

BLUE COLLAR

by

Paul Schrader

and

Leonard Schrader

AUTO WORKERS. In the 1920s they came to Detroit like pretty girls to Hollywood. In the 1970s they are bored, brutalized, exhausted, angry. Most hate their jobs. Many hate their lives.

THE AUTO WORKERS

JERRY BARTOWSKI, 32, Caucasian, spot-welder. His biceps are still rippled from high school days, but his face and arms are flecked with flash welding burns. He pumps gas three nights a week to make extra money for his wife and kids. His conversation is peppered with racial slurs, yet his two best friends are black. His philosophy of life can be summed up in two words: fuck off. He wants nothing more than for everybody -- the company, the union, the government -- to leave him alone, but, of course, they won't do that. Because he's everybody's victim.

ZEKE (EZEKIEL) BROWN, 30, Negro, assembly man. A wiry, urban-bred black with an oversized wife and five kids. His wit and temper have labeled him a malcontent by both the union and the company. Although he knows his union is corrupt, he defends it against the greater evil: the company. "Plant," he says, "is just short for plantation."

SMOKEY JAMES, 35, Negro, utility man. Smokey doesn't talk much. He doesn't have to: his hulking frame and cold eyes do his talking for him. An ex-con and two-time loser, Smokey is the all-purpose work horse of the plant. His anger at the system runs deeper than Jerry's or Zeke's, but he has no illusions about changing it. He spends his hard-earned money entertaining women friends. Nobody fucks with him. Only a hard-ass nigger like Smokey could get away with having a white racist as one of his best friends.

CREDITS

1 EXT. ASSEMBLY PLANT - DAY

The low-lying buildings of an auto plant squat in a drab Midwestern suburb. The painted sign, stretching across the buildings, reads: "Home on Wheels Assembly Plant, Dearborn, Michigan."

Behind the sign, a digital sign proclaims: "1977 Production Total: 265,542." The total clicks forward: "265,543."

The disembodied notes of a Bo Diddley song, hot from his electronic guitar, reverberate across the bleak Michigan sky.

CUT TO:

2 INT. ASSEMBLY PLANT - DAY

We track down the assembly line:

The goddamn line. Fifty-five cars an hour, 4,400 cars a week, 220,000 cars a year. Two shifts a day, 8 hours a shift, plus 90 minutes for lunch, 46 minutes to drink a coke or take a piss.

All along the line, men work silently and monotonously. Hard young black faces. Sweating old white faces. Men with Afros and crewcuts, plain-faced women with out-dated hairdos. Bodies hustling everywhere, arms moving, legs moving. Take-home pay \$150.00 a week, with overtime, \$9,000 a year. Moving, moving.

Overhead "mules" lower car frames onto the line. The staccato sound of power wrenches and power-drills attached to long electric cords. Metal parts pushed into place -- panels, fenders, roofs, hoods, floor pans.

Machinery moving, forklifts unloading, welding irons sparkling. And the brilliant colors: sunflower yellow, glacial blue, cranberry red, sandlewood, pewter, lime, gold.

A middle-aged man pounds at a soft drink machine, curses and runs back to the line.

And the noise. Always the relentless pounding of heavy machinery.

Bo Diddley's twanging notes are backed by the beat of metal presses. His raspy voice belts out:

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

'Now when I went to school,
I stop and went in,
Now I'm a man, baby,
Standin' amongst men.

'Man...
500% more man,
Man...'

CUT TO:

3 EXT. ASSEMBLY PLANT - DAY

The three o'clock whistle blows. The deafening noise of the line abruptly stops.

The younger workers are the first to dash out of the plant, lunch buckets in hand. It's impossible to get away quick enough.

They rev their motors and spit gravel toward the gate. Two late-model cars, one new, one already beat-up, almost collide.

A young black man throws his lunch bucket into his hand-painted chartreuse car and squeals off. Across the side of the car are painted the words: "I LOVE A WHITE WOMAN."

CUT TO:

END CREDITS

4 EXT. OOGIE'S ROUTE 41 BAR - DAY

Oogie's lies about three-quarters of a mile down Route 41 from the Home on Wheels plant. There's nothing special to distinguish it, inside or out. It's like a thousand taverns by a thousand factories in a thousand cities.

The first of a dozen or so cars pull into the lot and the auto workers, laughing and calling to each other, head into Oogie's.

JOHN BURROWS, a man about thirty, dressed in working clothes, has been waiting in his parked car. He gets out and follows a group of auto workers into Oogie's.

CUT TO:

5

INT. OOGIE'S - DAY

Burrows blends into a clump of men as they walk in. There are a few calls of, "Hey, Oog," and "Set 'em up, Doris."

The workers are here to take advantage of "Happy Hour." The bar is soon crowded with workers. Pool tables and pin ball machines stand near the rear. The jukebox comes on as soon as the men enter. It plays country & western: "from bar rooms to bedrooms."

Oogie's is an integrated bar. Not by choice, but by convenience. After standing next to a nigger all day, it doesn't make much sense to refuse to drink with him.

Burrows sits at a table which includes JERRY BARTOWSKI, ZEKE BROWN and SMOKEY JAMES. Two other men join them.

DORIS, the barmaid, brings over six bottles of Stroh's, three in each hand. Jerry, hitting the table with his palm, calls to her:

JERRY

Let's go, Doris. Get it on.

ZEKE

Step on it, bitch. My motor need gasoline.

DORIS

(sets down bottles)

Take more than gasoline to start your motor. It needs to be overhauled.

ZEKE

Say what, bitch? I can overhaul your old ass in my sleep.

DORIS

Shit.

She extends her hand for payment. Burrows pulls out a ten and hands it to her.

BURROWS

It's on me.

The others stare at him: who is this guy?

BURROWS

Mind if I ask some questions?

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

JERRY

Not if you're paying.

BURROWS

You work at the plant, right?

ZEKE

Just 'til times get better, Jack.
Normally we work on Wall Street.

BURROWS

I'm an Instructor at Eastern
Michigan. I'm doing a thesis on
unionism. I'm doing research on
'Bald Eddie' Johnson.

ZEKE

Be easier getting into virgin
pussy.

JERRY

(smiles, nods)

Nobody fucks with Bald Eddie.

ZEKE

What's this 'thesis' shit? Is
that some sex research jive?

BURROWS

Not exactly.

ZEKE

I heard that some dudes be getting
paid for fucking. Is that true?

BURROWS

I wouldn't know about that.

ZEKE

Damn, I been researching pussy
all my life, Jack. I mean
searching and re-searching, and
I never been paid shit.

BURROWS

It's not exactly my field...

ZEKE

And Smokey here, he's such a
pussyhound he's a professional.
You ever been paid for it, Smoke?

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (2)

SMOKEY

Shit.

JERRY

Don't let these niggers bother you. What do you want?

BURROWS

Who's your Union Rep?

JERRY

Clarence Hill.

ZEKE

The motherfucker.

BURROWS

Do you think Bald Eddie is still in touch with the men? I mean, he was a ball-buster when he came up, but that was thirty years ago.

ZEKE

Fuckers are all the same, Jack.

JERRY

They've been eating on too many tables with tablecloths.

BURROWS

Take young guys on the line today, like you...

Smokey has been studying Burrows coldly and intently. He finally speaks:

SMOKEY

That honky ain't no college instructor.

JERRY

What?

SMOKEY

That honky ain't no college nothing.

(a beat)

I know his face. He work for the F.B.I.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (3)

There is an awkward pause. Burrows' failure to immediately respond indicates that Smokey's right. Burrows tries to recover:

BURROWS

What's wrong with asking a few questions? You guys got nothing to be ashamed of, do you?

JERRY

Ashamed! Listen, asshole, we went out three years ago for 73 fucking days and I was on the picket line every day and I'm still paying the bills for the money I had to borrow to support my family. And you know what, asshole, we got our raise. I'm proud of my union and ain't no college shithole make me say different.

Not to be outdone, Zeke stands and opens his shirt to reveal a large scar.

ZEKE

I got nothin' to hide, you honky mutha.

BURROWS

Get that on the job?

ZEKE

These...

(points to scars
on arm)

... from the job, mutha. This...
(points to chest)

... from when the pigs attacked
me on the picket line.

JERRY

(under his breath)

I thought that was from that
crazy Delores bitch on River
Street.

ZEKE

Same thing, sucker.

Doris brings another round.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (4)

BURROWS

So tell me why you let the union
rip you off as much as management.
Do you like getting fucked over?

JERRY

Get your ass out of here. You
don't know shit. Goddamn phony-
baloney asshole professor.

BURROWS

(standing)

'S all right by me. Ain't my
kids who can't have new shoes,
ain't my wife who can't have a
new refrigerator, ain't me who...

ZEKE

That's fightin' words, motherfucker.

JERRY

Fuckin'-A.

DORIS

(still holding beers)

Who's paying for these?

The workers look at each other. Beers ain't cheap.
Jerry points to Burrows:

JERRY

He ordered 'em.

BURROWS

But I've been asked to leave.

JERRY

(relents)

You can stay. Pay for the beers.
Just don't talk about my union.

CUT TO:

6 INT. JERRY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

That night. Jerry sits on the edge of the bed, wearily
pulls off his trousers and collapses beside his wife
ARLENE.

She pulls the blanket over his underpants, kisses the
back of his neck and caresses his muscular shoulders.

(CONTINUED)

6

CONTINUED:

He doesn't respond.

ARLENE

Tired? Jerry? Your back still hurts, don't it, honey?

JERRY

Mmm.

ARLENE

The school nurse called today. To say that Debby must have those teeth braces.

JERRY

(irritated sigh)

Arlene.

ARLENE

Just warning you, 'cuz she's gonna ask you for them again tomorrow.

Jerry blots out the world by placing his forearm against his eyes. Arlene snuggles against him.

CUT TO:

7

INT. ASSEMBLY LINE - DAY

Like a giant serpent without head or tail, the line slithers in an endless oval. As the frames dolly from the bake oven, workers with power sanders smooth out the rough spots.

Zeke lifts a windshield from the pile, slops glue on its edges and attaches a rubber sleeve. CHICKEN SALAD O'NEILL, an old worker standing next to him, attaches the shield to the suction cups as the hydraulic lift swings it onto the line. Chicken Salad mumbles incessantly:

CHICKEN SALAD

Sumabitch... sumabitch...

ZEKE

Some day I'm gonna glue-and-rubber your mouth.

CHICKEN SALAD

Sumabitch...

(CONTINUED)

7

CONTINUED:

DOGS HIT MILLER, the foreman, stalks up and down the line, his voice barking a litany in tune with the clanging machines:

DOGS HIT MILLER

(sometimes O.S.)

Move it, Barney... Keep her rolling, boys. No slackers on this line. Get off your butt, Franklin...

Jerry and Smokey stand in the pits, like soldiers in a trench, spot-welding frames as they pass overhead. The LOTTERY MAN bends down beside them and Smokey flips up his welder's helmet:

LOTTERY MAN

In the lottery this week, Smoke?

Jerry double-times for Smokey as he gives the man two dollars.

SMOKEY

One for Jerry. What's the pay-off?

LOTTERY MAN

Good week -- three hunnerd.

He hustles off. Jerry flips up his helmet as Smokey, returning the favor, double-times for him. Jerry's pockets are a portable medicine chest: he sprays both nostrils, checks his earplugs and reaches for his Murine.

DOGS HIT MILLER

This is company time, Bartowski.

JERRY

(flipping down helmet)

This thing's a goddamn killer.
I'm getting brain cancer.

ELSEWHERE ON THE LINE, workers are inserting seats and steering wheels. Others attach doors, hoods, trunks. Then, somewhere out of sight, six gallons of gas are injected, the engine ignited and another "Home on Wheels" plops off the line.

JENKINS, the middle-aged worker in the credit sequence, motions for his partner to cover him and dashes over to the soft drink machine. He drops in his dime, makes his selection, but nothing happens. He pushes the Coin Return, then bangs the machine.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (2)

JENKINS

Goddamn machine! The fif-teenth
time it's cheated me.

Jenkins spots Dogshit Miller coming and heads back to the line.

JENKINS

(points to machine)

The fifteenth time. When you
gonna get it fixed?

DOGSHIT MILLER

Tell your Union Rep.

CUT TO:

8 INT. UNION HALL - NIGHT

The foot-scuffled "institutional green" union hall is hung with pictures of former victories: photo blow-ups of picket lines, solidarity strikes and Presidential visits.

Smokey, Jerry, Zeke, Chicken Salad, BOBBY JOE and a dozen other workers are scattered about the room, slouched in folding chairs. Several are snoozing. A few are sipping from pints in brown paper bags.

CLARENCE HILL, the Union Rep, stands before them. His manner seems a little too smooth. One suspects it's been a half-dozen years since he stood on the line.

HILL

... we need two volunteers from
each plant to help pass out these
leaflets Saturday...

He holds up a leaflet reading: "Vote YES on Prop. 4."

HILL

... we all know how important
this ballot measure is. Now,
who wants to help?

An anonymous groan goes up from the workers.

HILL

Now come on, boys. Nobody said
it was going to be fun.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

8)

CONTINUED:

HILL (CONT'D)

Did I say it'd be fun? Somebody's got to do it, and if we don't do it ourselves, we'll have to use our money to hire somebody else.

VOICE FROM CROWD

Whatdaya mean we? You gonna be there, Clarence?

Jerry passes his pint to Smokey:

JERRY

(under his breath)

Hell, I got two jobs and they think I'm going to hand out some asshole pamphlets on my day off.

HILL

I know you're all good union boys. The union does right by you, and you do right by the union. You're doing this for yourselves -- so let's have some volunteers.

Zeke stands up.

HILL

Zeke. I knew we could count on you.

ZEKE

I'm busy Saturday. I wanna talk about the union doing right by me -- like you said.

HILL

(exasperated)

What is it now, Zeke?

ZEKE

My locker door. The handle's been broke for six months now and the company still ain't fixed it. The only way I can open it is to stick my little finger in the hole.

(demonstrates)

I cut my finger and that was two weeks ago and it still ain't healed yet. So now I gotta use ball-point pens which keep breaking.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: (2)

The other workers just groan and look away. They've been hearing about his goddamn locker for five months.

HILL

Be reasonable, Zeke.

ZEKE

Reasonable! I been waiting six months, Clarence, and you ain't done shit. You call that reasonable? You're my Rep. You're supposed to take this to the Green Room and get it settled.

HILL

You know I can't take every little thing to the Green Room. I gotta wait for something big, or a bunch of little things. We can't let our power be dissipated by the plant.

ZEKE

Plant? The brothers've heard this bullshit before, Jack. You know what 'plant' is? 'Plant' is just short for plan-tation!

YOUNG BLACK IN CROWD

Right on, brother.

Several white workers raise their eyes to the ceiling for help. Is he going to start this racist rap again?

HILL

Now that Zeke is finished...

ZEKE

All right for you, Jack. I'm gonna take my case to the head man himself. I'm going straight to union headquarters, then I'll get some fair rep-re-sen-tation.

HILL

That of course is your right...

ZEKE

(playing to the crowd)

Not only that, Jack. I'm gonna run for Union Rep myself.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: (3)

ZEKE (CONT'D)

I'm gonna win your job and give
the brothers some real representation.

There are mutters of approval from the crowd. Zeke is
just warming up:

ZEKE

Gonna make real changes around
here. And then -- and then maybe
I'll just fly out to Palm Springs
and drop in on Bald Eddie's new
vacation house and maybe hit a
few golf balls with Frank
Fitzsimmons and Mr. Nixon.

Jerry and Smokey join in the laughter. There are a few
scattered calls of "You tell 'em, Zeke" and "Right on,
brother."

CUT TO:

9, INT. OOGIE'S - NIGHT

The usual "Happy Hour" crowd. Smokey, Jerry and Zeke,
laughing, sit around a table dotted with beer bottles.
Bobby Joe, a 19-year-old Southern boy with long blond
hair, sits with them. His yellow hard hat rests in front
of him.

Bobby Joe leans toward Zeke, motions to Smokey and says:

BOBBY JOE

... what did he do?

SMOKEY

Nothin'.

JERRY

(laughs)

Yeah, they just sent this nigger
to Jackson Pen three years 'cause
they like his ass.

ZEKE

Tell him, Smoke. The redneck's
gonna have to learn sometime.
Tell him how it's done.

SMOKEY

Wasn't nothin'.

(CONTINUED)

9

CONTINUED:

ZEKE

Big talker, ain't he? I'll tell
you, Bobby Joe. At Jackson,
Smokey was a heavy mutha...

Across the room, HANK, a white worker, drops a quarter in
the jukebox:

ZEKE

(calling)

Hank, don't play any more of them
goddamn cowboy songs.

HANK

(calls back)

Fuck that, Zeke. I work for my
money. I get to hear what I want.
Borrow some from your welfare lady.

ZEKE

Mutha-fuckin' cowboy.

(continuing)

Anyway, this goes back a few years
when Smokey was still learnin'
about the pussy. He was visiting
the wife of a friend -- who was
outta town. Now this bitch be a
good teacher -- but ugly. I mean,
ug-ly.

SMOKEY

Not that ugly.

ZEKE

Anyway, ol' Smokey's in there,
humping and pumping 'cause this
nympho bitch can't get enough --
I mean, the bitch'll fuck anything...

SMOKEY

Wait a minute, nigger. Wasn't
that way at all. Shit. I was
there with my friend Leroy 'cause
this lady likes fucking two guys
at a time. She says everything
was cool, 'cause her old man was
long gone, outta town she said...

Pause.

BOBBY JOE

And...?

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (2)

SMOKEY

So just when we get to really smoking, I hear her old man stomping up the stairs. Now I know this crazy fucker. George Washington Coleman. Know his step. Crazy fucker. Always got a gun. He don't care, he shoots your ass.

Pause.

ZEKE

And George Washington be pounding on the door and the bitch be screaming, 'George is back, what'll we do?' and Smokey be looking out the fifth floor window, praying, 'Oh, God, just for one minute let these arms become wings.'

SMOKEY

Wasn't like that at all. Leroy and I knew there was only one way to get past George Waashington, and that was to get over him. So on a signal Leroy opens the door and I hit the dude in the balls and the mouth, and the fucker drops like a stone. Except the fucker wasn't George Washington at all, but the police. Fucking cop trying to ask about somebody next door.

BOBBY JOE

So?

SMOKEY

So we cut out and there two more pigs waiting with cuffs and sticks.

BOBBY JOE

Why didn't you just explain?

SMOKEY

Listen, boy, nigger hit a cop on Twelfth Street, he don't stick around to explain.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (3)

ZEKE

And that was just the first time
he got busted. The next time
was even dumber.

SMOKEY

Wasn't my fault. Those crazy
wife-bitches do anything to get
fucked.

BOBBY JOE

Your wife don't mind?

SMOKEY

Shit.

ZEKE

Smokey, he don't need no wife.

BOBBY JOE

Why's that?

ZEKE

'Cause he got yours.

Jerry, Smokey and Zeke crack up. Jerry leans over to
Bobby Joe and says confidentially:

JERRY

Watch out for that big nigger,
he'll get your wife's pussy
stretched way outta shape.

Zeke, laughing, chokes on his beer.

ZEKE

Better than Polack dick. Polack
wife lay back, screaming, 'Is it
in yet?'

JERRY

(standing to leave)
Least I work for my family,
spearchucker. Time for me to
go pump some gas.

ZEKE

(stands)
Yeah. I gotta split too.

SMOKEY

I'm having a party Saturday night.
With some of my friends, you know?

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (4)

ZEKE
'Bout time, my man.

JERRY
When?

SMOKEY
Midnight.

JERRY
See you then.

Jerry and Zeke walk out together.

CUT TO:

10 INT. ZEKE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Zeke's house was furnished from a discount house -- and that was seven years ago. The lampshade is mended, the sofa frayed and a well-worn path leads from the door to the dining room.

Zeke, drinking a beer on the sofa, watches his least favorite TV show: "The Jeffersons." Zeke really doesn't watch "The Jeffersons"; he just talks back to it. An endless stream of epithets issues from his mouth:

ZEKE
... Goddamn Oreo mother-fucker.
Where'd a dumb nigger like that
get so much money? Sold his ass,
I'll tell you that. All his
Goddamn honkey friends...

CAROLYN, Zeke's wife, sits Jemima-like in her chair, trying to hear the TV over Zeke's incessant bitching.

CAROLYN
If you hate it so much, why
don't you just turn it off?

ZEKE
Say what? I worked three years
for that sucker, and I'm damn
well gonna watch it. Only thing
that works in the house anyway.

Three of Zeke's boys, LISTON, ALI and FRAZIER, have been playing the "Game of Jaws" (Ideal Toy Corp.) on the floor.

(CONTINUED)

10. CONTINUED:

Ali slips a spoon into the plastic shark's mouth and the jaws snap shut.

LISTON

You lost. It's my turn.

ALI

Frazier pushed my arm.

FRAZIER

Bullshit. I didn't touch you.

Yanking the toy from his brother, Ali accidentally breaks off the shark's plastic jaw.

LISTON

You in trouble now. Daddy gonna kung-fu your ass.

ZEKE

(leans forward)

What the shit...

(tries to fix toy)

Can't you boys take turns? You can count, can't you? Shit, this junk's as bad as the cars we make. Next time I'm gonna buy those 'unbreakable' toys. Like maybe wood blocks.

LISTON

I didn't break it.

ALI

It wasn't any good, anyway.

ZEKE

Maybe you can figger out how to pay for it, smart-ass.

(gestures to TV)

Maybe you can become a rich Uncle Tom and get on TV and have lots of white friends.

The front doorbell rings and Zeke gets up to answer it. He peeks through the chain and sees a JOHN BERG, a white man in a suit.

CAROLYN

If that's your brother, tell him we already ate.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (2)

BERG

Mr. Brown? I'm John Berg from
the Internal Revenue Service.

ZEKE

Don't want none, Jack. Can't
afford it.

BERG

It's about your income tax. If
you don't talk to me, you'll
have to talk to the police.

ZEKE

(lets him in)

Oh, you the tax-man. Why'nt you
say so? Come on in. Carolyn,
get this man a beer. Sit down.

BERG

Nothing, thanks. This'll just
take a minute. I wanted to catch
you at home, Mr. Brown.

Berg remains standing. Zeke, eyeing him suspiciously,
motions for Carolyn to get a beer.

ZEKE

I hope there's no problem.

BERG

In checking your return, we've
found two discrepancies. First,
you are claiming nine deductions
for children...

ZEKE

That's right. Carolyn and me
have had one each year.

BERG

But according to the hospital
records, you only have five
children -- all boys.

ZEKE

I can't afford no hospital for
all my kids. Look at that form.
Shit, I don't take home but \$150
a week.

(CONTINUED)

10) CONTINUED: (3)

BERG

I'd just like to see your sons
to make sure.

(opens folder)

We have Sugar Ray Brown, Floyd
Brown, Liston Brown, Frazier
Brown, Ali Brown, O.J. Brown,
Gayle Sayers Brown, Jim Brown
and Stevie Wonder Brown -- who's
Stevie Wonder?

Carolyn walks back in with a beer.

CAROLYN

He's a singer.

ZEKE

Sugar Ray and Floyd got a ballgame
tonight. Here are Liston, Ali and
Frazier. The rest are out on the
streets. I can never keep track
of them boys. Carolyn, why don't
you try to go find them?

Carolyn sets down the beer and leaves with the boys.

BERG

Another thing, Mr. Brown. Our
records show you held a part-time
job last year and didn't declare
it?

ZEKE

Sure you won't have a beer?

BERG

Not while I'm working. You worked
thirty days as a house painter.

ZEKE

Somebody musta made a mistake.

BERG

The mistake appears to be yours.
I'm sure you just forgot about
it, but you'll have to pay the
back taxes nonetheless. Plus the
late penalty, of course.

CUT TO:

11 INT. NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Carolyn and her sons stand in her neighbor's kitchen.
MARY, her neighbor, calls her two boys into the room.

MARY

You can use Junior and Billy.

CAROLYN

I need two more.

MARY

(indicating next
door)

What about Carla's boys?

CAROLYN

Too old. Besides, you know how
Carla is. Maybe you have some
extra clothes for the boys. They
can switch.

MARY

Sure. Worth a try.

CAROLYN

Take your clothes off, boys.
Now, Frazier, remember you're
Jim, and, Ali, you're O.J.

ALI

Sure, that's easy. I am O.J.

CUT TO:

12 INT. ZEKE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

BERG

... it's only \$295 for the second
job, but when you add that to the
four false deductions over a period
of six years, it comes out to
\$2,460.75.

ZEKE

You crazy? Where am I going to
get that kinda money?

Carolyn returns with Junior, Billy and Liston in tow;
plus Ali and Frazier dressed in out-of-sized clothes.
Zeke is enormously relieved:

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

ZEKE

O.J., Gayle, where you been?
Damn, can never find those boys.
Come on in. Don't be shy.

Berg, not fooled for a second, looks at the boys.

BERG

Very impressive, Mrs. Brown.
This is going to take longer
than I planned. Let's get all
the boys together and go through
the records. I'll wait for the
others if necessary.

ZEKE

(looks at Carolyn)

Shit.

CUT TO:

13 EXT. ECONO-GAS - NIGHT

Blue fluorescent light floods the Econo-Gas station.
Jerry, tired, pulls the nozzle out of a car and hangs it
on the rusty pump. He approaches the driver of the car,
FBI agent, John Burrows.

JERRY

Three bucks.

BURROWS

(looks for money)

Had a good time the other night.
There was something I wanted to
ask you.

JERRY

I don't know nothing.

BURROWS

I was gonna drop by your house
and see you...

JERRY

Listen, man, nobody comes near
my house. Nobody I don't invite.

BURROWS

(paying)

You know Clarence Hill, don't you?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

BURROWS (CONT'D)

You used to be his key man before he was promoted to Union Rep. I hear he just bought a house in Woodland Hills.

JERRY

I don't know nothing about that.

BURROWS

C'mon...

JERRY

Don't know nothing about no house, nothing about no Clarence Hill, nothing about no Union. I don't know shit.

BURROWS

Everybody knows your local's one of the most corrupt in the country.

JERRY

Yeah? I also know you got your man inside the Union, and the Union's got its man inside the government, and if I farted up wind, I'd be out of a job in an hour.

BURROWS

But you...?

JERRY

Just get your ass out of here. I don't talk to no government agent.

Jerry taps the rear fender and walks off.

CUT TO:

14 EXT. UNION HEADQUARTERS - DAY

A couple workers walk into an unassuming concrete-block building in Detroit.

Zeke parks his beat-up white '62 Chevy Impala (with a blue door and cracked rear window), gets out and walks into the headquarters.

CUT TO:

15 INT. UNION HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The well-worn offices are for working, not for show. Nothing fancy. Metal desks, filing cabinets, and a large walk-in wall safe.

At the counter, a union rep is handing out stacks of leaflets reading, "Vote Yes on Prop. 4."

Zeke looks around, then walks over to JANET, an attractive light brown secretary.

ZEKE

My name is Ezekiel Brown. I'm here to see Mr. Johnson.

JANET

(writing)

Just a minute.

ZEKE

How come they got you working Saturday afternoon, girl?

JANET

Working on Proposition Four.

ZEKE

I was thinking of a different proposition. When you gonna have time to hit the town?

JANET

I don't even know you, Mr. Brown.

ZEKE

We can fix that fast.

JANET

Frankly, I don't want to.

ZEKE

Whew! You be cold, girl. You're locked up tighter than that safe.

Ignoring him, Janet punches the intercom:

JANET

Mr. Johnson, Mr. Ezekiel Brown is here.

BALD EDDIE (V.O.)

(on intercom)

Send him in.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

Zeke surveys the room again. A secretary carries a metal box into the open safe.

An aging SECURITY GUARD sits in the corner, looking out the window and picking his nose. When he spots Zeke watching him, he quickly pulls his finger out of his nose and rubs it on his pants.

Janet points to the door to Bald Eddie's office. Zeke walks over and enters.

CUT TO:

16 INT. BALD EDDIE'S OFFICE - DAY

BALD EDDIE JOHNSON, 55, overweight, seems equally friendly and tough. One look at him tells you he's been in power a long time.

Framed photos of Johnson posing with John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, Jimmy Hoffa and others hang on the wall behind him.

BALD EDDIE

Hello, Zeke. What's the problem?
Have a seat.

ZEKE

I want to complain about Clarence Hill, Mr. Johnson...

BALD EDDIE

(interrupting)

Bald Eddie.

ZEKE

... about Clarence Hill, he's our Rep at the Home on Wheels plant in Dearborn. How'd he get his job? He's a racist.

BALD EDDIE

How's that?

ZEKE

He ain't looking out for the black men at all. White folks get everything fixed right away. But black workers don't get nothing.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

ZEKE (CONT'D)

When my Daddy came up from Alabama, all he could say was: 'Where do I go to make them cars?' My uncles, my brother, my cousins, we been making Fords and Chevys all our lives. And what we got to show for it?

BALD EDDIE

You know our local was the first to insist on black-white parity. We have the best black-white relations in the union.

ZEKE

Don't get me wrong. The union's done right by blacks on wages. But wages ain't the problem no more. It's these goddamn prices. Everything keeps going up. The more money we make, the less it's worth.

BALD EDDIE

What exactly is the problem?

ZEKE

My locker. It ain't been fixed for six months now and Clarence won't do nothing. Two weeks ago I cut my...

BALD EDDIE

(picks up phone)

Janet, get me Clarence Hill.

He'll be at home.

(to Zeke)

How long you been on the line?

ZEKE

Seven years.

Janet speaks on the phone to Bald Eddie. Zeke cannot hear what she says.

JANET (V.O.)

There's no answer, Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Hill must be out of town.

Johnson thanks her, pushes the button and pretends to be talking to Clarence Hill.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: (2)

BALD EDDIE

Hello, Clarence.

(a beat)

I'm fine. I'm here with Zeke Brown. He's having some trouble with his locker. Will you see to it that it's fixed?

(a beat)

Good. Keep me informed. Thanks. Talk to you later, Clarence.

(hangs up; to Zeke)

That ought to take care of it, Zeke. Is there anything else?

ZEKE

(impressed)

No, I guess not. Thanks a lot, Mr. Johnson. This is a real load off my mind.

Zeke turns and leaves.

CUT TO:

17\ INT. UNION HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Zeke, quite satisfied with himself, re-enters the outer office. Janet is on the phone. A stack of leaflets stands on the counter. The security guard, back to picking his nose, reads a tabloid.

Zeke watches as a young white secretary wheels her bicycle out of the open safe.

Zeke opens the front door for her, but keeps looking back at the open safe, thinking of all the money it must contain.

CUT TO:

18 INT. JERRY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jerry and Arlene are in bed. Jerry, restless, stares at the alarm clock. 11:35.

JERRY

Oh, damn.

ARLENE

Damn what?

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

JERRY
(getting up)
I forgot to lock one of the pumps.

ARLENE
Do you have to do it now? Do it
in the morning.

Jerry pulls on his jeans.

JERRY
And pay for all the gas stolen
tonight? Besides, honey, I want
to sleep in with you in the
morning.

ARLENE
Will you go to mass with me?

JERRY
(sighing)
Okay. Just this once.

CUT TO:

19 INT. ZEKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Carolyn lies in bed, watching Zeke change his clothes.

ZEKE
What do you mean, baby? I told
you about it this morning. I
gotta help Freddy move into his
new apartment. If he don't move
at night, he'll have to pay his
back rent.

CAROLYN
If you're gonna be working, how
come you're puttin' on your new
pants?

ZEKE
Shit, woman, these ain't new.
You call these new?

CAROLYN
They sure ain't old.

ZEKE
What do you want, woman?
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

ZEKE (CONT'D)

You want me walking around like
some criminal? Is that what you
want?

CAROLYN

What shirt you gonna wear?

ZEKE

(points to work
shirt)

Just this old rag over here.

CUT TO:

20 EXT. SMOKEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jerry parks his pale blue Ford on a street lined with
drab apartment buildings.

Ahead of him, Zeke takes off his "old rag" work shirt,
tosses it into his open trunk and puts on his floral
rayon party shirt.

JERRY

Hey, Zeke, how'd you get away
from your old lady?

ZEKE

Shit, sucker, my woman knows her
place.

They walk toward the apartment building.

JERRY

You probably got her handcuffed
to the bed.

ZEKE

Handcuffs! Who's got money for
handcuffs? I use the clothesline.

They laugh as they enter the building.

CUT TO:

21 INT. SMOKEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Smokey opens the door and slaps hands with Zeke and Jerry.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

ZEKE

What's happening, brother.

Smokey's shag-carpeted living room resembles a large bed strewn with pillows and cushions. Smokey spends his pay maintaining his superfly lifestyle: flashy clothes, flashy women, flashy cars and an empty bank account. His apartment looks like a Las Vegas hotel suite.

Four black girls, CATHY, FLO, BOBBIE and SUGAR, are seated around the coffee table snorting coke. Six thin rows of white gold are neatly lined on a mirror. Cat takes a blow through a rolled-up dollar bill.

ZEKE

Cat, my girl, you looking fine.

CATHY

Cathy to you. You looking older.

ZEKE

(kneels down)

Slip aside and let me get some of that nose candy.

JERRY

Jesus, there must be three weeks pay here, Smoke.

SMOKEY

(holds up fingers)

Four.

ZEKE

Smokey's just like us. A real family man. Spends all his pay on his family -- and all the family's he's got is you, me and these beautiful girls here.

CATHY

Is jive-talking all you can do, nigger?

ZEKE

Say what, bitch? Don't worry about me. Just worry about keeping up with me.

CATHY

Talkin' and jivin'.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2)

ZEKE

You just fix your eyes on Jerry here. These white folks don't know shit about fucking. Thinks his wife got pregnant on the telephone.

JERRY

(unbuckling his
belt)

At least it was my telephone.

TIME CUT: the party is well under way. Everyone is high and in various stages of undress. The stereo plays Marvin Gaye's "You Sure Love to Ball."

Zeke, fucked out for the moment, is watching Smokey who's going at it with Cathy and Bobbie.

Jerry and Flo are in the other corner.

ZEKE

... you shoulda seen that sucker, Smoke. Biggest I ever seen. Motherfucker's so big you could walk in standing up.

JERRY

(calling over)

Who's he talking about?

SMOKEY

(occupied)

Shit if I know.

ZEKE

What, not who, sucker. The safe at union headquarters. It's so big that one bitch keeps her bicycle in it.

Sugar walks in from the bathroom.

SUGAR

Think you can get it up again, 'Zekiel?

ZEKE

Shit. Come over here, girl. Can Old Zeke get it up? Is Martin Luther King in heaven?

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (3)

TIME CUT: Smokey, Zeke, Flo and Sugar walk out of the bedroom. Jerry is going down on Cathy on the sofa.

ZEKE

I didn't say we should, just that it was a knock-over. You should of seen that motherfucker. They must keep a truckload of money in there.

Smokey, ignoring him, takes a hit off the last row of cocaine. Zeke slaps Jerry on the ass:

ZEKE

You hear me, sucker?

JERRY

Mmmmm.

ZEKE

Enough money for all of us.
(tickles Jerry's
foot)

I'm talking to you, Jerry.

JERRY

(peering over
Cathy's thigh)
I'm a little preoccupied, you
know?

ZEKE

Well, who ain't, sucker?

CATHY

Shit, can't you see he's busy?
Ain't often a woman gets a real
man.

ZEKE

Shit, that's just 'cause no black
man would eat no pussy.

(walks over to
Bobbie)

He's just makin' reparations.

TIME CUT: the party's over. Jerry, Zeke and Smokey, fucked and coked out, sit on the sofa passing a quart of Wild Turkey. Flo slumps in a chair.

The first light of dawn comes through the curtains. They speak almost to themselves.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (4)

JERRY

Every time I get coked up like this I think I'm never gonna go back on the line again. Don't know why the fuck I do.

SMOKEY

'Cause the man is waiting for your ass at the end of it.

ZEKE

I gotta get three grand in 90 days or the IRS is gonna start docking my paycheck for back taxes. Then I can forget about toys and clothes and shit. I won't even be able to feed my kids.

JERRY

Gas station ain't better. Two-fifty an hour. I must have fuckin' brain cancer.

ZEKE

Good thing Smokey's got no family to worry about. Otherwise we'd never have a good time.

JERRY

I swore I wouldn't work during my vacation this year.

ZEKE

(to Smokey)

Where can I get three grand? I don't want to have to go to no dago loan shark. Those cats mess with your family.

SMOKEY

Hit the safe you're talking about.

ZEKE

You kidding? That's our own union.

SMOKEY

You said it was a knock-over.

ZEKE

That was just the coke talking.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (5)

SMOKEY

Is it a knock-over or not?

ZEKE

It's a knock-over all right.
Baby food. Just protected by
some honkey who picks his nose
all day.

SMOKEY

Then hit it.

ZEKE

Our own union?

SMOKEY

They ain't done shit for us.

JERRY

(laughs)

That'd really be a killer,
wouldn't it?

ZEKE

We'd just be taking what was
ours in the first place.

SMOKEY

How many night guards?

ZEKE

I don't know.

SMOKEY

(to Jerry)

What d'you think?

JERRY

Nah. I couldn't.

ZEKE

Somebody oughta. Teach them
fuckers a lesson. They're
hurting us bad as the company.

JERRY

Ain't no way to do it...

(takes a swig)

... but I'd sure like to see the
look on their faces.

CUT TO:

22 INT. ASSEMBLY PLANT - DAY

Coffee break. Workers cluster around the vending machines. Others sit against their lockers, snacking from lunch buckets. Hank and Chicken Salad eat Twinkies. Jenkins plays poker at a table. Bobby Joe reads Catch-22 in paperback. Jerry, Zeke and Smokey sip soda from paper cups.

ZEKE

Me and Smokey been thinking about it. We're gonna talk some more at Oogie's.

JERRY

The union job?

ZEKE

(hushes him)

You want in?

CHICKEN SALAD

(announcing to all)

Here comes Dogshit Miller already.

DOGSHIT MILLER

Get a move on, men. Line starts rolling in thirty seconds.

BOBBY JOE

We know, Miller. We know.

CHICKEN SALAD

Sumabitch...

The men trudge back to their positions. Jerry and Smokey walk together.

JERRY

(using nasal spray)

Smokey, have you got any, uh, side effects?

SMOKEY

From the party?

JERRY

Yeah.

SMOKEY

Just a hang-over.

JERRY

No, I mean like crotch rot.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

SMOKEY

You crazy? Those girls are clean.

JERRY

(nodding, resigned)

That's what I figured. I got me another case of the psychosomatic crabs.

SMOKEY

(reaches for helmet)

You're fucked up, Jerry.

JERRY

(scratches himself)

And they always get me worst when I'm with Arlene.

The buzzer sounds. The line starts rolling. Smokey and Jerry flip down their helmets.

TIME CUT: the line moves monotonously forward. In the b.g., Jenkins motions for his partner to "double up" and dashes over to the soda machine. He sticks a quarter in, makes a selection and nothing comes out.

JENKINS

(jerking coin return)

Sixteenth time, you bastard!

(sudden fury)

This is the last time you're gonna fuck me, you goddamn asshole machine!

Jenkins strides toward an idling high-low and gets on. The FORKLIFT OPERATOR rushes over and grabs his elbow.

FORKLIFT OPERATOR

Jenkins! What are you doing?

Still in the b.g., Jenkins pushes the operator away and revs the engine. He raises the forks eye-level and, dropping the high-low into gear, screeches toward the vending machine.

He rams both forks into the machine -- straight into the glass displaying the soda it supposedly delivers.

Squealing backward and forward, Jenkins repeatedly bangs the machine against the concrete wall. Freon gas hisses from the bottom of the machine. Orange and brown soda spews across the floor.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED: (2)

Dogshit Miller races over and rips Jenkins off the high-low.

Someone hits the Emergency Stop button: the workers watch Dogshit and Jenkins struggle. Everyone's sympathies are with Jenkins.

DOGSHIT MILLER

Goddamnit, Jenkins! What's wrong with you? Your pay's gonna be docked for this.

JENKINS

(struggling)

Don't touch me, Dogshit.

DOGSHIT MILLER

(twisting Jenkins' arm)

You're paying for every penny.

JENKINS

(kicks at him)

Fuck off.

DOGSHIT MILLER

You goddamn idiot. You're off the job. You're outta work for two weeks.

JENKINS

Fuck off, Dogshit. You and the whole company. Just fuck off.

Dogshit marches Jenkins out of the building.

DOGSHIT MILLER

Two weeks, you bastard. Every penny of this comes outta your paycheck.

(looking back)

Who stopped the line? Hank, hit the button. Get the line moving.

The workers watch in sullen anger as Dogshit and Jenkins leave. Again the company has placed the machine before the man. There are mumbles of, "Fucking Dogshit, what does he care?" and "Bastards never fix anything 'til somebody gets killed by it."

Hank looks around, shrugs and hits the button. Clock shows fifteen minutes to whistle-time: 2:45. The line starts up.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED: (3)

Bobby Joe stands back from the line and calls out:

BOBBY JOE

Hey, you company-owned assholes!
You gonna take that? From now on,
they're all gonna be lemons!

ZEKE

Let's screw 'em good.

The young workers, moving faster than before, launch a campaign of sabotage. Seats are bolted in backwards. Cranberry doors are placed on cobalt blue frames.

The older workers back away, afraid to participate.

OLD BLACK WORKER

Dogshit ain't gonna like this.

OLD WHITE WORKER

There's gonna be hell to pay
tomorrow, I'll tell ya.

The young workers respond by doing three jobs at a time. The older workers, gradually caught up in the madcap mood, shout encouragement from the sidelines. "Bust the shit outta that bitch."

CHICKEN SALAD

That's the stuff, Zeke. Nah, I
can't do this shit. I got
eighteen years. Hey, don't
forget the windshield wipers...
sumabitch... ain't this something?
Bobby Joe, whatja doing putting
those seats in forward?

BOBBY JOE

I'm putting the covers on backwards.

CHICKEN SALAD

First put the seats in backwards.

Jerry, Zeke and Smokey work in a frenzy, laughing and shouting encouragement to each other. Jerry removes spark plugs. Zeke spreads glue across a steering wheel and dials. Smokey welds the doors shut.

2:55. Dogshit Miller returns with Clarence Hill. The workers stop and look at them innocently. A multi-colored, misassembled Home on Wheels plops off the line.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED: (4)

DOGSBIT MILLER

(to Hill)

See what kinda morons you give us.
Ain't gonna do anything to stop
it, are you?

HILL

What can anybody do?

Dogshit knows things have gone too far for discipline.

DOGSBIT MILLER

Stop and forget it happened.

(hits stop button)

That's it, men, we're shutting
down five minutes early today.

There are shouts of joy as the workers stream toward their
lockers.

CUT TO:

23 INT. JERRY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jerry and Arlene sit at the table with their 8-year-old
son, BOB. Debby's seat is empty.

BOB

I want some more, Dad. I'm
hungry. Can I have some of yours?

Jerry shows the box of Hamburger Helper to his son.

JERRY

Look, it says right here that
this is good for four helpings.
'Serves four.' You've had enough.

BOB

I'm still hungry.

JERRY

Write the company.

BOB

Can I have some of yours, Mom?

ARLENE

Have another piece of bread.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

BOB

What about Debby's? She ain't
ate anything.

JERRY

Where is Debby?

(calls)

Debby! Come to the table. Your
food's getting cold.

ARLENE

Go easy on her, honey. She's
had a hard day.

Debby's head appears for a moment out of the bedroom.

JERRY

What's wrong with her?

ARLENE

She doesn't feel good.

JERRY

Debby, come in here. What's
wrong, honey?

Arlene motions for Jerry to get up and follow her. Bob
reaches over and takes some of his dad's Hamburger Helper.

CUT TO:

24 INT. JERRY'S HOUSE - HALL - NIGHT

Jerry calls Debby over. Her lips are bloody.

ARLENE

You know how she wanted to be on
the baton team?

JERRY

What's wrong, Debby? How come
nobody tells me anything?

Jerry opens his daughter's mouth. Her gums are cut and
blood-red.

ARLENE

She tried to make braces out of
a coat hanger.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

JERRY
(stunned)
Jesus Christ.

He tries to pull Debby to him, but she turns and runs into her bedroom, closing the door behind her.

JERRY
Jesus Christ, Arlene. Get those goddamn braces, and get 'em tomorrow. We'll worry about the bill when it comes.

ARLENE
Maybe we can have another garage sale.

JERRY
We got nothing left to sell. We'd be better off if we were black. At least we could get some government welfare or something.

Arlene puts her head on his shoulder.

ARLENE
It's okay, honey. It'll work out.

JERRY
Just get them braces.

We close on Jerry's trapped face.

CUT TO:

25 INT. OOGIE'S - NIGHT

Jerry walks in. Unlike the Happy Hour crowd, Oogie's night set is sexually mixed and dressed in street clothes; otherwise, it's the same bunch of fuck-offs.

Jerry spots Zeke and Smokey at a corner table and joins them.

JERRY
I was thinking about what you guys were talking about. You really gonna do it?

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

SMOKEY

Maybe.
(a beat)
Yeah.

ZEKE

Smokey knows a girl that used to work there. She's coming over to his place tomorrow night.

JERRY

You gonna carry pieces?

SMOKEY

No. It's a straight 1642: Breaking and Entering. It better be a 1906 as well: Grand Larceny.

JERRY

How much do you think there could be?

SMOKEY

Four-five grand.

ZEKE

At least. Whatja think?

JERRY

Nah. It ain't for me.

ZEKE

It's gonna be a pushover.

JERRY

You'll pull it off all right.
It just ain't for me.

Jerry walks over to the bar.

OOGIE

Beer, Jerry?

JERRY

And bourbon by.

CUT TO:

26 INT. ASSEMBLY PLANT - DAY

Smokey and Jerry stand in their spots, welding frames that pass overhead.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

In another part of the plant, a half-dozen workers fix the misassembled Homes on Wheels.

CUT TO:

27 INT. SMOKEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Zeke and MAXINE are seated at the dining table. Zeke sketches a floor-plan of the headquarters as she describes it.

MAXINE

No, that's a wall, and that's a counter. And this is two rooms.

ZEKE

Like this?

MAXINE

Right. With windows.

Smokey walks out of the bedroom speaking on a telephone with a long cord.

SMOKEY

I've got Charlie T on the line. He wants to know what color the lettering is. You know, the word 'Safewell.'

MAXINE

Yellow or gold. I think.

SMOKEY

(on phone)

Yellow. Maybe gold.

Smokey listens, then cups the phone and speaks to Zeke:

SMOKEY

Charlie says it's probably a '46 or '47. Suggests that we drill and pick it. Take about 30 minutes. He'll show us how.

ZEKE

How much does he want?

SMOKEY

\$100 now. Then 10% of the take.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

ZEKE

You got a hundred?

SMOKEY

No. I spent everything last weekend.

ZEKE

Shit. That does it. I'm broke too. Got about ten bucks.

SMOKEY

I only got twenty-five. But I can pawn my ring. Just pay me off the top.

ZEKE

Great. Tell the man it's a deal.

There is a knock on the door as Smokey resumes his conversation. Maxine opens the door; Jerry peers over the chain.

ZEKE

Bartowski. Come on in.

Maxine lets him in.

JERRY

I was just in the neighborhood. Thought I'd stop by.

Smokey hangs up. Jerry looks at the sketch.

JERRY

That the floor plan?

ZEKE

Yeah. Grab a chair.

SMOKEY

You want in?

JERRY

I'm just curious. Tell me what you've got. Run through it all from the top. I want to hear everything.

CUT TO:

28 EXT. UNION HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Smokey's "pimpmobile" -- a candy-red Continental embellished with white pin-stripes -- is parked down the street from headquarters.

Smokey, Zeke and Jerry watch the headquarters from the front seat. The Tigers game plays softly on the radio.

SMOKEY

A cop car passes by every fifteen minutes. The security guard comes in every hour at night and checks it out. Usually about quarter past the hour.

JERRY

Do they have one of those closed-circuit TV cameras.

SMOKEY

No. Just an electric eye alarm.

ZEKE

Shit. I saw that in Pink Panther. Those muthas are rough. They can tell the minute you step on the floor how much you weigh, whether you're a man or a woman, how old...

SMOKEY

Shit. This is just an electric eye on the door. Like the supermarket.

ZEKE

Whose car we gonna use? Mine broke down again.

SMOKEY

We can use mine.

JERRY

You kiddin'? Use this pimpmobile? Cops'll spot this showboat clear across Lake Huron.

ZEKE

(to Jerry)

Let's use yours.

JERRY

Needs a new gas pump.

(CONTINUED)

28

CONTINUED:

SMOKEY

So get one.

JERRY

Then maybe I should get some more money.

SMOKEY

Get off it. We're all in even.

JERRY

Do we need any masks or anything? Disguises.

SMOKEY

Maybe. Just in case.

JERRY

Use bandanas or something.

ZEKE

Look like some goddamn cowboy?

SMOKEY

You get 'em, Zeke. Halloween masks or something like that. Crazy shit that'll make anybody forget our faces.

A car stops in front of the headquarters. Janet walks out, hands an envelope to the driver and returns indoors.

JERRY

Who's in the Buick? Duck down.

They all slouch.

ZEKE

That was that fox I was telling you about. Bald Eddie's secretary.

SMOKEY

I've seen her before. She ain't that good looking.

ZEKE

You crazy? What happened to your taste, brother? The lady's a fox.

SMOKEY

Shit, you think every chick's a fox. That bitch eats Gainesburgers.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (2)

ZEKE

Sounds like you already tried it,
brother...

Jerry watches them with increasing concern. What am I
doing here with these two clowns?

CUT TO:

29 INT. DIME STORE - DAY

Zeke walks through the toy and game section of a five-
and-dime store.

He rummages through the novelty items, selecting those
which interest him: two beanie propeller caps, eye-
glasses that go whirligig, a pair of buck teeth and an
arrow-through-the-head.

CUT TO:

30 EXT. ASSEMBLY PLANT - DAY

Jerry leaves work, lunch bucket in hand. He passes a
line of men waiting at the job application window.

Jerry puts his bucket in his car and drives off.

CUT TO:

31 EXT. ECONO-GAS - DAY

Jerry parks behind the Econo-Gas and opens his hood.

He opens his lunch pail, takes out the gas pump he's
smuggled from the plant and places it on the car fender.

CUT TO:

32 EXT. PAWN SHOP - DAY

Smokey steps out of a pawn shop and walks down the side-
walk.

SLIM, a young black leaning against a parked car, calls
to him:

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

SLIM

Smokey, my man.

SMOKEY

Hey, Slim.

SLIM

You want some watches? Got a great deal for you. Sixteen jewels, gold-plated. Made by Bulova. Over the counter, these things sell for a hundred and ten dollars.

SMOKEY

(looks at watches)

It don't say 'Bulova.'

SLIM

It's made under a different name, you know?

SMOKEY

I'll give you fifteen bucks.

SLIM

Twenty.

SMOKEY

Fifteen bucks -- for three of them.

SLIM

What kind of shit is that, brother? What kind of fool do you think I am?

Smokey starts to walk off.

SLIM

Not so fast, brother. You got a deal.

CUT TO:

33 EXT. ZEKE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jerry and Smokey wait in Jerry's car. Jerry has a pillow case tucked in his waist.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

Zeke, shutting the door behind him, tiptoes toward the car with a brown paper bag. Work gloves jut out of his back pocket.

Zeke gets in the back seat and exchanges muted greetings.

SMOKEY

Everybody set?

They nod.

SMOKEY

Synchronize your watches. It's 11:32.

Zeke and Jerry look at their barren wrists.

ZEKE

I ain't got a watch.

JERRY

Mine's broke.

Smokey opens the glove compartment and pulls out the watches he bought from Slim.

SMOKEY

You're in luck. I got a couple of great hot watches today. 16 jewels. Gold plated. Only ten bucks each.

CUT TO:

34 EXT. UNION HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Jerry cuts the headlights and pulls into an alley across from the headquarters. They watch and wait.

ZEKE

Where are they?

SMOKEY

Be cool.

ZEKE

Maybe we shoulda hit a liquor store like everybody else.

JERRY

You kiddin'? I'd never do a real robbery.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

ZEKE

What do you call this?

JERRY

Getting back.

ZEKE

Tell that to the cops.

SMOKEY

Here they come.

A patrol car passes headquarters and drives out of sight.

SMOKEY

Let's go. Put your gloves on.

Jerry starts the car and pulls out into the street.

CUT TO:

35 EXT. REAR HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Jerry parks in an alley near the rear of the headquarters. Wearing crepe-soled shoes, dark clothes and gloves, they get out and head toward the building. Smokey carries his lunch bucket; Zeke the paper bag.

Smokey jimmies the door lock and opens the rear door. He points to the thigh-level electric eye and whispers:

SMOKEY

There's the eyes.

One by one, they crawl on their hands and knees under the electric eye and enter.

CUT TO:

36 INT. UNION HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Zeke quietly closes the door behind them. Smokey flicks on his pen-light and surveys the room.

They walk slowly through the darkened offices. The thin beam of light finds the safe.

ZEKE

(sotto voce)

There she be. What a beaut...

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

CLANG! Zeke accidentally kicks over the metal waste-basket, sending its contents sprawling across the floor.

They all freeze.

JERRY

(softly)

Jesus!

SMOKEY

Take it slow.

They tiptoe over to the safe. The pen-light points out the word, "Safewell." Smokey hands Zeke the light and opens his lunch bucket. Inside is a power drill and tools.

ZEKE

You got the diagram?

Smokey hands Zeke a folded sheet of paper, removes the drill and fits a bit into it. Zeke opens the diagram and places it over the combination lock.

The paper, properly placed, has three small black dots circling the combination. By each dot are notations how deeply to drill and in what order. Zeke tapes the paper in place.

Smokey plugs the extension cord into an outlet, takes off his jacket and wraps it around the drill to muffle the sound.

Jerry, watching intently, pulls on the safe handle. It moves freely. This seems unusual.

Smokey turns on the drill and starts boring. Jerry pulls at the handle; it moves again.

JERRY

Hey, Smoke...

SMOKEY

(drilling)

What?

JERRY

I think it's open.

SMOKEY

Huh?

Jerry tries the handle again.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: (2)

JERRY

The safe. It's open.

Jerry pushes the handle and pulls the heavy door open.
The paper diagram rips in half.

SMOKEY

Holy fuck.

They silently enter the large walk-in safe. Zeke's pen-light flashes across the shelves.

The safe is empty.

JERRY

No wonder it was a knockover.
They don't keep anything here.

ZEKE

That can't be.

Zeke's light searches the safe. It contains stacks of leaflets and files. A box of political buttons. Zeke opens a white paper bag: it contains a half-eaten lunch.

JERRY

This is stupid. Let's get out.

SMOKEY

Wait. There's a safe in the corner.

Zake shines his light on a portable chest safe.

ZEKE

That must be where the money is.

JERRY

How we gonna open it?

SMOKEY

We'll torch it later.

A car stops in front of the headquarters. The motor is turned off. They freeze. And listen.

ZEKE

Who's that?

JERRY

Maybe the guard. Why's he stopping?

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: (3)

ZEKE

What time is it?

They all look at their watches.

SMOKEY

12:30.

ZEKE

I got 12:15.

JERRY

Mine's stopped.

The front door is unlocked and opened. Zeke flips off his pen-light. Smokey looks through the safe door.

An OLD SECURITY GUARD walks in and flashes his light around the room.

OLD SECURITY GUARD

Hello. Hellooo.

The Guard notices the wastebasket and sets it upright. He puts some of the waste back into the basket.

JERRY

What we gonna do?

SMOKEY

Run for it if we have to. Get the disguises.

The Guard, suspicious, walks over to a desk phone and picks up the receiver. He starts to dial.

Zeke, opening his brown paper bag, gives Jerry a disguise. Smokey holds the drill by his ear as he watches through the door. Zeke puts whirligig eyeglasses on Smokey.

The Guard dials and waits for the phone to ring. Smokey decides it's time for action. He steps out of the safe holding the power drill like a club.

The Guard looks up. This is what he sees: three men, two black, one white, walking toward him. One, a huge black man, has whirligig glasses and carries a power drill. Another, also black, has huge buck teeth and wears a propeller beanie. The third, white, has an arrow through his head.

Smokey coldcocks the Guard on the side of the head. He slumps to the floor.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: (4)

SMOKEY

Got the safe?

Zeke starts back.

JERRY

Yeah.

SMOKEY

(wraps cord
around drill)

Let's go.

CUT TO:

37 EXT. ECONO-GAS - NIGHT

Jerry's car is parked in back.

CUT TO:

38 INT. ECONO GAS - NIGHT

Jerry finishes blow-torching the safe, pulls off his goggles and opens it.

ZEKE

I hope you didn't burn everything.

JERRY

(looking in safe)

It's just more papers.

Jerry spreads the contents across a work bench. There are accounting books, a green notebook and a sealed manila envelope. The envelope is marked:

4/\$100s

20/\$20s

Smokey opens the envelope and rifles through the bills.

JERRY

This is chickenshit.

ZEKE

(looks through
papers)

There's gotta be more.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

SMOKEY
(counting bills)
Eight hundred.

ZEKE
(ironic)
At least it's grand larceny.

SMOKEY
The guard makes Assault and Battery.
A 1475.

ZEKE
Split it.

SMOKEY
There's a hundred for Charlie T,
plus 10% -- \$180.
(distributes bills)
That's six-twenty, 200 apiece.

JERRY
To think I risked my ass for this
chickenshit.

SMOKEY
Plus twenty.

ZEKE
That's to pay for the disguises.

JERRY
I need money for the gas pump.

ZEKE
We'll throw fingers. Odd man wins.

SMOKEY
One, two, three.

They throw fingers. Zeke wins.

JERRY
That wasn't fair. Zeke went
late.

SMOKEY
It was fair. What we gonna do
with the safe?

JERRY
It can't stay here.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED: (2)

ZEKE

I'll take care of it. There's a
garbage dump by my brother's place.

CUT TO:

39 INT. UNION HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Reporters cluster around Bald Eddie Johnson. He stands
near the safe with his LAWYER. Clarence Hill is in the
b.g.

BALD EDDIE

That's all I can say now. The
police are investigating.

REPORTER

How much was taken?

BALD EDDIE

We're still trying to determine
that.

REPORTER

We heard it was over \$50,000.
Is that true?

BALD EDDIE

Yes. You could say that.

CUT TO:

40 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

A mini-cam crew interviews the Old Security Guard. He
sits up in bed, a small bandage on his head.

OLD SECURITY GUARD

It was crazy. They just came
out of the safe. Two black guys
with a white one in the middle.
Like an Oreo.

TV REPORTER

What did the blacks look like?

OLD SECURITY GUARD

I really don't know. They had
disguises.

(CONTINUED)

40

CONTINUED:

TV REPORTER

What about the white man?

OLD SECURITY GUARD

(thinks)

He had an arrow through his head.

CUT TO:

41

INT. ZEKE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Zeke is looking through the Union's "green notebook" while he and Carolyn watch "Sanford and Son."

The Detroit Free Press is scattered over the sofa. A two-column headline reads: "OREO GANG" NETS 50G IN UNION THEFT.

ZEKE

(talking to TV)

Junkyard, my ass. Redd Foxx.
The black Rockefeller, that's what
he is. Cloud own a chain of
junkyards. Fucking bald, too.
How'd an ugly nigger like that
get so much money...

CAROLYN

Oh, shut up.

Something in the notebook catches Zeke's attention. He looks closer.

Several pages are filled with minute notes and figures. They seem to be in code. One page reads:

2-4-77 2500 to RG via Ben at 15%
per mon. Confirm 2-7-77
2-8-77 rec 500 from McG via Greek
outstand: 1500+1G by 2-19-77
2-19-77 15G to Lake via JJ. Total
outstand: 45G at 11% mon.
2-19-77 rec 2500 from McG via Greek.
acc. clear.

CUT TO:

42

INT. BOWLING ALLEY - NIGHT

Zeke and Jerry drink beer and watch their wives and children bowl. Carolyn and Arlene play in one lane; Bob Bartowski, Ali and Frazier Brown in the other.

(CONTINUED)

42

CONTINUED:

JERRY

Fifty fucking grand. Those fuckers would choke on the truth. They get so used to lying they can't do anything else.

Carolyn finishes her frame. Arlene selects a ball.

ZEKE

(to Carolyn)

Atta girl. Hit those pins for me, baby.

(back to Jerry)

You know that stuff we found in the safe?

JERRY

I thought you threw that out.

ZEKE

I kept a notebook. There's something funny in them.

Arlene misses her spare and calls to Zeke:

ARLENE

Zeke, it's your turn.

JERRY

(to Zeke)

Like what?

CAROLYN

(calling to Zeke)

You get a spare, we can go ahead.

Zeke motions to Jerry ("be right back") and gets up.

ZEKE

What you say, woman? A spare? This is gonna be a strike or Stevie Wonder don't need a cane.

Zeke hefts several bowling balls before he selects one.

CAROLYN

(to Arlene)

He's so goddamn slow.

ARLENE

I'm just glad we can get out once in a while.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: (2)

Zeke takes aim and bowls: three pins fall. Carolyn groans.

ZEKE

I'm just settin' 'em up.

Zeke selects another ball.

CAROLYN

Otherwise, they just go out and drink.

ARLENE

Like they say: boys that work hard got a right to play hard.

CAROLYN

We work hard too.

Zeke bowls again: two more pins tumble.

CAROLYN

Don't you aim at all?

ZEKE

Hush your mouth. I'm just gettin' warmed up.

(picks up his
beer)

White folks musta invented this game.

Jerry lines up his shot and bowls. Seven pins.

ARLENE

That's great, Jerry.

(to Carolyn)

I try not to think about it too much.

Jerry shoots again, hits a single pin and sits back down next to Zeke.

JERRY

(to Zeke)

Like what funny?

ZEKE

It's a list of loans. But they ain't regular loans. They're all at shark rates.

Carolyn bowls a strike.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: (3)

ZEKE

That's my woman!

JERRY

We better tell Smokey.

CUT TO:

43 INT. SMOKEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Smokey sits at the table reading the green notebook.
Zeke watches while Jerry paces.

SMOKEY

Shit, this ain't no big deal.

ZEKE

But it is illegal.

SMOKEY

So what ain't?

ZEKE

I mean Michigan National doesn't
charge 15% a month.

SMOKEY

Okay, so it's illegal.

ZEKE

Don't you see, blockhead? This
is what those government guys
have been talking about. Illegal
loans made from the union pension
fund.

SMOKEY

(interested)

Maybe.

ZEKE

Yeah, I thought you'd be interested.

JERRY

What do you mean?

ZEKE

We finally got them where they've
always had us -- by the balls.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

ZEKE (CONT'D)

We got what the government's looking for -- proof of the union's fucking corruption. We can throw all those bastards out -- Hill, Bald Eddie, all of 'em. Bring 'em down.

JERRY

Holy shit, we're in trouble now. They're gonna be after us. Pope couldn't save our asses now.

ZEKE

You crazy? This is our chance to change the union.

JERRY

Fuck that. This is the worst thing that could have happened to us. We gotta get rid of that book as soon as possible. Pretend it never existed.

SMOKEY

You're both fuckin' crazy.

ZEKE

What?

SMOKEY

Neither of you knows shit about how things go down.

ZEKE

I suppose you do?

SMOKEY

Why do you go to the line every Friday?

JERRY

Well...

SMOKEY

'Cause the finance man is gonna be at your house Saturday, right?

ZEKE

Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED: (2)

SMOKEY

You see, that's the way they got it set up. You gotta dig that fact. Everything the company does is meant to keep us on the line. To keep us broke with just enough money to pay last week's bills. Otherwise nobody'd be crazy enough to go back to the line. Everything they do, the way they pit lifers against the newboys, the old against the young, the black against the white, is meant to keep us in our place.

ZEKE

(taps notebook)

This'll put them in their place.

SMOKEY

Politics don't change shit. The only thing that makes any difference is money. Money makes us free. When you got money you can fuck the man, you can just take off and do what you please. You're free.

ZEKE

But I want to see those bastards busted. Especially Hill.

SMOKEY

That's your problem. You're thinking of hurting them instead of helping yourself.

JERRY

So how do we help ourselves?

SMOKEY

Blackmail. They want this book, they'll pay for it. We'll get the fifty grand those ratfuckers are getting from the insurance company.

JERRY

It's just gonna get us in more trouble.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED: (3)

ZEKE

How do you do it?

SMOKEY

Send Bald Eddie a Xerox of a page from the notebook. Tell him what we want. If he wants to pay, have him put an ad in the Free Press.

ZEKE

What if they won't pay?

SMOKEY

Then you can turn 'em in.

JERRY

Do you really think they'll pay?

SMOKEY

Let's find out.

CUT TO:

44 INT. ASSEMBLY LINE - DAY

Smokey bolts seats with a power-wrench. Dogshit Miller walks over, calling out:

DOGSBIT MILLER

Utility man!

Smokey looks up.

DOGSBIT MILLER

Smokey, we need another man over in frame welding.

SMOKEY

What happened?

DOGSBIT MILLER

Two guys on sick leave, another just passed out. Gone for the day.

SMOKEY

Sounds like I'll be doing the work of three men.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

Smokey heads for the frame welding section. Dogshit continues down the line. He spots Jerry using nasal spray:

DOGSBIT MILLER

Blow your nose on your own time,
Bartowski.

(continues walking)

Keep her moving, Flannigan.

FLANNIGAN

I'm doing my best.

DOGSBIT MILLER

Do better.

Dogshit approaches Zeke who is gluing rubber sleeves on windshields. Chicken Salad and BARNEY WARD, an old black worker, stand next to him.

DOGSBIT MILLER

Get a move on, Brown. You're
draggin'. You're always draggin'
the line.

CHICKEN SALAD

We work as fast as we can.

DOGSBIT MILLER

Did I ask you? Move it faster.

ZEKE

(working)

Get off my back.

DOGSBIT MILLER

Shut up and work, Brown. Or
you're on the street.

ZEKE

(stops)

Get off my case, Miller.

DOGSBIT MILLER

Any more lip from you, son, and
you're out of a job for two days.

ZEKE

(angry)

Get off my ass, peckerwood. I'm
warning you -- I'll break a wrench
over your goddamn head.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED: (2)

DOGSHIT MILLER

That's it. You're through.

(calling)

Super! Super! Jimmy, get the Superintendent.

(back to Zeke)

We got no time for smart-ass blacks.

No one has moved, so Dogshit heads back to find the Super himself. Barney, still working, says to Zeke:

BARNEY

You shouldn'ta said that, Zeke.
Not that you'd kill him.

ZEKE

(cold stare)

Who heard me?

CHICKEN SALAD

Not me. I didn't hear shit.
Sumabitch.

Dogshit Miller walks back with the SUPERINTENDENT. Clarence Hill follows behind.

DOGSHIT MILLER

Brown! Let's go into the Green Room.

CUT TO:

45 INT. GREEN ROOM - DAY

The Green Room is just that. The Superintendent and Dogshit sit on one side of a metal table; Zeke on the other. Clarence Hill sits in between.

ZEKE

I do my job and nobody can say different. I was my own man when I came and I'll be my own man when I leave.

DOGSHIT MILLER

Which will be soon.

Hill's job is to resolve these arguments at the lowest level possible.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

HILL

Sounds like an everyday misunderstanding to me. Now Zeke'll buy Miller a bottle of Cutty and we'll all forget it happened.

ZEKE

I ain't buying shit.
(to Hill)
And you ain't shit for a rep.

HILL

(repressing hatred)
Maybe you shouldn't be in this union.

SUPERINTENDENT

There you have it, Clarence. You can see for yourself. You can't even keep your own man in line. What I want to know is if the Union's gonna hassle us when we let him go.

HILL

The Union takes a hard line on firing. Bald Eddie will want a hearing.

ZEKE

Let's call him.

SUPERINTENDENT

We will not allow a foreman to be threatened. That's the bottom line.

DOGSHIT MILLER

Half the men carry pieces as it is.

HILL

It's really not that serious. Things just got a little out of hand. What do you say, Zeke? Do you see a way out of this?

ZEKE

He's riding me. I should get some consideration...

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED: (2)

Hill seizes this potential for compromise.

HILL
Miller'll buy Zeke the Cutty and
we'll go back to work.

Miller looks at Hill and the Super and indicates with a
gesture that he'll take care of the Scotch himself.

HILL
Okay?

SUPERINTENDENT
Okay.

ZEKE
(grudgingly)
Okay.

HILL
Good. It's forgotten then.
Shake hands and go back to work.

Neither Miller nor Zeke move to shake hands.

ZEKE
If it's forgotten, there's nothing
to shake about.

Clarence Hill stands up.

HILL
That's right. Let's get back
to the line.

CUT TO:

46 INT. ASSEMBLY LINE - DAY

Zeke rejoins Chicken Salad and Barney. Dogshit, Hill and
the Super walk off.

ZEKE
Got me a bottle of Cutty.

BARNEY
You did right, Zeke. If I didn't
have eighteen years, I woulda done
the same things.

(CONTINUED)

46

CONTINUED:

ZEKE

(starts to work)

You fuckin' hypocrite.

BARNEY

Huh?

ZEKE

(still angry)

If whitey told you to get down
on your knees and suck his thing,
what would you do? Go off in a
corner, just you and him?

BARNEY

Wha -- ?

ZEKE

You told me.

BARNEY

I-I-I'd kill him.

ZEKE

No. You already told me what
you'd do. You'd do anything to
protect your eighteen fucking
years. What makes you think your
eighteen are more important than
my seven -- your kids than mine?

Smokey has been watching with interest. He steps out
of the frame welding section and walks over.

ZEKE

(seeing Barney's
devastated look)

Ah shit, forget it, Barney. It
ain't even you I'm mad at.

Smokey walks over and pulls Zeke aside.

SMOKEY

Hey, cool it, brother. This
ain't no time to get funky.

ZEKE

What do you mean?

SMOKEY

I just saw the paper. The
Union's agreed to pay the money.

CUT TO:

47 INT. UNION CORRIDOR - AFTERNOON

The auto workers walk toward the union hall.

Jerry whispers to Smokey as they go:

JERRY

(excited)

The whole thing! They're gonna
pay the whole fifty grand?

Smokey hushes him.

JERRY

I never even seen that much money.
That's over fifteen thousand each.
At one time.

They walk into the union hall.

CUT TO:

48 INT. UNION HALL - AFTERNOON

Clarence Hill stands in front of the men. He seems more nervous than usual. Bald Eddie stands behind him.

Smokey, Zeke and Jerry do not sit together.

HILL

(reading paper)

The total was just over \$75,000.
\$75,600 to be exact.

VOICE FROM CROWD

Why's the Union got so much cash?

HILL

We were just holding it temporarily.
Somebody musta known.

ANOTHER VOICE

Why don't you protect your money?
The paper says the safe was wide
open.

HILL

That's not exactly right...

BALD EDDIE

(stepping in,
confident)

It wasn't our money, men. It was
yours. They stole your money.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED:

ZEKE

Now you're talking. How you gonna get it back?

BALD EDDIE

It was all insured.

ZEKE

But what about the guys that did it?

BALD EDDIE

Don't worry. The police'll find 'em. They owe this union some favors. In addition, we're putting up a thousand dollar reward.

Zeke looks at the others as if to say, "That's my man, Bald Eddie," and sits down.

CUT TO:

49 EXT. UNION HALL - LATE AFTERNOON

The workers stream out of the hall toward their cars. A mini-cam crew interviews them as they pass.

TV REPORTER

What do you think of the Oreo robbery?

BOBBY JOE

Who cares? No skin off my ass.

TV REPORTER

What do you care about?

BOBBY JOE

The line. What else?

HANK

(interrupting)

Yeah, why don't you tell about that? How they'd rather pay me for a broken back than fix the machine that done it?

The TV Reporter, anxious to obtain some more acceptable comments, moves on to the next worker:

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

TV REPORTER

What about you, sir?

SMOKEY

Fuck off, Jack.

TV REPORTER

And you?

CHICKEN SALAD

Sumabitch. I don't know shit.

Hank walks over.

HANK

I'll tell you what you can put
on the air. Listen to me...

Hank's voice trails off as we follow Smokey and Jerry.
They approach Smokey's red-and-white pimpmobile.

SMOKEY

We gotta think about the switch.

They get in the car.

CUT TO:

50 INT. SMOKEY'S CAR - LATE AFTERNOON

JERRY

(closing door)

I gotta get home.

Jerry suddenly notices someone sitting in the back seat.
He turns:

JERRY

Jesus! Who is he?

A small, fortyish Puerto Rican man, well dressed and composed, sits in the rear. CHARLIE T.

Jerry looks at Smokey. Smokey's face is expressionless.

CHARLIE T

My name's Hernandez.

(a beat)

Charlie T. Hernandez. Smokey
knows who I am.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

Smokey nods.

CHARLIE T

You owe me some money.

SMOKEY

It wasn't like the papers said,
Charlie T. There wasn't no fifty
grand. We paid you fair. It's
an insurance scam by the union.

CHARLIE T

I don't want to hear no stories,
Smoke. I just want my five grand.

Charlie T looks across the street at the dark blue Mark
IV and driver which wait for him.

SMOKEY

But we've got something else.
We got some stuff the union wants.
Stuff they'll pay for. You'll
get your five grand.

JERRY

Give us a couple weeks.

CHARLIE T

What kind of stuff?

JERRY

Illegal loan lists.

Charlie T's ears perk as Smokey shuts Jerry up with a jab:

SMOKEY

Just stuff.

CHARLIE T

Okay.

(a beat)

Smoke and me go way back so I'll
give you a couple weeks. Smoke
always pays his bills.

SMOKEY

The union says they'll give us
the bread. What if they don't?

CHARLIE T

You'll find it. You'll find it
even if you have to sell this car.
You know that, don't you, Smoke?

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: (2)

SMOKEY

(nods)

Yeah. I know.

CUT TO:

51 EXT. OOGIE'S PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON

Jerry, Zeke and Smokey lean against Jerry's blue Ford.
Each holds a bottle of Strohs.

ZEKE

If they're gonna claim 75 grand
from the insurance company, then
we should ask for the same.

SMOKEY

Then Charlie T will have to get
75 hundred, 'cause I don't wanna
mess with that little spic. He'll
fuck you good.

Chicken Salad and Hank walk out of the bar and wave as
they walk toward their cars.

JERRY

(waving back)

Take it easy.

They wait until Chicken Salad and Hank drive off.

ZEKE

How we gonna get the bread?

SMOKEY

I don't know.

JERRY

What the hell? I thought you had
everything figured out.

SMOKEY

Making a switch ain't easy.

ZEKE

We can use a locker at Greyhound.

SMOKEY

They'd grab us picking up the money.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

JERRY

Not if they're afraid of the book.

SMOKEY

That's what we gotta find out.
How much they want the book. Or
if they're just playing games.

ZEKE

We can rip the book in half, put
half of it in a locker and ask for
the money.

Bobby Joe staggers out of Oogie's behind two other workers.
He nods and heads toward his car. They wait until he gets
in.

SMOKEY

This ain't no good.

ZEKE

It'll work. They'll send the
key to a P.O. box.

SMOKEY

No, I mean it's no good for us to
be seen together like this. They
know the job was pulled by two
blacks and a white guy.

JERRY

What we gonna do?

SMOKEY

We'll have to talk by phone. We
stop being seen with each other.

(a beat)

Just go our own ways. If anybody
asks, we just don't hang around
together anymore.

There's a moment of silence. Each man stares at his beer,
knowing his life has just changed.

JERRY

(reflective)

That's too bad. Arlene's gonna
miss the bowling.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED: (2)

ZEKE

(detached)

You didn't take her that much
anyway.

Another moment of silence. No one wants to be the first
to leave. Finally Smokey speaks up:

SMOKEY

Well, I guess it's time to go.

Jerry affectionately slaps their palms:

JERRY

You crazy niggers take care.

ZEKE

Same to you, you crazy honky.

The three men walk in different directions to their cars.

CUT TO:

52 INT. GHETTO GARAGE - DAY

Police officers and detectives inspect a garage jam-packed with stolen merchandise. The walls are stacked with TV sets and stereos. Open boxes display cameras, typewriters and sporting goods.

A UNIFORMED OFFICER catalogues the merchandise while an ELDERLY MAN watches dispassionately. A DETECTIVE speaks to him:

DETECTIVE

Come on, Pop, who's paying your
bills?

ELDERLY MAN

I don't know nothing. I just sit
here.

The Uniformed Officer calls over:

UNIFORMED OFFICER

He just likes to watch a lot of TV.

DETECTIVE

Who hired you?

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

ELDERLY MAN

I don't know.

DETECTIVE

You better talk. This is gonna be a big rap to take alone.

CUT TO:

53 INT. POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Charlie T sits confidently. The Detective and another PLAINCLOTHESMAN stand around him.

DETECTIVE

If you'd paid the old man a decent sum, he wouldn't have cracked. We got you dead to rights.

CHARLIE T

(faking accent)

Amigo, I t'ink you got nothing, no?

PLAINCLOTHESMAN

Jesus, Charlie, would you stuff the accent?

Charlie T just shrugs.

DETECTIVE

I think you're making a mistake, Hernandez. There was a Harrington-Richardson .32 in the haul. A chrome-plated job. Ballistics says it was the gun which shot a police officer three weeks ago. He's still in the hospital.

PLAINCLOTHESMAN

The old man says you brought in the box with the revolver.

Charlie T looks worried.

DETECTIVE

That makes you an accomplice.

(CONTINUED)

53) CONTINUED:

CHARLIE T

(drops accent)

Hey, man, you know I wouldn't have anything to do with a shooting.

DETECTIVE

Do I?

PLAINCLOTHESMAN

We got you this time.

CHARLIE T

(thinks)

Okay. I admit the situation compromises me.

(a beat)

What can... What can I trade?
What do you want to know?

DETECTIVE

You ain't got nothing big enough to trade.

CHARLIE T

What do you mean, I ain't got nothing big enough to trade?
This is Charlie T you're talking to.

DETECTIVE

What you got?

CHARLIE T

I got something so big it'll blow the fuckin' lid off this town.

(smiles)

So big you'll have to hush it up.

CUT TO:

54 INT. BALD EDDIE'S OFFICE - DESK - DAY

Screen is filled with three folders from union files: those of Ezekiel Brown, Jerry Bartowski and Smokey James.

As Bald Eddie speaks off screen, his finger points to the snapshots attached to each folder:

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

BALD EDDIE (O.S.)

(points finger at
Jerry)

This one's a union man. He'll
buckle under a little pressure.

(points to Zeke)

This one's hungry. He wants a
hand on the controls.

(points to Smokey)

This bastard's a two-time loser.
He'll make us pay through the ass
forever, then fuck us for the fun
of it.

CUT TO:

55 INT: OOGIE'S - NIGHT

Smokey sits alone, nursing a beer. Drinking nearby are
TWO THUGS, white, middle-aged, heavyset like prizefighters.
One is unshaven. The other is fat.

The Unshaven Thug walks past Smokey to the wall phone.
Smokey eyes him carefully. The Thug cups the receiver
to muffle his voice.

Toward the front of the bar, a HARD HAT calls to Oogie:

HARD HAT

Where's the john?

OOGIE

(points)

In the rear. Use my name.

HANK

Yeah. You'll get a good seat.

The Hard Hat staggers past the Unshaven Thug on his way
to the john.

The Thug hangs up the phone and returns to his partner.

UNSHAVEN THUG

He's at the gas station. His
wife's at home.

FAT THUG

You know how to get there?

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

UNSHAVEN THUG

Yeah. Let's go.

They finish their beers and leave. Smokey walks over to the phone and dials.

HANK

(calling out)

Forget it, Smoke. She won't answer. She's got another man.

SMOKEY

(into phone)

Arlene?

ARLENE (V.O.)

Yes?

SMOKEY

This is Smokey James.

ARLENE (V.O.)

Oh, hi.

SMOKEY

Did you just get a call?

ARLENE (V.O.)

Yeah, from the phone company. They made a mistake.

SMOKEY

Are the kids there?

ARLENE (V.O.)

No, why?

SMOKEY

Jerry asked me to call. He just split his pants down at the station and had to take off. He wants you to drop off his extra pair.

ARLENE (V.O.)

Okay.

CUT TO:

56 EXT. JERRY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The house is mostly dark. Smokey's car is parked down the curb.

CUT TO:

57 INT. JERRY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Smokey sits alone on the sofa. A baseball bat rests at his side. The room is lit only by a table lamp.

Smokey hears a car pull up. Car doors close. Footsteps. He waits. The doorbell rings.

The bell rings again. The door opens and the two Thugs enter. They squint to see in the darkened room.

SMOKEY

(waits a moment)

You boys looking for somebody?

FAT THUG

(seeing Smokey)

I guess we got the wrong house.

SMOKEY

No, this is the right place.

Let's hear what you got to say.

The Thugs edge their way toward the door.

FAT THUG

Sorry to bother you. This is the wrong house.

The Thugs retreat out the door. Smokey gets up and follows them. The baseball bat hangs from his hand.

CUT TO:

58 EXT. JERRY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The Thugs start to run when they spot Smokey behind them.

Smokey reaches out and clips the Fat Thug across the right ankle with the baseball bat. The Thug crumples to the lawn, holding his broken ankle, groaning in pain.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED:

Smokey stalks the Unshaven Thug around the moonlit lawn. He taps the back of the Thug's legs with the bat as they walk.

SMOKEY

Who sent you?

UNSHAVEN THUG

(walking in circles)

Nobody.

SMOKEY

(prodding his legs)

You redneck cracker! Who?

The Unshaven Thug looks back at his prone partner and tries to reach him. Smokey raps his right calf.

UNSHAVEN THUG

Nobody, Mack. We just got the wrong place.

SMOKEY

(taps him harder)

I'm running outa patience.

The Unshaven Thug makes a break for it. Smokey, running behind him, breaks the man's right leg with a single, one-handed swing. The Thug falls to the ground.

UNSHAVEN THUG

(in pain)

Motherfucking coon. I'll kill you.

Smokey lifts the Louisville Slugger above his head and brings it down on the Thug's other leg with a mighty swing.

It sounds as if every bone in the man's leg shatters. The Thug yelps in pain, then passes out. His legs lie twisted at odd angles.

Smokey walks back to the Fat Thug, who, shaking with fear, pleads to Smokey with his eyes.

FAT THUG

No more, brother. No more.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED: (2)

Smokey points the bat at the Fat Thug's partner:

SMOKEY
You know he'll never walk again.
(no response)
Don't you?

FAT THUG
(nodding)
Yeah.

SMOKEY
You ready to talk yet? Who sent
you?

FAT THUG
Some union guy.

SMOKEY
What's the name?

He prods him with the bat.

FAT THUG
He didn't say.

SMOKEY
The name!

FAT THUG
Some guy who runs for Bald Eddie.

SMOKEY
That's name enough.

Dropping his bat, Smokey gently lifts the unconscious Unshaven Thug and loads him in the back seat of the Thugs' Chevrolet.

He helps the Fat Thug hobble into the driver's seat. Smokey closes the door for him.

SMOKEY
Don't drive too fast now.

The Fat Thug puts the car in gear and drives away. Smokey walks back, scoops up his Louisville Slugger and closes the front door.

Jerry and Arlene pull into the driveway and get out. Jerry, puzzled, looks at Smokey.

CUT TO:

59

INT. BALD EDDIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Zeke watches Bald Eddie behind his desk.

BALD EDDIE

I've been watching you for some time, Zeke. You remind me of myself when I was young. A little rough, a little pushy, you talk too much, but you got guts. You're just the right guy to stand up for another worker's rights. Clarence Hill's being transferred to a new plant in Ohio. I'd like you to fill in for him until the next election.

(a beat)

Now you can help make those changes you've been talking about. The pay's fifteen-four a year.

ZEKE

How much power am I gonna have?

BALD EDDIE

How much can you handle?

ZEKE

Anything you can hand out.

BALD EDDIE

If you can handle it, you can have it. This is a hard-ass outfit. We don't take slackers.

ZEKE

I'm no slacker.

BALD EDDIE

Good.

CUT TO:

60

INT. ASSEMBLY PLANT/LOCKER ROOM

Coffee break. Graffiti on one locker reads: "BREATHING HERE 40 HOURS A WEEK IS WORK ENOUGH." Two young workers share a joint.

Chicken Salad, Hank and Barney spike their coffee with Jim Beam.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

CHICKEN SALAD

These youngbloods don't even know how to eat shit. We used to get disciplined for smoking.

HANK

Three disciplines? What a joke.

BARNEY

You hear about the kid in batteries? Just walked off mid-shift. Never came back for his half-week paycheck.

HANK

And that kid Hemzacek, who's sick Mondays and Fridays? Dogshit called his doctor and the doc says, "Sure, for five bucks I'll say anything you want."

CHICKEN SALAD

Sumabitch, we oughta get a doctor like that.

CUT TO:

61 INT. ASSEMBLY PLANT/LINE - DAY

The line is quiet. Jerry and Zeke talk out of earshot of the locker room.

JERRY

What's gonna happen? I'm getting scared.

ZEKE

Don't worry, man. Charlie T's been cooled out. We won't have to go to the cops after all.

JERRY

What we gonna do with the notebook?

Zeke spots Dogshit Miller and Hill heading toward them.

ZEKE

We'll decide tonight.

Out of Jerry and Zeke's ear range, Miller says to Hill:

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

DOGSHIT MILLER

This coming Monday? Zeke's gonna
be the rep? In charge of the
whole salami?

Hill nods. Dogshit spots the workers lounging by the
lockers. He shouts to them:

DOGSHIT MILLER

What the hell's going on here?
Thirty seconds, men. Let's get
moving.

The workers trudge back to the line. Dogshit waits for
Smokey and says to him:

DOGSHIT MILLER

They need a Utility Man in paint
room number three.

CUT TO:

62 INT. ASSEMBLY PLANT/PAINT ROOM - DAY

Receiving instructions from another painter, Smokey puts
on overalls, goggles and a mask. He enters Paint Room
#3 and closes the swinging glass-paned door behind him.

A worker parks a high-low in front of the door, gets off
and walks away.

INSIDE THE PAINT ROOM, Smokey flips on the twenty-second
timer paint dial. Blue paint sprays from overhead
nozzles onto a Home on Wheels frame.

Smokey picks up a paint gun and prepares to add the final
touches.

Smokey looks back at the dial: something is wrong. The
twenty seconds have passed and blue paint continues to
spray over the frame.

He fools with the timer: the spraying continues. Excess
paint drips off the frame.

Smokey sets down his gun and pulls the manual paint
switch. This too is ineffective.

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED:

The room is growing thick with blue paint. Smokey walks to the door and pushes: the high-low blocks the door.

Ramming his body against the door, Smokey starts to panic. He turns, dashes back and hits the bright red "Emergency Alarm" button. Nothing happens.

Paint fills the room. Smokey struggles forward, emerging from the dense blueness like an arctic explorer from a snowstorm.

His body is a solid sheet of cobalt blue. He struggles to breathe.

Staggering forward, Smokey smashes his blue fists against the glass door pane.

Mustering all his strength, he crashes his bulky hand through the glass. His blue head and arm break through the glass and collapse on the yellow high-low. The glass cuts his neck and arm; red blood streams through the blue paint.

Other workers, hearing the breaking glass, rush over to help. Blue paint billows out of the room.

Someone shuts the paint nozzles off from a master control. One worker moves the high-low. Others help Smokey out of the room. He is unconscious.

Dogshit Miller, Clarence Hill and the Superintendent run over. A worker removes Smokey's mask. Smokey's face is blue; there is a black circle where the mask was. His lips and tongue are blue. He does not appear to be breathing.

WORKER

Is he dead?

DOGSHIT MILLER

Get the ambulance! Quick! Help him breathe! Give him mouth-to-mouth!

SUPERINTENDENT

Nobody's ever died in this plant.

CUT TO:

63 INT. JERRY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jerry, wearing a T-shirt, sits at the kitchen table writing checks. He separates the bills which need immediate payment from those which can be postponed.

Debby twirls her baton while her stereo blasts "Seventy-six Trombones" from the bedroom.

CUT TO:

64 INT. LIVING ROOM

Arlene and Bob watch "The Jeffersons." During a station break, Arlene walks into the kitchen, CAMERA FOLLOWING.

JERRY

Arlene, come here a minute.

(to Debby)

Could you turn that down, honey?

Daddy's trying to work.

Debby smiles through her new braces:

DEBBY

Am I good, Daddy?

JERRY

You're beautiful, honey. You really are.

ARLENE

(to Debby)

That's right, honey. Now why don't you practice in your room?

DEBBY

(twirls off)

Okay.

JERRY

I thought you were going to go up to Manistee and see your mother?

ARLENE

(confused)

That was this summer. We didn't have the money.

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

JERRY

I've been thinking about it.
Maybe you ought to go. Take
the kids. They need a vacation.

ARLENE

(sitting down)

What are you talking about? The
children are in school.

Jerry sets his ball-point down and stares at her:

JERRY

You know what I'm talking about.

(a beat)

I want you and the kids to get
out of town for a while. Go to
Manistee. Take the bus.

ARLENE

What's going on?

JERRY

Something funny with the union.
I don't think you should be here.

ARLENE

This doesn't have to do with
Smokey James' death, does it?

(Jerry nods "yes")

You didn't have anything to do
with that, did you?

JERRY

No.

ARLENE

Then what is it?

JERRY

I can't tell you.

CUT TO:

65 EXT. ZEKE'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Jerry motions and Zeke walks out onto the porch with him.

ZEKE

What is it?

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

They walk to the corner of the porch and sit on the railings. Ali and Frazier are bouncing on a stack of discarded mattresses in the vacant lot next door.

JERRY

We both know Smokey was murdered.
It wasn't no fucking accident
like the company says.

Zeke silently agrees.

JERRY

What are we gonna do about it?

ZEKE

Nothing can help Smokey now.

JERRY

(reluctantly)

Our friend's been killed. We
hafta expose the union, like
you said.

ZEKE

It's not that simple.

JERRY

What do you mean?

ZEKE

We can't expose them without
going to jail ourselves.

JERRY

What about the notebook?

Zeke's voice is cold, hard, serious:

ZEKE

I said it wasn't that simple.
Things've gotten complicated.

JERRY

You mean you don't have the
notebook?

ZEKE

Our local is on the edge of a
revolution. There's gonna be
some big changes. We're gonna
shake it up, Jerry. I've been
waiting for this all my life.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: (2)

JERRY

Jesus, you gave it to them.

Next door, Ali yelps as Frazier wallops him.

ZEKE

Frazier! Cut that out! Don't
be beatin' on your brother.

(to Jerry)

There was nothing really illegal
in it. Well, illegal but not
wrong. The union was just trying
to make more money for the workers.

JERRY

You dumb asshole, You think those
bastards'll let you change
anything? They just bought you
off with a promotion.

ZEKE

No. They may think they bought
me off, but they bought a stick
of dynamite. I'm gonna tear hell
in this union.

JERRY

What about Smokey?

ZEKE

Dogshit Miller's being fired for
negligence.

JERRY

That don't mean shit.

ZEKE

Look, sucker. What's better?
Going to the pen for a cat who's
already dead or staying free so
you can make some real changes?
I stopped being a virgin years
ago.

JERRY

Fuck changes. Fuck your
revolution. I'm looking out
for number one. What's in it
for me?

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: (3)

ZEKE

What do you want? They never
woulda paid us.

JERRY

The union gets the notebook.
You get promoted to a soft job...
(Zeke objects)
... okay, you get the chance to
change things. But what do I get?

ZEKE

They need a foreman to replace
Dogshit Miller.

JERRY

I get screwed. That's all I know.

ZEKE

Play it smart. With you as
foreman and me as Rep, we'll
rip that place apart.

Jerry looks away, disbelieving.

CUT TO:

66 EXT. MacARTHUR BRIDGE - DAY

MacArthur Bridge leads from Detroit to Belle Isle. Jerry
stands alone at the railing, smoking and looking out
across the river.

In the background, a car stops on Belle Isle and a man
gets out. He walks slowly toward Jerry.

Jerry watches him a moment, then looks away.

John Burrows walks up and stands next to Jerry.

BURROWS

Hello, Bartowski.

Jerry flips his cigarette into the river.

BURROWS

The shit's coming down. I suppose
you know that. We didn't find out
until after the union did. The
Detroit Police don't keep secrets
very well.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED:

Jerry doesn't answer.

BURROWS

Why didn't you come to me first?
I could have prevented all this.

JERRY

I didn't have anything to do
with it.

BURROWS

You can still help us get the
info on Bald Eddie.

JERRY

I got nothing to sell. I helped
steal a notebook. I heard some
conversations. I saw an industrial
accident. Only two people can back
me up. One's dead. The other's a
Union Rep.

BURROWS

Let us worry about that. We'll
piece it together.

JERRY

What do I get out of it?

BURROWS

A suspended sentence.

JERRY

Big fucking deal. How do I protect
my family?

BURROWS

You got no choice now. I'm the
only one that can protect you
or your family.

Jerry looks across the river toward Windsor.

JERRY

Maybe I'll go to Canada. It
can't be any worse there.

BURROWS

They'll find you wherever you go.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (2)

JERRY

I can take care of myself.

BURROWS

Can you? Is that why you carry
that .38?

(pokes at the revolver
in Jerry's waist)

Face it. You're one man all alone.

JERRY

I won't help you, Burrows. I'd
let them kill me before I turned
stoolie.

CUT TO:

67 INT. JERRY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jerry lies in bed alone. He hears a NOISE and bolts
upright. His eyes search the darkness.

Jerry gets out of bed. He wears his jeans.

He opens the closet and takes out a shotgun case. He
removes his Winchester 12-gauge and places two shells
into the chambers.

CUT TO:

68 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jerry lies on the sofa fully dressed. His shotgun rests
by his side.

He listens for the slightest noise.

CUT TO:

69 EXT. OOGIE'S PARKING LOT - EVENING

Jerry gets out of his car and locks it. He makes sure
his .38 is in place under his jacket.

Glancing in each direction, he walks toward the bar.

CUT TO:

70 INT. OOGIE'S - NIGHT

Jerry enters and walks toward the rear. Several workers greet him but he doesn't answer.

He sits with his back to the wall.

Doris brings a beer and bourbon. He pays her. The juke-box plays Merle Haggard: "Got laid off at the factory and their timing's not the greatest in the world."

Jerry scans the bar for new or suspicious faces. He thinks he sees TWO MEN looking at him.

He overhears some bar talk:

CHICKEN SALAD

How'd he ever get to be Rep? Just tell me that?

AUTO WORKER

You know how it is, they got to give these blacks whatever they want.

CHICKEN SALAD

However he got it, he sure likes it.

Jerry gets up and walks over to the wall phone. He dials, waits, then drops a handful of change into the machine.

After a moment, the line rings and a woman's voice answers. In the background there's the sound of "Seventy-six Trombones."

JERRY

(into phone)

Arlene? It's me.

ARLENE (V.O.)

Turn that down, Debby. Hi, how are you?

JERRY

How are you?

ARLENE (V.O.)

Fine.

JERRY

Is there anything unusual?

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

ARLENE (V.O.)

Like what?

JERRY

Salesmen or guys hanging around
or anything?

ARLENE (V.O.)

No.

JERRY

Where are the kids?

ARLENE (V.O.)

They're here.

JERRY

Don't let them go out alone.

ARLENE (V.O.)

What's wrong?

JERRY

I think they're following me.

ARLENE (V.O.)

Who?

Jerry's eyes continue to scan the bar.

JERRY

I'm the only one left, Arlene.
I'm the only one who knows what
went down. About the notebook,
the loans, Smokey's death, how
Zeke got his job. Everything
will be okay when I'm dead.

ARLENE (V.O.)

(urgent)

Where are you now?

JERRY

At the bar. I'm afraid to go
home.

ARLENE (V.O.)

Call the police right now.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED: (2)

JERRY

I'm not a brave man, Arlene. I
can't take them all on.

ARLENE (V.O.)

Can't you get a job like Zeke did?

JERRY

Yeah, but I don't trust them.

ARLENE (V.O.)

If you just keep quiet, won't they
leave you alone?

JERRY

I don't see how they can.

TIME CUT: It's closing time. 2:15. The crowd has
thinned out.

OOGIE

Drink it up, fellas. Time to go.

Jerry finishes his beer. The late-nighters straggle
out. The suspicious Two Men are gone.

DORIS

(to Jerry)

Com'on, Jerry. What's wrong?
Got troubles with the wife again?

Jerry nods goodbye to Doris and Oogie and walks out of
the bar.

CUT TO:

71 EXT. OOGIE'S PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jerry pulls his pale blue Ford out of Oogie's.

CUT TO:

72 EXT. DETROIT - NIGHT

Jerry drives through the lonely streets. A blue-and-
white D.P.D. car passes.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

Jerry notices a car in the rear view window. He turns; the car turns with him.

He looks again: it's another Detroit Police cruiser.

Jerry tries to shake the blue-and-white. He takes one sharp turn after another. The police car follows.

He unzips his jacket, revealing his revolver.

Jerry simultaneously cuts his lights and guns his car down a dark side street.

The D.P.D. cruiser passes by.

Jerry emerges from an alley, flips on his headlights and turns onto the street.

He looks into the rear-view mirror: two more headlights.

Jerry slows for a stoplight. The car behind him is a beat-up red Chevy.

The red Chevy pulls up beside Jerry. The Two Suspicious Men from Oogie's sit in the front seat.

The second man picks something up. Jerry sees the glint of a rifle barrel.

Jerry guns his car forward. He speeds through one red light, then another. The red Chevy stays on his tail.

Jerry pulls out his .38 and holds it in his right hand as he grasps the steering wheel.

The red Chevy draws closer.

Ahead Jerry spots another car on the empty Detroit streets: the blue-and-white D.P.D. cruiser. It pulls out from a cross street.

< Jerry hits the brakes and cuts the wheel. His Ford squeals and spins, sliding broadside into the police car. The D.P.D. OFFICERS are frightened at first.

— The Two Men in the red Chevy, seeing Jerry hit the cop car, execute a quick U-turn and drive the other direction.

Jerry pursues them. The Two Men in the Chevy are his proof the union's trying to kill him.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED: (2)

Jerry's Ford pursues the Chevy. The police car pursues Jerry.

The three cars squeal through Detroit's dark downtown streets.

The Two Men in the Chevy now try to elude Jerry. They cannot.

In the damaged D.P.D. car, the Officers radio ahead for assistance.

Ahead of the Chevy, a second blue-and-white appears. The red Chevy squeals sharply right.

A D.P.D. roadblock awaits the Chevy. The Two Men try to smash through it, but their car spins and crashes into a building.

Jerry's Ford piles into the rear of the Chevy. The pursuing cruiser screeches to a halt.

Officers, guns drawn, swarm over the damaged cars.

Policemen pull the Two Men out of the Chevy and handcuff them. One officer takes their rifle.

Another officer rips the .38 out of Jerry's hand and throws him against the side of his car. A second officer handcuffs Jerry's hands behind him.

JERRY

(frightened)

I want to confess a robbery.

POLICEMAN

You gotta hear your rights.

JERRY

I want to confess a robbery. But I'll only talk to an FBI agent named John Burrows.

CUT TO:

73 EXT. ASSEMBLY PLANT - DAY

An unmarked FBI car pulls up in front of the Home of Wheels plant.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED:

An FBI AGENT opens the rear door for Jerry. Two agents walk on either side of Jerry.

Jerry passes the "Job Application" line. The job-seekers stare coldly at him.

Jerry walks with the agents into the plant.

CUT TO:

74 INT. ASSEMBLY PLANT - DAY

Jerry and the FBI agents walk along the line. The auto workers glance at them. Bobby Joe is the new foreman:

BOBBY JOE

Keep it rolling, men. This ain't
no floor show.

Some workers mumble as Jerry passes:

JENKINS

Asshole scab.

CHICKEN SALAD

Big man.

HANK

Stoolie.

Jerry enters the locker room and, as the agents wait, stuffs his things into a gym bag.

Zeke is waiting for Jerry when he returns. Jerry walks past him, saying nothing.

ZEKE

(to Jerry's back)

I'd hate to live in your shoes,
you scum fink.

Jerry stops and turns. Someone hits the button: the line stops.

BOBBY JOE

Who hit the button?

Everyone ignores him. They all watch Jerry and Zeke step closer to each other, each boiling over with hatred.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED:

JERRY

I see they finally fixed your locker, Zeke.

ZEKE

You don't give a fuck about your fellow workers, do you, Polack? Just save your own ass.

JERRY

Hey, coon, you double-crossed me. You tried to get me killed.

ZEKE

Do anything to keep outa jail. Sell your white ass to the police.

JERRY

I ain't the one that sold out, you nigger-shit.

ZEKE

Fuck you, whitey. You're just another white boy looking out for hisself, don't give a fuck about anybody else.

JERRY

You goddamn nigger!

ZEKE

I ain't forgettin' you, honky! You gonna have to move to another city, hide your children...

JERRY

Nigger! Nigger! Nigger!

ZEKE

... asshole whitey! Whitey!

Ramming close to him, Jerry knees Zeke in the balls.

Zeke buckles over, then leans back and belts Jerry in the face. Blood streams from Jerry's nose.

Jerry reaches down and picks up a wrench.

Zeke hauls back and throws another punch.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED: (2)

Jerry swings the wrench full force at Zeke's skull.

The workers and FBI agents pull at the two men, trying to restrain them.

An anonymous voice calls out:

VOICE (O.S.)

Kill 'im!

Zeke and Jerry's eyes burn with hate. Their bodies lunge toward each other.

FREEZE FRAME. Jerry's wrench is poised above Zeke's skull. Zeke's fist is frozen a bare two inches from Jerry's bloodied face.

The workers' faces are frozen in contorted anger.

Smokey's disembodied voice speaks over the frozen frame:

SMOKEY (V.O.)

'Everything they do, the way they
pit the lifers against the newboys,
the old against the young, the black
against the white, is meant to keep
us in our place.'

The image slowly fades out.

THE END