

"CITY ISLAND"

by

Raymond De Felitta

INT. NORTH JERSEY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY DAY

A dank and cheerless cell-block. Two Correctional Officers examine the cells, making sure all inmates are present. One of the officers is middle-aged, tough but not scary-tough. This is VINCENT RIZZO.

Vince Rizzo calls out the names of the prisoners as they pass the cells.

VINCE
Nakovny...Napperfork...Nardella...

This last name makes him pause. He stops and stares into the cell at a YOUNG INMATE who glowers back.

VINCE (V.O.)
You asked me my worst secret. My most personal secret. The secret of all my secrets. I get it.

Vince stares at the young man named Nardella. And then, reluctantly, moves on.

VINCE (V.O.)
But first...I'm Vince Rizzo and I want to begin by telling you about where I live.

CREDIT SEQUENCE

1. EXT. CITY ISLAND THE BRONX DAY

Boats in the harbor. Sunlight glinting off the water. Old clapboard houses set in what appears to be a genuine fishing village. All with a view of Manhattan.

VINCE (V.O.)
City Island is a fishing village, located in the Bronx, New York, a place most people associate with machete's, chop-shops, the Son of Sam, gang warfare and the once great New York Yankees.

SHOTS OF FAMILIES LEAVING THEIR HOUSES FOR WORK

VINCE (V.O.)
The Bronx is all these things. But it is also home to the families that are the infrastructure of the greatest city in the world—the fireman, the cab-drivers, the sanitation workers, the secretaries, the teachers and the cops. And the guys who work in our local prisons. Like myself

MORE SHOTS OF CITY ISLAND

The locals opening their shops in the morning, bidding each other a good day.

VINCE (V.O.)

Now: City Island is distinct from the rest of the Bronx by virtue of being located on it's own two lane spit, right in the middle of the Sound. Most people don't believe it until they see it. And within the one square mile that comprises all there is of City Island lies another distinction. That of the muscle-sucker versus the clam digger.

SHOTS OF THE BOAT WORKERS IN THE HARBOR

VINCE (V.O.)

The 'muscle-sucker' is an island resident who moved here from somewhere else. The 'clam-digger', however, was born and bred on City Island, preferably in the same house that's been handed down through the generations. Myself, I'm a clam-digger. There's quite a few of us. Houses don't go up for sale here everyday. My grandparents built our house in 1924. My dad grew up here. So did I. My kids did too. And this goes to the heart of why it matters so much to a clam-digger to be what he is and not some mussel-sucker.

2. EXT. RIZZO HOUSE DAY

The Rizzo family home at the end of the cul-de-sac, which sits on the water. Quaint, but not well kept. A Jeep and a Dodge Rambler sit on the ill-kept front lawn.

VINCE (V.O.)

Because we represent family, continuity, stability. And in the Bronx-hell, in the world as we know it--these qualities are in increasingly short supply. In short, the world can be divided between clam-diggers and mussel suckers. Those who stay, and those who wander. But I digress. You asked me my worst secret. My most personal secret. The secret of all my secrets. Well...like most of us, I guess I have a few.

From an upstairs side-window, we see SMOKE. Not billowing or threatening, just gently emerging from the window.

3. INT. RIZZO HOUSE DAY

JOYCE RIZZO is getting dressed in a hurry. Great body. Savvy eyes. Men of a certain generation would call her foxy. Morning news blares from a television. The bedroom is small and unkempt.

JOYCE
Vince! You fall in or something--what are you doin' in there?

VINCE (o.s.)
Shower!

Joyce makes a jerk-off motion.

JOYCE
I need the blow-dryer.

No response. She goes to the bathroom door and bangs.

4. INT. BATHROOM

Although the shower is running, VINCE RIZZO is NOT showering. He is smoking a cigarette, leaning against the tiny window and carefully blowing the smoke out. On his face, bemusement. As Joyce knocks--

VINCE
Christ.

He carefully stashes his cigarette on the ledge, grabs the blow-dryer and opens the door a crack, offering it.

She grabs it.

5. INT. HALLWAY/BEDROOM

Joyce. As she moves down the hall she yells--

JOYCE
Vinnie! You ready for your test today?

6. INT. VINCE JR.'s ROOM

VINCE JR., seventeen, is skinny, all elbows and angst. He surfs the web for porn. We see quick flashes of breasts, legs, asses.

VINCE JR.
Uh, yeah. Just about.

JOYCE

Go out and start my car. I'll be five minutes.

He stands up and backs away from the internet, not taking his eyes off it as he leaves his room.

7. EXT. RIZZO HOUSE

Vince Jr. exits the house, backpack slung over his shoulder, leans into Joyce's jeep and starts it up.

Across the street an OBESE WOMAN is leaving. She's over three-hundred pounds but carries herself well, even proudly. She waves at Vince Jr.

OBESE WOMAN

Morning.

He watches as she maneuvers herself into a small Honda and drives away. Vince Jr. stares as the little car disappears up the street.

8. INT. RIZZO'S BEDROOM

Joyce is almost done with her hair. Vince enters in a robe. Now we see him clearly for the first time.

Vince Rizzo is forty-ish. He is very much here and very much somewhere else simultaneously. Distraction is his mode. His face which is a perfect poem of puzzlement. As he dresses--

JOYCE

Call Vivian, will ya'? Find out what train she's taking.

VINCE

She staying over?

JOYCE

Spring Break. She's here all week. I thought we'd go out for Mexican tonight--

VINCE

Poker game.

JOYCE (rolls her eyes)

Your daughter's home from college and all you can think about is--

VINCE

She's here all week! Just make an early dinner and don't let's start.

JOYCE

And this summer, Vince? You are finishing that garage room and adding another bathroom—even if we gotta get you back on night shift to afford it!

The slamming of the door as Joyce exits ends the conversation. Vince looks at himself in the mirror.

His eyes seem to ask: is this a *bad* marriage?

9. INT. VINCE'S DODGE RAMBLER

Vince sits in traffic on the New Jersey Turnpike. He punches his cellular. A moment later---

VIVIAN (O.S.)

Hi dad.

VINCE

Hey sweetheart. How's our future college grad?

VIVIAN (O.S.)

S'fine. Whatever. What's up?

VINCE

Well, your mom wants to know what you want to do all week?

VIVIAN (O.S.)

All week?

VINCE

Yeah, your spring break.

VIVIAN (pause, then--O.S.)

Oh. Right.

VINCE

You got other plans? D'you forget?

VIVIAN (O.S.)

No. Course not. I just have work and--

VINCE

Bring your books with you. Take the six o'clock. I'll pick you up.

VIVIAN (O.S.)

You don't have to!

He almost rear-ends a car. But he slams on the breaks and loses his phone. When he picks it up off the floor--

VINCE
Hello? Christ.

Vivian's gone. Vince crushes his cigarette out and lights another.

10. EXT. BRONX SCIENCE HIGH SCHOOL

Joyce's car pulls up. Vince Jr. gets out. Joyce scrawls her signature on a piece of paper and hands it to him.

JOYCE
Write whatever, I don't have time.

She drives off. Vince Jr. waits a beat, watching her go. Once she's gone, he rummages through his bag again and peers in.

A pack of Marlboro Lights and a bic at the ready. He sets his mother's "note" on fire and lights a cigarette with it.

11. INT. JOYCE'S CAR

Joyce drives into the city. She reaches into her purse. A pack of Camel lights and a bic at the ready! She lights up her first smoke of the day and exhales gustily.

12. EXT. NORTH JERSEY STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILIT

Vince's Rambler pulls into the officials gate. He parks and gets out, hustling from the car to the building chain lighting one cigarette with the next.

13. EXT. BRONX SCIENCE HIGH SCHOOL

Vince Jr. looks around and sees--

A CHUBBY TEENAGE GIRL SITTING ON THE STEPS

This is CHERYL. Vince Jr. walks over.

VINCE JR.
Hey, Cheryl. What's the matter?

CHERYL (not looking up)
Don't feel well. I'm going home.

VINCE JR.
What's wrong?

CHERYL

It's this new diet I'm on. Cabbage soup
and lentils. My stomach is, like, exploding.
(then, looks at him sourly)
I can't believe you smoke. Gross.

VINCE JR.

Wanna do something? I'm not going to
class today.

CHERYL

Like what?

VINCE JR.

I don't know. Maybe get some doughnuts?

CHERYL

Oh, nice. Just make a fat joke. Creep.

Cheryl gets up and marches away. Vince Jr. stares at her,
bemused at her reaction. Then he walks the other way.

14. INT. JERSEY CORRECTIONAL DAY

Morning roll call. Vince--in uniform--walks with another
guard, MATT CRUNIFF. Vince yells out names as Matt Cruniff
inspects cells. (After every name we hear a GRUNT.)

VINCE

Hall! Hammett! Hansky! Hattford!

MATT

Morning ladies!

VINCE

Holurud! Hunt! Innersby! Issacs!

15. INT. LAW FIRM DAY

Joyce Rizzo works the phones. This is her gig.

JOYCE

Partrige, Amis, Pruitt and Van Helfen--
he's at lunch, would you like voicemail?

She patches through without waiting for an answer. Takes
her headset off and leaves. She hits another secretary's
desk. Her name is TANYA.

JOYCE

He played poker again last night.

As she walks away, Tanya bails her station, eagerly.

TANYA
Wait! Joyce, wait!

16. INT. JERSEY CORRECTIONAL DAY

Panning the faces of the prisoners as they grunt after their names are called.

VINCE
Nadler! Nakovny! Nardella!

After this last grunt, a slight pause. Vince looks at the prisoner named: TONY NARDELLA

Twenty-one years of age. Dark hair. Brooding good looks. He stares sullenly back at Vince. A beat. Then Vince continues with-

VINCE
Neirhoff! Nieman! Nosotrolanos!

Nardella's eyes follow Vince warily. Then he looks away.

17. EXT. OFFICE BUILDING DAY

Joyce and Tanya smoke it up on the plaza in front of their building.

JOYCE
I checked his pockets. No money--and I figure Vince for a loser at cards. So he might really be playing poker.

TANYA
I remember my Bernie's poker-game. Jamie-Lee. From Arkansas. Still hard to believe anyone other than Bill Clinton coming from Arkansas.

JOYCE
Besides, Vince isn't really the cheating type. You know? I mean, that takes energy, planning.

TANYA
You yourself told me it's been a year since you've had sex.

JOYCE (thinks, shakes her head)
Yeah, but Tanya, a year without sex in a long marriage, that's like a coffee break.

TANYA

Okay. So, how come the poker game is always when he's pissed off at you?

JOYCE

Good, but not positive proof. I gotta theory that most guys don't bother to cheat cause it's too much trouble. They like the sex up here—

(she points to her head)

--more than...you know. And honestly? What's the difference? After awhile, marriage is really just about running a business.

TANYA

Sooo empowered.

JOYCE

Shut up.

TANYA

Joyce—hello? My husband sharing with somebody else what he is legally bound to only share with me? And expecting me to believe he's playing poker?

(pause, then simply)

Even if it were a better lie, I'd kill him. And her.

Tanya smokes her cigarette. Joyce looks away.

JOYCE

Is that what you did to Jamie-Lee?

TANYA

Worse. I let her keep Bernie.

***18.INT. CORRECTIONS OFFICE**

Vince and Matt behind a desk in the strictly basics office they share. Vince reads a tattered paperback: "BRANDO: A LIFE".

MATT

So. Playing "poker" tonight?

He makes "quote" signs and smiles knowingly. Vince shoots him a look.

VINCE

It's not what you think, Matt.

(back to paperwork)

Who the new guys?

MATT

Del Boga--transferred from Upstate.
And uh--Nardella.

VINCE (pause, then)

Lemme see his sheet.

Matt tosses Vince a short stack of papers. In bold letters:

NARDELLA, ANTHONY---

*Transfer--Camden State. B: 8/12/84 Camden, N.J.
COUNT THREE-GRAND THEFT AUTO DRUG FELONY
POSSESSION MAXIMUM OFFENDER Approved-- board of
parole.*

Next to this is:

A MUGSHOT OF TONY NARDELLA

Facing front and profile. Vince examines it.

MATT

Grand Theft Auto, ounce a'coke, intent
to sell. Done three of five at Southcourt.
They laid him off on us--overcrowding.

VINCE (reading)

"Parole...provisional release to closest
living relative..."

MATT

Coulda done thirty days on the outside if
he'd had any family to claim his sorry
grand theft ass. Instead he's gotta wait out
the rest of his time...

VINCE

Hm. S'tough.

MATT (shrugs)

He'll get out eventually. Then
he gets to boost another Ferrari.

VINCE (reading the sheet)

Says it was an Impala.

Vince's eyes: something odd running through his brain.

18. OMIT

19. EXT. PRISON

Vince steps outside for a smoke. He punches his cellular. A moment later---

VIVIAN (O.S.)
Hi dad.

VINCE
Hey sweetheart. How's our future college grad?

19A. INT. LOCKER ROOM

Vivian Rizzo is opening her locker and getting what appears to be a workout outfit out of her backpack.

VIVIAN
S'fine. Whatever. What's up?

VINCE (o.s.)
Well, your mom wants to know what you want to do all week?

VIVIAN
All week?

19B. INTERCUT VINCE AND VIVIAN

Vince blowing the smoke away from the phone so as not to be heard...Vivian getting her clothes out.

VINCE
Yeah, your spring break.

VIVIAN
Oh. Right.

VINCE
You got other plans? D'you forget?

VIVIAN
No. Course not. I just have work and--

VINCE
Bring your books with you. Take the six o'clock. I'll pick you up.

VIVIAN
You don't have to!

VINCE
I want too! Call and tell me what bus you catch. I love you.

VIVIAN
Love you too.

Hang ups. Pull back from Vivian. The locker room is populated by attractive young women in thongs, bras, outfits that don't seem...collegiate. A bouncer pokes his head in.

BOUNCER
Noon shift. You're on.

Vivian hustles into her "work outfit" and walks out into the

19C. INT. HELL'S HALF ACRE MAIN ROOM

Main area of a strip club. As she walks she talks with a fellow stripper named EZMALIA, an eastern European...

EZMALIA
You look happy.

VIVIAN
I'm losing a whole weekend full of shifts. Forgot about "spring break."

EZMALIA
What's with you and Spring break? Take a vacation like the other kids.

VIVIAN
I need the money.

As the two girls climb the stage and get to work on the poles,

EZMALIA
You young girl—alone. How much money you need?

VIVIAN
You tried going to college in America?

EZMALIA
You tried financial aid?

VIVIAN
You tried keeping your scholarship to a Catholic University after being caught with a kilo of the sticky Hawaiian?

EZMALIA
You were a dealer?

VIVIAN

I was holding. They suspended me and cut off my funds. I can go back next semester but I have to pay full tuition.

Ezmalia nods towards Vivian's large chest.

EZMALIA

How much for those?

VIVIAN

Welcome to America. Takes money to make money.

20. INT. PENN STATION

Sad Penn, with its Pizza and Doughnut dives. Vince is waiting at a gate, watching passengers pour off a train.

Finally-

VIVIAN

a bag in her hand. This is a different Vivian. Her hair is up in a bun, her clothes are conservative--khaki's, sweater and glasses. Vince's eyes: he adores his 'little girl'. Father and daughter hug.

VINCE

I'm double parked on thirty-fifth street.

VIVIAN

You didn't have to come. I coulda taken the express bus.

21. INT. VINCE'S DODGE RAMBLER

Chugging up the West Side Highway, heading for the Cross Bronx. Fat Friday Traffic. 1010 WINS blares traffic reports from the car radio.

VINCE

You bring your books?

VIVIAN

Um--no.

VINCE

You don't gotta study or nothin'?

VIVIAN

S'fine. Whatever, dad.

VINCE
I don't want you fallin' behind in--

VIVIAN
Stop, dad.

VINCE
What? I'm only concerned--

VIVIAN (yells, pointing ahead)
STOP DAD!

She means the car. They rear-end the car in front of them.

22. EXT. RIZZO'S HOUSE NIGHT

The Rambler pulls up onto the lawn, it's front grill badly dented.

As Vince and Vivian get out of the car, Joyce appears in the doorway, looking at the car.

JOYCE
Great Vince. Beautiful. Thing of beauty.

VINCE
Ah, shut-up.

Vivian looks like she's ready to go back to "college."

23. INT. DINING ROOM

The Four Rizzo's eat. Vince Jr. stares off at a television set in the other room, playing TVLAND.

JOYCE (to Vivian)
Bloomie's havin' a sale in Pelham.
We should go tomorrow.

VIVIAN
Yeah. Sure.

JOYCE
I can take off a day or two next week--
maybe we'll go to the Botanical Gardens.
Vinnie's been wanting to go.

VINCE JR. (frowns)
I what?

JOYCE
To the Botanical Gardens.

VINCE JR. (makes face)
 My face mom. It's like: botanical
 gardens? Maybe a tour of the ziplock
 bag factory would be more interesting?

VIVIAN
 Shut up, Vince—

VINCE JR.
 'Shut up Vince'—'you shut up'—
 'no way'—'way!'

She whacks his arm. Not hard. He recoils in fake pain.

VINCE JR.
 Ahh! Christ--my heart!

VINCE
 Hey, hey, enough.

VIVIAN
 When's he leaving this phase of his
 dopey adolescence?

JOYCE
 Never. He's gonna stay in high school
 forever cause he's too smart to take
 any of his classes seriously.

VINCE JR.
 What for--to get an "A"? Wow, I got
 an "A". Five more "A's" and I'll have
 a "Four point O." Letters and numbers.
 All so I can grow up and be another
 meaningless--

JOYCE (jumps in)
 Prison guard like your father who didn't
 go to college either.

VIVIAN
 Oh mom, real nice.

VINCE (eats, pause, then)
 Know what else happens if you don't go to
 college? You wind up with a wife who answers
 phones for a goddam living!

JOYCE
 I went to Oneonta—

VINCE

For two years, big deal. Not exactly
a Harvard Degree there, is it?

Vince Jr. is watching the mounting argument like a
spectator.

JOYCE

If I hadn't gotten pregnant--

VIVIAN

Great mom, so I spoiled your college degree--

JOYCE

You didn't spoil anything. I only said
that if I hadn't had you I woulda--

Suddenly Vince stands. Throws his napkin down.

JOYCE

Where you goin'?

VINCE

Poker game.

He slams the door. Silence at the table.

24. INT. MALAKOV ACTING STUDIO

Twenty or so people--mostly under thirty. MICHAEL MALAKOV, a
bushy black-haired clad-in-black acting teacher, is watching
an emotional scene being performed by two young actors, a
MALE and FEMALE.

MALE ACTOR

...take it all, I don't want it with
conditions! Take the house--

FEMALE

Grandad's house! I WANT IT TO BURN.

Sitting in the back, off to himself, is Vince. He is as
out of place as he feels. He clutches a copy of "An Actor
Prepares" as if holding onto a security blanket.

Calmly Michael Malakov interrupts.

MALAKOV

Let me stop you right there.

The actors freeze. This is not good.

MALAKOV

Indication is no substitution for articulation. I'm feeling a lot of different emotions, but not one specific choice. And too much food on the table leaves the hungry man starving with indecision. It also creates a dramatic vacuum which, once entered, is very hard to disengage from. Our favorite number? One. One premise, one emotion, one action, one result, one step at a time.

Pause. The two actors nod.

FEMALE ACTOR

Thank you.

Pause. The students applaud. When they're done—

MALAKOV

Everybody stand...stretch...thank Mr. Strasberg...

THE CLASS

Thank you, Mr. Strasberg.

MALAKOV

And before you go, here is your assignment. Stand in a row on stage. Quick, hurry!

The students jump on to the stage and form a row.

MALAKOV

Now twist into a semi-circle... Keep going until you are each face to face with another of your species...and meet the person who stands across from you.

People smile, shake hands. Vince is standing across from a wondrously alluring woman named MOLLY CHARLESWORTH. She speaks with exaggerated formality.

MOLLY

Molly Charlesworth. A pleasure.

VINCE

Yeah. Vince Rizzo.

She smiles at him. He looks away, uncomfortably.

MALAKOV

Your assignment for next week is: share the worst secret of your life with each other. The most personal secret. The secret

of all your secrets. You can do so without fear of intimacy issues or any of that bullshit because you are, in fact, protected by the Statute of Actors Limitations to wit: actors can keep secrets like nobody else because only they have secrets that are even more damaging.

(laughter from the class)

What will you do with your new friend's secret? You will use it to find the courage to dramatize the telling of *your own worst secret*. The very thing that you right now are hiding and protecting with your very *life* will soon become a monologue for all of us to hear. I look forward to a litany of devastation next Friday, after which we'll all drink too much and applaud ourselves at the West Bank.

Class is over. Vince and Molly look at each other, wide-eyed.

MOLLY

I'd love to be drunk before we do this, but the chance of a blackout and the resulting loss of memory precludes that. Don't you think?

Vince nods, frozen, at the strange, attractive young woman.

25. INT. EMPIRE DINER

They each munch way-too-big burgers. Vince's copy of "An Actor Prepares" sits on the table between them.

MOLLY

Then the day-maid came into my room and said "Your father didn't kill himself. He tried to kill your mother." Only my mother was away—and my father was so drunk he thought their wedding portrait had come to life. So the cops took him in, my brother and I were sent to live with my Aunt on her plantation in Hawaii where my brother turned to opium by-products, I was shuttled to a series of dusty and best *forgotten Swiss boarding schools and my mother went into re-hab at Silver Hill where she met a patient who was a bricklayer and fell in love with him and married him twice.

(pause, then)

This was pre-Liz Taylor and Larry Fortensky.

Pause. She eats a pickle.

VINCE

Jesus.

(and then)

So what happened to your brother?

MOLLY (shakes her head)

No, enough of that. I don't like it for this purpose. You see, the problem is I've told that secret a million times--I audition with it, in fact.

(and then)

All right, Vincent, your turn. I'm stuck.

VINCE

Huh.

(pause, thinks)

Is it possible that I don't have one?

MOLLY

No. That would make you too healthy to want to be an actor. Come on now, think.

VINCE

Well. Okay.

(pause, then)

Well, one thing. Right here. My wife thinks I gotta poker game tonight. She don't know where I am.

MOLLY

You mean, instead of telling her you're enrolled in a night class you tell her you're out gambling? Is that better?

VINCE

Well, it's hard to explain but...yeah. She wouldn't go for me wanting to be an actor.

MOLLY (still puzzled)

How terribly refreshing. I mean, to have a celebrity manqué in the family and to not encourage your own reality show. Shunning celebrity. How un-now.

VINCE

Yeah, I guess so.

MOLLY

So tell it to me. Like you were confessing it.

VINCE

Okay.

(gamely)

I'm Vince Rizzo and...I want to tell you
my worst secret. My most personal secret.
See: my wife...she thinks I got a poker game.

When, in fact...

(pause)

When, in fact...

(pause)

...you know what? This is bullshit.

Molly looks happily taken aback.

MOLLY

You mean, you could do worse?

VINCE (nods)

Yeah. Guess so.

MOLLY

Try me.

VINCE

Really? I mean...we don't hardly know each
other.

MOLLY

I know. Isn't it lovely?

Vince's face: yes, this is the right way to look at it. So:

VINCE

I just met my son.

MOLLY

Where?

VINCE

In uh...the facility where I work.

(and then)

I'm a corrections officer.

MOLLY (pause--then)

You're a prison guard?

VINCE (hates this term)

Yeah, sorta.

MOLLY

And how old is your son?

VINCE
 Guess he'd be...twenty-somethin' by now.
 (and then)
 Tony. His name's Tony.

Vince reaches into his pocket and pulls out

TONY'S MUGSHOT

He hands it to Molly, who stares at it. A long stare. Then--

MOLLY
 This is brilliant. How old were you when--

VINCE
 Early twenties. Just a kid myself really.
 (pause, then uncomfortably)
 His mom was older.

MOLLY
 And how did you recognize him?

VINCE
 His name popped out on his rap sheet.
 Nardella. Which was Nan--his mom's--name.
 Born in Camden--that's where she lived. Not
 that I was there at the time.
 (starkly)
 I took off.

MOLLY
 A child, conceived in love, but...
 ...destined to a life of crime.

VINCE
 He stole a car. I mean...doesn't exactly
 make him a criminal, right?

MOLLY
 What kind of car?

VINCE (thinks)
 Chevy Impala.

MOLLY
 No. Anyway, what else?
 (long pause, then excitedly)
 You've never told your current wife about
 him. Or about his mother! Or about any of it!

VINCE (long pause, then)
 I meant to. It was just...never the
 right time.

He stares off, unable to comprehend what's happened to him in the past day. Molly stares at him, fascinated.

26. INT. RIZZO HOUSE

Joyce and Vivian watch "American Idol", glassy eyed and bored. Vivian's cell phone rings. She answers.

VIVIAN

Hi. No. Can't talk now. Maybe Monday. Give my shift to Autumn. Bye.

JOYCE

Who was it?

VIVIAN

Work.

Joyce accepts this, trusting and disinterested.

27. INT. VINCE JR.'s ROOM

Vince Jr. is on the internet, glassy-eyed. All kinds of sex sights are searched like: HOT HORNY BABES! BLONDE BITCHES! HOTTEST YOUNG MODELS! He stares numbly at the multiplying images of tiny-wasted, skinny young babes.

No interest in his eyes at all. He types in: FAT CHICKS, BRONX NEW YORK. Pause. Hundreds-no, thousands-of hits.

He starts scrolling madly through the images. Pauses as he sees something strange. Clicks.

A moment later: an image appears of a woman. He stares at it. At first scared and then amazed as he sees that-

IT'S THE OBESE WOMAN FROM NEXT DOOR

Vince Jr. double-clicks and the woman's website opens up. It's an elaborate site. The woman's name is DENISE.

DENISE (on internet)

Hi! I'm Denise and I'm a proud BBW. That's "big beautiful woman" for those of you new to this. I'm Five-eight, three-hundred and fifty pounds and I think eating and being a big beautiful woman is the sexiest thing in the world!

Vince Jr. is both amazed and appalled by what he's seeing and hearing. After a moment, he exits the sight. Stands up fast-like he's afraid of being caught!

He walks to the window and looks out at-

28. DENISE'S HOUSE

across the way. A light is on in the kitchen. He sees her large silhouette moving about the room. In his eyes: shame and fascination.

29. EXT. 42nd STREET NIGHT

Vince and Molly, walking west. She's enjoying his secret.

MOLLY

And there stand you, ready to save—
what's his name?

VINCE (little smile)

Tony. Tony Nardella.

MOLLY

Ready to save Tony Nardella from the
misery of the last mile and take him
into the bosom of your warm-hearted family!

VINCE

Unh-uh, no way. Don't think so.

MOLLY

Why not?

VINCE

My wife for one thing. She'd flip.

MOLLY

She thinks you were a virgin when
you met?

VINCE

Not exactly. But she don't think I was
a father either. Joyce's got pretty
firm opinions on things. It's sorta her
best quality and her worst—you know--all
in one. She's one tough woman and she'll
fight like a pitbull for you if she's
on your side.

MOLLY

She sounds like...a *real dame*.

VINCE (nods)

Yeah. A real dame. Looks great too.

(pause, then)

I don't know...we ain't exactly friends
anymore. I don't know when it happened.

MOLLY (pause, then)
The re-appearance of your secret love child
might well provide the solution.

VINCE
How?

They stop walking. Molly examines Vince. Can't resist
touching his shoulders a little as she talks...

MOLLY
He'll provide a dangerous symbol of
your own virility. She'll be reminded
of the very things that attracted her to
you to begin with. You see, the Vincent she
didn't really know is the Vincent that she
secretly wants back.

VINCE
Does that make sense?

MOLLY
No. But women are emotionally incoherent.
It's one of our defining characteristics.

Molly watching Vince's face: she can see he's considering
it. She pulls out a pen, jots her phone number on the back
of a card.

MOLLY (cont.)
I do some of my best work via cellular.
Call me, Vincent. But only on a whim.

And she hands her number to him and disappears into the
starry night. Alone, Vince smiles at her as she leaves.

30. EXT. CITY ISLAND MORNING

The boats in the harbor. Pan across to the Rizzo house.

A plume of cigarette smoke comes out of the upstairs
bathroom window. We hear Vince coughing.

Downstairs on the front porch lies Vince Jr., sleeping.
One eye opens as—

DENISE EXITS HER HOUSE

She sees Vince Jr., smiles and waves.

Vince Jr. quickly shuts his eye, pretending not to have
seen. But once she walks away, he opens his eyes again and
stares after her.

31. INT. BATHROOM

Vince smokes, blows it out the window. He reads a book: "An Actor Prepares."

But his eyes wander.

32. INT. RIZZO HOUSE

Joyce and Vivian reading the New York Post. Joyce is clipping coupons. Vince comes down the stairs. Pauses and looks at his wife and daughter.

JOYCE (to Vivian)
C'mon, let's get movin' before
the crowd shows up.

Vince and Joyce look at each other.

VINCE
I was thinking-bein' Friday night and
Vivian's here, why don't we have a nice
big home-cooked meal tonight?

JOYCE (shrugs)
Yeah, sure, you mean like we do every
Friday night?

VINCE
Yeah but I mean...somethin' special. Like
it was for a real special occasion.

Joyce and Vivian stare at him, puzzled.

JOYCE
You want balloons or somethin'?

VINCE
I'm just saying, something nice!

JOYCE
Since when don't I make somethin' nice?!

VINCE
Make somethin' nicer!

JOYCE
Make it yourself!

Vince and Joyce stare at each other, filled with frustration. Vince turns and storms out.

JOYCE
The great communicator. Forget it.

33. EXT. RIZZO HOUSE

Vince steps over Vince Jr. who is still lying on the porch. As he gets into the Dodge Rambler—

VINCE
You sleep outside last night?

VINCE JR.
Actually I stayed at the Plaza Hotel
and did heroin with a bunch of prostitutes.
I'm thinking of becoming a pimp.

Vince nods. Starts up the car. Hasn't heard him.

VINCE (driving off)
Good. See you later.

34. INT. JERSEY CORRECTIONAL

Panning the faces of the prisoners as they grunt after their names are called.

VINCE
Nadler! Nakovny! Nardella!

After this last grunt, a slight pause. Vince looks at Tony Nardella.

Tony Nardella looks back. A beat. Vince moves on. Tony's eyes: Why does the prison guard keep staring at him?

35. INT. VISITORS STATION

Tony Nardella stands there, puzzled. Vince approaches the glass wall that separates them. Into the microphone--

VINCE
Hi, I'm Vince Rizzo. Correctional
Officer 426. I see where you made provisional
parole but didn't have no family to be
released to.

TONY
Yeah. That's life.

VINCE
Yeah. Your mother named Nan?

TONY
Yeah.

VINCE
Bout five foot two, redhead?

TONY
Yeah.

VINCE (pause, then)
How's she doin'?

TONY
Not so good. Dead.
(and then)
Four years ago.

Beat. Vince's face: a flicker of emotion at the news.

VINCE
Sorry to hear that.

TONY
You knew her?

VINCE
Uh, yeah. Yeah, I knew her.

Pause. Tony Nardella is not given to verbosity.

TONY
So. Anything else?

Beat. Vince isn't how to deliver this. Finally—

VINCE (looking away)
I spoke to Warden Amboy. And uh...
(pause, then)
You're bein' released to me. You'll
be under my personal care for the next
thirty days. I live in the Bronx.

Tony's face: this sounds fishy, to say the least.

Music takes us through—

36. EXT. PRISON PARKING LOT

Vince escorts Tony, still wearing handcuffs but now in his street clothes—jeans, boots, leather jacket. In his eyes: a look of suspicion.

37. INT. DODGE RAMBLER

Vince driving. Tony staring ahead, frozen in fear. We see that his handcuffs are still on and chained to the door of the car.

Tony stares straight ahead, miserable and afraid.

38. EXT. CITY ISLAND AVENUE

The Dodge Rambler drives down the main drag and turns onto the Rizzo's block.

39. INT. DODGE RAMBLER

As Vince drives down his block—

VINCE

We got this little house in the back.
Really a boatshed. You can stay there.
(musing)

In fact, I'm thinking we can do a
little deal with each other—you know,
I do you a favor, you do me a favor.

Tony's eyes: not good!

40. EXT. RIZZO HOUSE

Vince Jr. smokes a cigarette. Sees the Rambler. Stubs it out and runs into the house—

41. BATHROOM

Up the stairs and into the bathroom where he speed-brushes his teeth. He reaches inside a closet for a towel.

Vince's acting book falls from its hiding place. Vince Jr. stares at it. Opens it and sees the mugshot of Tony.

Vince Jr. looks puzzled.

42. INT. RAMBLER

Vince pulls up to his house and parks. Stops and looks at his son.

TONY (uncomfortably)
What?

VINCE (pause, then)
Nothin'.

Vince smiles goofily. He's with his long lost son!

TONY

Can I ask you...like...why I'm chained to a Dodge?

VINCE

I'll unchain you in minute. Soon as you calm down. First I wanna tell you something.

(breathes, then)

See Tony, this is my home. My home which my grandparents built and which I share with my family.

TONY

You got them chained up in the house too?

VINCE (ignores this)

You're gonna get real food and a nice place to live for the first time in three years.

TONY

And all of this is because you knew my bitch mother?

VINCE

Well Nan was difficult, but she was also-

TONY

A drunk and a whore?

VINCE

No! Why would you say that?

TONY

She used to punish me for not boosting cases of Vodka from the liquor store where I worked by screwing my friends. Which base does "drunk and whore" not cover?

VINCE (gingerly)

Don't you have any nice memories of her?

TONY (sullenly)

At least she was around. My father left before I was born.

Pause. Then--

VINCE
That all you know about him?

TONY
He's dead.

Vince's eyes say: so that's what she told him.

VINCE
That's too bad.

TONY
Only thing that's too bad is I didn't
get to visit his deathbed and dance
on his ugly face for leaving me with
that bitch.

Vince's face: taking in their father/son vibe.

43. EXT. RIZZO HOUSE

Vince gets out. Unchains Tony but then rechains him to *his own wrist*.

TONY
Do I ever get uncuffed?

VINCE
In a minute. I don't want you running
away or anything before you see what a
nice set-up I'm offerin' you.

TONY
Run away. Gee. Why would I do that?

They walk, chain in chain, down the side of the house...

VINCE JR.

Watches from an upstairs window. What he sees is: his father chained to a young, tough-looking guy walking him to the back of their house.

He stares at the two of the them.

44. EXT. GARAGE

A little one-car shed in the back of the house. Vince hauls the door open.

45. INT. GARAGE

A concrete floor, a cot and exposed plumbing.

VINCE

I started building it a couple of summers ago but got busy with other things. So this is where our little deal comes in.

(pause)

You're gonna help me build a bathroom.

TONY

Scuse me?

VINCE

My wife's been wanting me to add a bathroom and I saw on your sheet that your last job was as a handyman. So that's the deal. Thirty days back here, build me a bathroom, I'll pay you a fair wage and then you get to go wherever the hell you want with a few bucks in your pocket.

Tony takes this in. Sees that Vince is for real.

TONY

How'm I supposed to build a bathroom with handcuffs on me?

VINCE

Sorry.

(as he unlocks them)

Just don't go running away. If you do I'll find you and personally toss your ass back in the cage. And they won't be kiddin'-you'll be back in for a long stretch. Okay, Tony?

TONY (pause, then)

Whatever.

VINCE

Say 'Okay, Vince, I promise you that.'

TONY (by rote)

'Okay, Vince, I promise you that.'

VINCE

'And thank you for getting my ass outta the cage.' Come on.

TONY (reluctantly)
Thanks for getting my ass outta the cage.

VINCE
And no more talkin' shit about your mother. Maybe she wasn't perfect but she was...she was...

TONY
A good lay?

Vince smiles. This makes Tony smile too. Vince unlocks the handcuffs. Then he pulls out a pack of cigarettes and lights one.

The sound of A CAR APPROACHING. Panic in Vince's eyes.

VINCE
Shit. My wife.

TONY
Is that what you call her? 'Shit, my wife?'

Vince takes, stubs the butt out on the floor and waves the smoke away.

VINCE
I don't smoke.

TONY
I can tell.

VINCE
And don't tell her where we met. Just say we're old friends.

TONY
We on a bowling team together?

VINCE
And my daughter's home from college so...you know...take it easy.

TONY (honestly puzzled)
Take it easy?

VINCE
And don't mention that I knew your mom.

Tony eyes: what a piece of work.

46. INT. RIZZO HOUSE

Joyce and Vivian enter, arms full of "Bloomie's" packages.

JOYCE
Anybody home?

Vince Jr. appears at the top of the stairs.

VINCE JR.
I'm here. So's dad. He's in the garage with some dude. They're handcuffed to each other and have been back there for quite some time.

Joyce's face: turning colors.

47. EXT. BACK OF RIZZO HOUSE

Tony sits in the garage, the door open. He's listening to a MAJOR ARGUMENT being played out a few feet away. None of it is going as planned.

VINCE AND JOYCE are in the kitchen but the backdoor is open. We see them coming and going as the raging argument continues.

JOYCE
You bring some filthy biker into my home without even so much as asking me-

VINCE
He happens to be a nice young man and he's working for his board.

JOYCE
Where'd you meet this guy anyway?

VINCE
He was getting' outta jail in a month, so I told them I'd take responsibility!

JOYCE
He's a criminal? What, Vince, you just picked a con at random to bring into my house?

VINCE
I knew his mother! And since when is it your house? My grandparents built this house!

JOYCE

What do you mean you knew his mother?
When? Who was she?

48. INT. GARAGE

Tony sits, listening glumly. The matches hit the floor. He stares at them. On the cover: HELL'S HALF ACRE. A caricature of a curvaceous woman in red. He stares at it curiously.

VINCE (o.s.)

Jesus, you think I never met another woman on the face the earth aside a you? She was just a... an old friend!

As the argument goes on, Tony looks up and sees Vince Jr. in the window.

JOYCE (o.s.)

The answer is no, Vince! NO, NO, NO. I'm not cooking for an extra person. He can't stay here. And if you don't like it-

Vince Jr. stares gravely at Tony. Then he gives him a thumbs up. Smiles at him. Tony gives him a thumbs up and smiles back.

49. INT. RIZZO DINING ROOM TABLE DAYLIGHT (6PM)

They eat in uncomfortable silence. Tony gobbles up the home-cooked food.

VINCE JR.

Guess this is better than the crap they serve you in jail, huh?

Vince hits Vince Jr. on the arm.

VINCE

Hey!

VINCE JR. (recoils in fake pain)

Ow, my peptic ulcer!

VIVIAN

Shut-up Vin.

VINCE JR. (mimics her)

"Shut up Vin". "You shut up Vivian". "No way!" "Way!"

JOYCE
Shhhh!
(pause, then)
Vince says he was friends with your mom.

TONY (mouth full)
Oh yeah. Long time ago, I guess.

JOYCE
I guess so. I never heard about it.

VINCE
It was before we met, sweetie.

JOYCE
Vince says she's a nice woman.
(and then, pointedly)
Good looking I bet.

Tony shrugs. Nervous eye contact between Joyce, Vivian, Vince and Vince Jr.

VINCE (a statement)
What.

JOYCE
What what?

VINCE JR.
Mom, dad's right. Why don't you just come right out and ask him if he had sex with her?

VIVIAN
Jesus!

Vivian whacks Vince Jr. in the head.

VINCE JR. (recoils in fake pain)
Aggh—my brain tumor!

Tony's eyes go wide. What the hell kind of family is this?

JOYCE
Vinnie, you apologize to me!

VINCE
Actually, sweetie, he has a point. I mean, that's what you were getting at, right? You were circling the airport a little but—

JOYCE

I don't care if you had sex with her or not. Why're you two ganging up on me?

Vince Jr., pleased with himself for having jumpstarted the argument, watches it like a Tennis match.

VINCE

Honey, please, after twenty years I know where you're headed before even you do.

JOYCE

Well that must be real boring for you, Vince. Really. Who knew I was failing to keep you entertained all these years?

VIVIAN

Oh Mom, he didn't mean it like-

JOYCE

Now you're on his side too, huh?

VIVIAN

Why does it have to be about "sides"? I'm just saying that dad says things in a stupid way and--

VINCE

I'm stupid, huh? Listen, maybe you talk to your college friends like that--

JOYCE

Good, Vince, blame her for getting a real education-

VIVIAN

Stop!!!

Everyone looks at their plates, privately wounded.

TONY

watches the family as they recede into their own thoughts. He continues shoveling food down. Long pause. Then-

VINCE JR.

I'm sorry, Vivian.

VIVIAN

Thank you.

VINCE JR.
Can I ask you a question?

VIVIAN
What?

VINCE JR. (pause, then)
Are your breasts continuing to grow?
Because, to my eye, they're much larger
now than they used to be.

CHAOS. Everyone screaming at once. Tony can't believe what he's seeing.

VINCE (boiling over)
How dare you speak to her like that!

JOYCE
Upstairs! Go to your room!

VINCE JR.
"Go to your room?" Pretty lame, mom!

VINCE
Don't you sass your mother! Go to your
room right now!

Vince Jr. looks thrilled. He bolts up the stairs singing--

VINCE JR.
Internet-ay! Libertay, egalitay,
internet-ay!

Pause. Temporary calm. Tony continues to eat, not making eye contact but CHECKING OUT EVERYONE SURREPTITIOUSLY. His eyes travel to Vivian's chest. Then to Vince.

Vince is also looking at his daughter's chest.

Now Joyce sees it. Tony and Joyce both stare at Vince staring at Vivian's chest. Finally Vivian sees what's going on.

VIVIAN
What?

JOYCE
Vince!

VINCE
Well, he has a point. You seem a
little larger in that area than--

VIVIAN (mortified)
Jesus, dad!

Vivian gets up, grabs her bag and marches out of the house.
The door slams.

VINCE
Hey! Where you goin'?

JOYCE
Goddamit, Vince! That girl spends
eighteen hours a day her head in the
books and she finally gets a little time
off to spend with her family and you
gotta screw it up?

VINCE
I didn't do nothing!
(gets up, throws napkin down)
Oh, the hell with it. Hell with
everyone!

Vince storms upstairs. Now it's just Tony and Joyce. She
looks away, trying to keep herself from emotionally
exploding. A beat.

TONY
Uh...dinner was great.

Joyce nods, looks away. She's crying.

50. INT. DODGE RAMBLER DRIVING DAYLIGHT

Vince cruising the Cross-Bronx Expressway. He dials his
cell.

51. *INT. WEST BANK CAFE MANHATTAN SAME

Molly Charlesworth is in serious dish mode. She's with a
handsome man, drinking Manhattans.

MOLLY
Then my brother had an affair with
my stepfather who met my mother
in re-hab--this was pre-Liz & Fortensky
and I was sent away to boarding school
in Switzerland and--
(her cell rings-she answers)
Hello?
(pause, she smiles)
Well hello Vincent.

52. INT. DODGE RAMBLER

VINCE

I'm callin' you on a whim. I was thinking maybe we could work on our secrets thing. You know? Tell you the truth...

(pause, then)

I'm a little stuck. With what to do with my son and everything...

53. INT. WEST BANK CAFE

MOLLY (into phone)

My brother? Overdosed on heroin in the mens room of the diner on forty-second and tenth? Hold his hand and tell him I'm on my way! I'll be there in ten minutes, Vincent!

(to her date)

I'm sorry, you understand, we'll re-sked when I'm avail.

And she's off, leaving a bewildered date in her wake.

54. INT. DODGE RAMBLER DRIVING

VINCE (confused)

Scuse me?

But the phone is dead. Vince's face: a slow smile as he realizes that she just dumped a guy to meet him.

55. INT. HELLS HALF ACRE DAYLIGHT

The strip-club where Vivian works. She storms in, pulling hair out of its bun. BRUNO the bartender smiles at her. The place is packed with a drunken, boorish Saturday night crowd.

BRUNO

Spring break over?

VIVIAN

Do me a favor? Ask Autumn if she wants to go home early tonight and aplit her shift with me.

BRUNO

Highly unlikely. Asian invasion is out in force.

He nods with his head. Vivian looks. A table of a dozen Asian businessmen are tipping Autumn with hundred dollar bills. She's lapdancing three, simultaneously.

VIVIAN (bitterly)
Shit! I coulda cleaned up this weekend.

He pours her a drink. She lights a cigarette and does the drink in one big gulp.

56. EXT. RIZZO HOUSE BACKYARD STILL DAYLIGHT

Joyce exits from the kitchen and sits on a lounge chair. She has a pack of cigarettes and a glass of wine in her hand. She sits and looks up as she sees—

TONY is sitting across the yard in the fold out chair. He sees her. Nods a greeting.

JOYCE

Nods back. Lights a cigarette.

JOYCE (across yard)
My husband thinks I quit.

Tony's face: a private smile at his realization that Vince and Joyce are equally guilty.

TONY (yells across yard)
One good thing about the joint—they don't let you smoke anymore. I quit.

JOYCE
Bein' in prison and not bein' able to smoke? That must be like...bein' in jail.

An odd pause as Tony considers this.

57. INT. VINCE JR.'s ROOM

Vince Jr. is on-line. The site is: REAL CENTERFOLDS! Lots of pictures of blonde, bronzed, California models. His eyes: not interested. And worried too. Then—

Vince Jr. types in "DENISEBBW.COM" and waits. A moment later, there's the fat neighbor! He stares, both fascinated and ashamed.

DENISE (on internet)
Hi! I'm Denise and I'm a proud BBW. That's "big beautiful woman" for those of you new to this. I'm Five-eight, three-hundred and fifty pounds and I think eating and being a big beautiful woman is the sexiest thing in the world! If you join my club, you'll get twenty-

four hour access to a live image of my kitchen, where I spend most of my time when I'm not working.

As she continues, Vince Jr. grabs a credit card belonging to VINCENT RIZZO that he keeps displayed quite openly on his desk and enters the numbers. Hits JOIN NOW.

He waits. Energized! Digging it!

58. INT. DINER WEST 42nd Street. NIGHT

Vince and Molly, drinking coffee, eating French fries. A copy of BACKSTAGE is on the table.

VINCE

He's a good guy, you can tell. Must have had a hell of a time with Nan. Wasn't like I was any help.

(pause, then)

Only thing is he still don't know...who I am.

MOLLY

You must tell him, Vincent. Think of the drama of the moment. On the other hand, think of the drama of not telling him. Wait! Don't think of anything, for Godssake!

(she closes her eyes—and then)

No. You must tell him. The longer he doesn't know your true identity, the greater the sense of betrayal. He's been betrayed enough.

VINCE (guiltily)

All started with me walkin' out on him.

MOLLY

No, don't succumb to self-flagellation. I mean I understand it—it's wonderfully Catholic, but you're beyond it. You've opened up your home to a convicted felon. You've even shown him great trust by leaving him alone with your family.

VINCE (dawning)

Jesus.

MOLLY

Because he's your blood and if you can't trust your blood, what the hell can you trust? Now you must take the final step and reveal his birthright to him.

She inhales, satisfied that the decision is correct. Smiles at Vince. A beat. He smiles back at her. One of those shared smiles that could go just about anywhere.

Vince lowers his eyes first. They fall on her copy of 'BACKSTAGE', sitting on the table between them.

VINCE

What's that?

MOLLY

Ugh. It's an addiction. "Backstage"--the Wall Street Journal for struggling actors. You peruse it for news on open calls for parts you won't get in projects that are never made.

For instance:

(as she opens it and reads)

Open call: Male, age 30-50, working-class type, no agency rep. required. Monday, 9 am, Canal Street Armory.

(pause, thoughtfully)

Hm. That one might be good for you.

VINCE

What happens--how's it work?

MOLLY

You've never auditioned? Oh Vincent, it's dreadful. You go and wait in a room crowded with people who look vaguely familiar. They march you in. They stare at you. They hate you. You sing and dance and show off all of the talent that once thrilled your mother and father. They make faces. Sometimes they ask a question--very rarely. You're dismissed. You leave feeling like a failure.

VINCE

Sounds...scary.

MOLLY
 Having said that...you really should
 go on this one. It sounds perfect
 for you.

She tears out the ad. Gives it to Vince who reads it.
 Intrigued.

59. EXT. RIZZO PORCH NIGHT

Tony and Joyce drinking wine, staring at the water and the
 view of the city.

JOYCE
 You must think we're a bunch of-

TONY
 No, no, not at all.

JOYCE
 I mean, we don't always act like a bunch
 of-

TONY
 No, forget it I...I understand.

Long pause. Then, with radical simplicity-

TONY
 Families are tough.

Joyce looks at Tony. Appreciates his calm stoicism.

60. INT. VINCE JR.'S ROOM

Vince Jr. is staring at the site. A spinning umbrella.
 Then he hears--

DENISE (on internet)
 Welcome, my new fat-friendly fan!

Vince Jr. looks at his computer, excited.

DENISE (on internet)
 You're now an official member of
 my club. If you see me at a BBW
 function in the New York area where
 I live, you can tell me you're a
 special member by saying our secret
 word: *BOTERO*.

VINCE JR. (to himself)
Botero.

A moment later, an image of a kitchen appears.

LIVE KITCHEN IMAGE

Denise moves around the kitchen, juggling baking pans, cookie sheets etc.

Vince Jr. gets up. Backs away from the computer, keeping his eyes on the screen, as if it might vanish. He leaves the room-

61. INT. RIZZO LIVING ROOM

--and descends the stairs. Looks. Nobody around. He leaves.

62. EXT. RIZZO HOUSE NIGHT

Vince Jr. exits, hops off the porch and approaches Denise's house.

The windows are set rather high up. Vince Jr. gets on a concrete block and peers into-

A KITCHEN WINDOW

There she is, just like on the computer, juggling baking pans, cookie sheets. Vince Jr. stares in fascination.

63. EXT. 59th STREET TRAMWAY NIGHT

The Tram that takes you, high above Manhattan, across to Roosevelt Island. As the tram rises into the air...

...we see that it is indeed a starry, starry night.

64. INT. ROOSEVELT ISLAND TRAM NIGHT

Molly and Vince are the only two on the tram. Vince looks out, a little mystified at where he is and how he got here. As she stares out at the stars-

MOLLY

The answers are all there. Don't worry, Vincent. For some reason, you're very close to God right now. I don't know why...but you can feel it in the stars.

(dawning)

Of course! Mercury's in retrograde.

VINCE

Mercury's a what?

MOLLY

Mercury—the wing-footed messenger.
Represents communication and the process
of life. Retrograde: traveling
backwards. It happens three or four
times a year—
and since all backward movement symbol-
izes a return to source, our atten-
tions turn towards unfinished business.
It can be a fine time for completing
things. Re-connecting. Settling
accounts. (and then)
Letting the stars do their plentiful
work.

Vince looking at her. Something about her way...

VINCE

Is it kinda strange that what you
say makes sense to me?

MOLLY (shakes head no-then)

Yes. But everything's strange, Vincent.
When you think of it, acting is one
of the strangest things a person could
choose to do with themselves. Pretending
to be another person—who was dreamed
up by a third party! It's like agreeing
to be a marionette.

Vince turns this around in his mind.

VINCE

Why you an actress then?

MOLLY

Oh really. What else *could* I do?
What other profession would accommodate
my behavioral problems?

VINCE (smiles)

Yeah. Sort of like getting paid for
being a screw-up.

MOLLY

Perfect.

They both look off at the view.

65. EXT. RIZZO BACKYARD NIGHT

Joyce and Tony.

JOYCE (resigned)

I feel like I spend my whole life trying to please everyone, and all it does is make 'em mad. My son--Jesus what a pill he's becomin'! And Vivian. Twenty years of working for that law firm so I could put away enough for her to go to law school after she graduates. You'd think she'd at least talk to me about it. I ask her about her classes and she just shrugs. "Whatever..." And Vince and his 'poker game'. Does he think I buy that crap?

TONY (a little shrug)

I grew up with a mother and no father. And my mother hated my father so much for leaving that she took it out on me cause I reminded her of him.

Joyce lights another cigarette. Stares off into the yard and blows smoke.

JOYCE

He started that room three years ago. Bought enough wood and junk to build a forest. That was gonna be his new career--building stuff. He was all gung-ho and then...pffffttt.

(shrugs)

He gets discouraged when things take too long. Like more than an hour.

Tony clutches himself against the cool air. Joyce sees this.

JOYCE

Upstairs in my son's room? There's a bunch of sweaters. First door on the left.

He nods and gets up...

66. INT. RIZZO HOUSE UPSTAIRS LANDING

Tony bounds up the stairs and enters

67. VINCE JR.'s ROOM

Nobody's home. The lights are out. Only the glow of the computer is on. Tony stares at the screen.

DENISE (on internet)
 Welcome, my new fat-friendly fan!
 You're now an official member of
 my club. If you see me at a BBW
 function in the New York area where
 I live, you can tell me you're a
 special member by saying our secret
 word: *BOTERO*.

Tony scowls at the computer.

TONY (to himself)
 Botero.

68. EXT. DENISE'S KITCHEN WINDOW

Vince Jr. watches Denise.

VINCE JR. (under)
 Botero...

Then--the concrete block he's on sways backwards.

SUDDENLY--IT GIVES

Vince Jr. falls backwards into a fence. Big noise.

DENISE

Looks up, frightened.

DENISE
 Hey! Hello! Who's out there?

Vince Jr. scrambles to his feet, hops over a hedge and runs into his house.

69. EXT. ROOSEVELT ISLAND NIGHT

Molly and Vince sitting on a bench looking at the glorious Manhattan view.

VINCE
 So. You been thinkin' anymore about
 your "worst secret?"

MOLLY
 I think about it all the time.

VINCE
 You probably got so many interesting
 secrets--

MOLLY
Scads—

VINCE
--it's hard to tell which one's the best.

(pause, then)
I gonna get to hear it? I don't mean to press you or nothin', but we got class comin' up in a few days and...

He lets it hang.

MOLLY
Where do you live, Vincent?

VINCE
The Bronx.

MOLLY
No thonx.

VINCE
Huh?

MOLLY
Nothing. Ogden Nash. Skip it.
For all I know, the Bronx is lovely.

VINCE
Well, my part of it is. S'called City Island. Old fishing village.

MOLLY
Really?

(this appeals to her)
City...Island. On the one hand a paradox—a peaceful island located within the world's busiest city. Further, the words stand in stark relief from each other—"city", so short and abrupt and definite and "island"—exotic, unknowable and with the silent "s".

VINCE
I never really thought about it that way. It's a great spot, though—my grandparents built the house and passed it down. Once you live there you can't really think of moving anywhere else.

MOLLY
Every busy city needs an island of peace. Like every busy soul needs a

place of repose. A place where we hide from our own frantic stories while they...madly, insanely, obsessively pursue us.

Pause. This last was said with a vigor that denotes to Vince another side of Molly, another angle. He looks at her, unafraid and unbashful. Molly looks him right in the eyes. Then, she opens her purse and pulls out an envelope. She hands it to Vince.

MOLLY

There it is, Vincent. My secret.

He begins to open the envelope. But she stops him.

MOLLY

No. Not yet. I need it to stay mine for just a little longer. Once you know it, it's no longer truly a secret.

(mysteriously)

There'll be a moment when it's obvious. Carry it with you. The moment could come at anytime.

Molly and Vince smile at each other. A beat. As they look out at the glittering view of Manhattan—

MOLLY

Oh, Vincent. What a wonderful time to have not disappeared.

MONTAGE — SUNDAY AT THE RIZZO'S

70. EXT. RIZZO HOUSE DAY

A plume of smoke emanates from the upstairs window. We hear Vince coughing.

71. VINCE JR.'s ROOM

He's asleep with his head on his desk, his computer still on Denise's website.

72. KITCHEN

Vivian comes crashing in, obviously hungover. She opens the fridge, grabs a bottle of Coke, and chugs it. Goes outside.

73. BACKYARD

Vivian passes the garage, pausing as she sees—

TONY

Already awake, doing push-ups on the cement floor of the garage room. He doesn't notice her.

She glares at him, mistrust in her eyes. She walks away. Tony keeps doing pushups.

74. A TINY AREA ON THE SIDE OF THE GARAGE

hidden from view. Vivian lights a cigarette and stands there, smoking and swigging her Coke. A small window into the garage is open, behind her.

Vivian throws an empty pack of matches through the open window behind her.

75. INT. GARAGE

Tony's doing push-ups as the matches hit the floor. On the cover: HELL'S HALF ACRE. A caricature of a curvaceous woman in red. He stares at it curiously, as he continues his exercises.

76. EXT. RIZZO BACKYARD LATER

Vince and Tony examining the little room, drinking coffee.

VINCE

Then I figure we run the pipe through her and tap into the main line.

(a little labored)

Feels good building something. Don't it?

Tony nods but looks off. He sees—

JOYCE

making coffee in the kitchen. She meets his eyes. Tony smiles at her. They each look away, bashfully.

77. INT. BACKYARD LATER

Vince and Tony carrying bags of cement from the rear of the garage to the front. Tony has his shirt off. A large tattoo of a cobra is on his back.

VINCE

You know, my grandfather built this house. Way back. Before I was born.

(pause, then)

Came here from the old country and became a fish scaler.

TONY
Oh yeah?

VINCE
Yeah. Him and his brother. Couple of
real mussel suckers.

TONY (puzzled)
How's that?

VINCE
Well, here on City Island, if you come
from somewhere else you're known as a
'muscle-sucker.' But if you're born and
raised here you're a 'clam-digger.' Old
City Island custom.

Tony stares at Vince like: who is this guy?

TONY
Huh.

As Tony grabs another bag, we see the expression on Vince's
face: he and Tony are not connecting.

78. INT. GARAGE LATER

Vince lights up, blowing the smoke through the tiny window.
He notices Tony staring at the poster of "The Godfather."

VINCE
If I could come back as some-body
different, it'd be him.

TONY (warily)
Don Corleone?

VINCE
No. Brando.
(and then)
Always kinda thought being an actor
is something I could do. Fact, I'm
takin' this acting class in the city.
I guess it's kind of stupid—I ain't
even told my wife. She thinks I gotta
poker game.

Tony's eyes: remembering Joyce's accusation of the night
before.

TONY
And all you really got goin' is
an acting class?

VINCE
Shh. Don't tell no-one.

He offers a cigarette to Tony, who refuses it.

TONY
I quit inside.

VINCE
Yeah, they got that rule now. Must suck.

TONY
Plenty other things that are worse.

Pause. Vince's eyes: guilty at what he knows must go on.

VINCE
We try to keep an eye on things. It's hard—so many guys, so many groups and gangs. But we see somethin' goin' on that we don't like, believe you me--

TONY (a little icy)
I took care of myself.

VINCE
Oh yeah?

TONY (shrugs)
I figured as soon as I got to Southcourt I had to act more psycho than everyone else. I mean, I was younger so I had to watch myself.

Vince is interested in this. He peers at Tony.

VINCE
What'd you do?

TONY
I went right up to the ugliest guy I could find and said: "I think I'm pissed off with you but I don't know why. Do I got a reason?"

VINCE (smiles)
No shit?

TONY
Yeah. I was like: gimme your top ten reasons you're a piece of shit and I'll let you know when somethin' rings a

bell. Just don't lie to me and don't figure me for one of your sissy-boys who're gonna put out for you, you sadly deformed excuse for humanity posing as a piece of prison garbage.

(pause, he shrugs)

It worked. They thought I was psycho. I was just...acting.

Tony turns away. Keeps working. But Vince looks at Tony. Admiration in his eyes. And yearning to connect to him.

79. INT. RIZZO HOUSE

Tony wanders over to the living room where he sees

VIVIAN

She looks up from her book.

TONY

Think it's lunchtime.

VIVIAN (an odd grunt)

Nhhff.

She buries her head in her book.

Tony stares at her for a beat. Then he leaves.

80. DINING ROOM

Brunch time. Vince, Vince Jr. Vivian and Tony sit as Joyce serves up bacon, pancakes etc.

JOYCE

What time you get in, Vince?

VINCE

I dunno. Midnight.

JOYCE

Win any money? Playing poker?

She makes "quote" signs as she says poker. Vince drops his fork and stares at her.

VIVIAN

Okay. That was extremely provocative, mom!

VINCE (makes quote signs)
What does this mean, huh?

As the argument continues--

TONY'S FACE

He knows the truth of Vince's whereabouts.

81. EXT. RIZZO BACKYARD

Tony shovels dirt from one pile to another. He goes to the--

TINY AREA ON THE SIDE OF THE GARAGE

where he finds Vince sitting on a brick, smoking and reading the "OPEN CALL" ad. He blanches when he sees Tony, stubbing his cigarette out.

TONY
Relax. Just me.
(re: the ad)
What's that?

VINCE
Well, between you and me, okay?
(Tony nods)
I got this friend who cut this out for me.
It's an open call for some movie--tomorrow
morning. But...
(pause, smokes)
...I don't think I'm gonna do it.

TONY
Why not? Isn't that what you wanna do?
Try acting?

VINCE
Yeah, but I'm no actor. Not for real.
Anyway, too much trouble. I gotta get the day
off from work--tell 'em some story. And
for what? It'll never amount to nothin'.

Tony's face: not getting Vince's lassitude.

TONY
You should do it.

He walks away. Vince stares at the ad.

82. EXT. RIZZO HOUSE FRONT PORCH LATER

Vince Jr. lies on the porch, eating sunflower seeds

and spitting the shells onto the lawn. But he's looking at the house next door. He pulls a cigarette out of his pocket and thinks about lighting it when—

Vince exits, the ad and his cellphone in his hand.

Vince stashes his ad. Vince Jr. hides his cigarette. No privacy here. They regard each other with mutual frustration.

VINCE JR. (agitated)
What are you doing?

VINCE
Taking a walk.

VINCE JR.
I'd join you, dad, but I'm waiting for a crack delivery from a group of black friends I've developed a close relationship to in school. Some might call it...
(makes "quote" signs)
"...a business relationship".

VINCE (didn't hear him)
Good. See you in awhile, son.

He walks away, heading down the street. Vince Jr. looks relieved at his being gone and pulls out his cigarette.

83. INT. KITCHEN

Joyce looks out the window. Sees Vince walking away. She grabs her cigarettes from a drawer, steps outside and lights one.

Tony is hauling away a pile of old lumber. Hot out. His shirt's off.

Joyce stares at his muscular back. In her eyes: she's checking him out. As Tony turns and heads back to the house, the lumber in his arms--

He stops. Sees Joyce. They look at each other. SOMETHING ABOUT THIS LOOK...

TONY (nods)
Hey.

JOYCE
Hey yourself.

She holds his eyes. Then turns and goes back into the house. She is twenty years younger in attitude. Tony

watches her. Then-

He drops the lumber.

84. INT. KITCHEN

Joyce enters, stops. Smiles to herself. She doesn't see Vivian staring at her.

JOYCE
Oh yeah.

VIVIAN
Oh yeah, what?

Vivian is staring at her mother, breaking her reverie.

JOYCE
Oh, relax.

Joyce walks away, blowing her daughter off.

85. EXT. RIZZO BACK YARD

Tony is bending down to pick up the lumber he dropped.

TONY'S POV

Through his knees he sees Denise, the fat neighbor, exiting her back door. Tony looks, head upside down, as she waddles through her garden.

Tony gets up. Stares at her. Mind working.

He picks up the lumber and walks to the front of the house.

86. EXT. RIZZO HOUSE FRONT PORCH

Vince Jr. is about to light his cigarette when

TONY APPEARS

He places the lumber next to the trash. Looks at Vince Jr.

A beat. Then Tony says, with a nod to Denise's house:

TONY
Botero?

Pause. Vince Jr. looks afraid, like he's been found out.
BUT IF TONY KNOWS THE SECRET CODE THEN IT MUST BE OKAY. So--

VINCE JR. (nods)
Botero.

A door slams. They both look over as--

DENISE EXITS HER HOUSE

heading for her car. She sees Vinnie Jr. and smiles. Vince Jr. stares at her, terrified. She looks puzzled and walks away. Vince Jr. looks to Tony, fear in his eyes.

TONY (urging him on, in a whisper)
Botero!

Should he? Shouldn't he? Can he? Will he? As she's about to disappear from view--

VINCE JR. (shouts)
BOTERO!

Denise stops. Turns. They look at each other. She smiles at him.

DENISE
I'm making Triple Braised Baby Back
Ribs and deep fried potatoes au gratin!
(and then)
Want to go shopping with me?

Vince Jr. gets to his feet. Stares at her. Tony stares at him. Finally: Vince Jr. smiles as he walks over to Denise.

Tony watches, quietly pleased at his part in this little exchange.

87. EXT. CITY ISLAND MAIN STREET

Vince on the cell phone, the crumpled "Open Call" ad from Backstage in his hand, a cigarette in his mouth.

VINCE
Yeah it's Vince Rizzo, correctional officer
426. I'm sick and need to take tomorrow off.
Matt Cruniff'll cover my desk. All right?
(then)... And don't call my house for nothin'.

He hangs up. As he walks away he sees--

VINCE JR. AND DENISE

walking into the A&P together like an old married couple. Vince's eyes: his son and the fat neighbor are friends?

88. INT. THE A&P MARKET

Vince Jr. pushes the basket as Denise fills it up with cartons of fattening food. Vince Jr. stops as he sees—

CHERYL

The chubby girl from High School, standing by the diet foods section. Vince Jr. smiles at her.

VINCE JR.
Hey Cheryl.

She turns. His face: preening in a strange way. Cheryl turns and sees Vince Jr. with the super-sized Denise.

CHERYL
Vinnie?

Cheryl's face: despite herself, she is jealous!

89. EXT. CANAL STREET MORNING

Vince checks the address of the ad. Walks and looks down the block. Heads for a building. Sees a line waiting to get in. He goes to the Security Man who waits at the head.

SECURITY MAN
Follow the line.

Vince nods. Looks at the guys on the line. They all look a little like him. Middle-age working class types, age 30-50.

He walks down the line expecting it to end. Guy after guy all reading scripts, copies of Backstage, Variety, some talking on cell phones, some listening to radio headsets. He gets to the corner and sees:

THE LINE EXTENDS AND WINDS AROUND THE BLOCK

*Vince keeps walking, a little perplexed. He stops, surprised to see

MICHAEL MALAKOV

His teacher, standing on the line, glasses perched on the end of his nose, reading the New York Post.

Vince almost says hi. But something about the situation is too strange, too poignant. Vince continues on his way, unseen by Malakov.

Finally he reaches the end of the line. He asks the last middle-aged working class guy:

VINCE
Hey uh...you know anything
about this movie here?

The guy turns to Vince. With grave simplicity:

WORKING-CLASS GUY
Scorsese and De Niro.

90. INT. RIZZO HOUSE BEDROOM

Joyce is putting on sweats and a big T-shirt. She opens her secret drawer and spies her cigarettes. Smiles. Goes to the window. And sees:

FROM THE WINDOW

Tony. The garage door open. He's hauling more lumber and trash out. His clothes: jeans. Period. Bare feet and bare chest.

Joyce looks at him. Then she takes off her sweats. She stands alone, in the darkness of her bedroom in her underwear.

91. EXT. CANAL STREET

Huge. Vince is no longer at the back. But he has miles to go. He stands, out of place, not reading trades, not talking on the phone, not knowing anyone.

92. EXT. GARAGE RIZZO HOUSE

Tony is hauling the last of the garbage out. He sees Joyce approaching.

TONY
Almost done with the trash. What's next?

JOYCE
I don't know. Vince tell you what he wants in here?

TONY
Toilet. Walls. Shower stall. Floor. He wasn't specific. But—we could go to a...you know...bathroom place and pick some stuff out. Maybe. If you feel like it.

93. INT. RIZZO HOUSE

Vivian is bumming around upstairs. She goes to a window and sees—

VIVIAN'S POV

Tony and Joyce talking. THEIR BODY LANGUAGE IS SIZZLING. Vivian's face: watching the encounter with horror.

94. EXT. GARAGE

Tony and Joyce.

JOYCE

I got no plans. Took today off.
You know...
(makes quote signs)
..."family time".

TONY

Yeah, well, maybe we should ask
Vince if he has any...preferences.

JOYCE

Preferences? For what?

TONY

You know. Toilets and stuff.

The word "toilet" makes him laugh. She laughs with him, not knowing why.

JOYCE

That's funny. Why's that funny?

TONY

Cause it's...you know. 'Toilet.'

Exaggerating the word. They laugh. Look at each other.

JOYCE

Yeah. Toilet.
(pause, then)
I better call my husband.

She goes inside. Tony watches her go.

TONY (to himself)

No. No. No way.

95. INT. RIZZO KITCHEN

As Joyce dials--

JOYCE (to herself)
No, no way. Nope.

96. INT. UPSTAIRS OF RIZZO HOUSE

Vivian stares out the window, shell-shocked.

VIVIAN
No, never, not, nor, nhnfffff---

She clutches herself, shuts her eyes and shudders with anger and frustration. It's almost like a seizure. When she stops, she has another look on her eyes.

It says: I'm outta here.

97. INT. KITCHEN

Joyce dialing the phone.

JOYCE (into phone)
Officer Rizzo, please.

As she waits we hear Vivian SLAM the door. Joyce looks puzzled.

JOYCE
Vivian? Hello?

No response. Then, back into the phone--

JOYCE
Yeah, I'm holding for my husband,
Vince Rizzo.
(pause, then)
He called in sick? No, no message.

She hangs up. A puzzled look on her face. Then she dials--

98. EXT. CANAL STREET

Vince standing on line. His cell rings. He answers it.

VINCE
Hello? Hi, sweetie. Uh...
(looks around)
...I'm at work. Yeah, well I'm
out in the yards.

99. INT. RIZZO KITCHEN

Joyce's face: crunching up with anger, with sadness, at another of Vince's lies.

JOYCE

Oh. Okay. No, I just was wondering if you had any preferences about toilets.

100. EXT. CANAL STREET

Vince's eyes narrow.

VINCE

Toilets? Uh, take Tony with you—he can probably help.

101. INT. RIZZO KITCHEN

Joyce looking out the window at the bare-chested Tony. He stops what he's doing at looks back at her.

JOYCE

Yeah. Good idea. I'll take Tony.

Over Joyce's face, one last sub-title:

You're goddam right he can probably help.

102. EXT. SAW MILL RIVER PARKWAY

Joyce and Tony driving in her car.

103. INT. CAR

Joyce drives. Tony stares out at the passing scenery. Pause. Tony sees something on the floor. It's—

A PAIR OF HANDCUFFS

Joyce sees him looking at them.

JOYCE

Ug, Vince. Know how cops never leave the house without their gun? My husband swears that every car needs a good pair of handcuffs. Like he's Joe Justice!

TONY (looks out window)

What's that?

JOYCE
Orchard Beach. Ever seen it?

104. EXT. ORCHARD BEACH PARKING LOT

The jeep pulls off into a vast parking lot.

105. EXT. DENISE'S HOUSE DAY

Vince Jr. knocks on the door. His bearing is more confident, less tentative. Denise opens the door.

DENISE (nods, smiles)
I'm making a triple Chocolate Death
Cake--it's a brownie base layered in
white chocolate, milk chocolate and dark
chocolate fudge sauce, covered in
whipped cream. Come in!

106. INT. JEEP

Tony and Joyce in the car, which is parked. Each stares straight ahead.

JOYCE
Tony? You do anything else? Besides--

TONY
Boosting a car? Just some kid stuff.
Held up a gas station. Robbed a
pharmacy. Couple of jewelry stores.
(he looks at her)
You afraid of me?

Long pause. Then--

JOYCE
Oh yes...

They plunge into each other, face against face and start making out.

107. EXT. CANAL STREET

A clock on a neighboring wall reads 3:30. Vince looks bored to tears. But he's getting closer.

108. INT. DENISE'S KITCHEN

Denise cooking up a storm. On the walls hang posters of the art of Fernando Botero--delightful images of hugely voluptuous men and women.

VINCE JR.

I was thinking of killing myself. Or cutting off a vital sexual organ in defiance. Anyway, I can't tell anyone else I know.

DENISE

Oh, Vinnie. All those poor kids staring at swimsuit calendars. They don't know it-- but that's as close as they're ever gonna get!

Vinnie Jr. looks at Denise. A major weight is being lifted off his adolescent shoulders.

She smiles at Vinnie Jr.

DENISE

Who was the girl in the market yesterday?

VINCE JR. (embarrassed)

Just someone from school.

DENISE (beat, then)

She's a sweetie. Invite her over.

Vince Jr.'s face: what a party...

109. INT. JEEP IN ORCHARD BEACH PARKING LOT

Tony and Joyce are hungrily kissing each other. She maneuvers herself off the drivers seat and onto his lap.

Joyce's face: it's been a long time since passion overcame her. Tony's face: it's been a long time period.

Tony jams the seat backwards. Now it's a bed. The make-out continues.

110. EXT. CANAL STREET ARMORY

Vince getting closer. A CASTING ASSISTANT comes out.

CASTING ASSISTANT

We'll take the next ten inside and that's it for the day.

She starts counting. Gets to Ten. Number Ten is Vince! He can't believe it.

111. INT. CASTING OFFICE

Vince and the other ten guys sit. They're reading sides-- pages of the scene. Vince struggles to make sense of it. Looks around at the others, who seem awfully casual about this.

The Casting Assistant appears.

CASTING ASSISTANT
Vince Rizzo?

He drops his pages in shock. Scrambles to pick them up. Collects himself. As he walks in--

CASTING ASSISTANT
Relax. Be yourself.

112. INT. CASTING OFFICE

A large, windowless room. A CASTING DIRECTOR sits behind a table at one end. At the other end of the room, a single chair is placed in the center. A cam corder sits on a tripod next to the casting director, pointed at the chair.

CASTING DIRECTOR
Have a seat.

Vince freezes.

CASTING ASSISTANT
Sir. Have a seat and slate yourself.

Vince sits down, puzzled.

VINCE
Uh...say again?

She turns the cam-corder on.

CASTING ASSISTANT
Look into the camera and say your name.

VINCE
Oh. Vincent Rizzo, correctional officer
426.

113. INT. JEEP

Joyce and Tony necking passionately. He fondles her breasts. As the make-out continues...

114. INT. CASTING OFFICE

The casting director is listening to Vince read. It's not going well. His reading is wooden. Strangely, he is using Marlon Brando's accent from "The Godfather".

VINCE (reading from script)
 "So make no mistake, Joey. From here on out, I'm watching you. What you do. Who you do? Was it...no. Watch it cause Frankie Grinucci has eyes in the back of his head."
 (pause-puzzled)
 My head. Must mean in the back of my head.

The Casting Assistant's eyes are on the ceiling.

CASTING ASSISTANT
 Thank you, Mr. Rizzo.

VINCE (looks at her)
 S'that it?

She nods. As Vince stands, though, the phone rings.

CASTING DIRECTOR
 Just a moment.

She holds up a finger signaling Vince to wait. Listens to the voice on the other end of the phone.

CASTING DIRECTOR
 Absolutely...absolutely...absolutely...
 (and then)
 I'll try.

She motions for Vince to come back.

CASTING DIRECTOR
 Are you an actor Mr. Rizzo?

Vince looks around.

VINCE
 Uh-not really. I'm a corrections officer.

CASTING DIRECTOR
 A prison guard?

VINCE
 Guess you could call it that.

CASTING DIRECTOR
Where do you work?

VINCE
North Jersey State Correctional.

CASTING DIRECTOR
That one of those...country club prisons?

Vince can't help but be slightly offended. Perhaps this is what was intended?

VINCE
I wouldn't call it that, sir, not by a longshot. We got people in there who...lemme put it this way: if you could see inside their minds and what they're thinking...you wouldn't be thinking of no golf game.

CASTING DIRECTOR
Tell me more about what you do.
What's a typical day like?

VINCE
Typical? Well...no such animal. Some days it's rote and tote—you know, roll call and work duty. Nothin' much happens. Other days...
(pause, then)
...other days there's trouble. Gangs get outta control. We gotta lockdown. The boys and girls have their little bitch spats just like in the real world only they jump some bones and try to make their mettle on the new recruits. Ugly stuff. Sometimes guys come in and I say to myself "Two words for you: bye-bye." Cause I know they ain't getting out the same as they came in, if you know what I mean.

CASTING DIRECTOR
You know this scene we just read?
Could you do it in your own words?

Vince thinks. Shrugs. What the hell.

VINCE

My own words? Well, I didn't read the whole script or nothin', but it seems like this Joey Zambooli thinks he's got the goods on the guy I play. Frankie—
(consults script)
Grinucci. Which makes this Zambooli the worst kind of creep.

CASTING DIRECTOR

Why do you say that?

VINCE

Well, like for instance, where I work? It's all about power. And guys like Zambooli come at the new guys and try to intimidate them. And if you don't get in their face fast, they'll have you on all fours sucking the cement.
(pause, then)
Pardon me.

CASTING DIRECTOR

So what's the best way to deal with these guys?

VINCE

Well what I would do is make it very clear from the beginning that I am more psycho than they are.

Tony's words.

CASTING DIRECTOR

Explain that to me.

VINCE

Well... I'd put my hand on this Joey Zambooli's shoulder and sorta from nowhere I'd go: "I think I'm pissed off with you but I don't know why. Do I got a reason?"

CASTING DIRECTOR

Look right into the camera, as if you were talking to Zambooli.

Vince does as he's told. WE SEE THROUGH THE CAMCORDER LENS, VINCE GIVING THE FOLLOWING PERFORMANCE.

VINCE

Yeah. I'd say, "Hey, Joey Zambooli, you think I got a reason to be pissed off with you? Gimme your top ten reasons you're a piece of shit and I'll let you know when somethin' rings a bell. Just don't lie to me and don't figure me for one of your sissy-boys who're gonna put out for you. I got the eyes in the front, the back and the side of my head and they all see twenty-twenty. Comprende, you sadly deformed excuse for humanity posing as a piece of prison garbage? You mess with Tony Nard--
 (pause—he corrects himself)
 --no. You mess with Frankie Grinucci, you lose.

He stops, a little startled by what just came out of him.

CASTING DIRECTOR

Okay. Thank you.

VINCE

- Yeah, you better thank me you piece of shit. You lying, two-bit punk-ass-

The Casting Assistant stops Vince.

CASTING ASSISTANT

Mr. Rizzo. Thank you.

Vince looks at the casting assistant, puzzled. She smiles a plastic smile back.

115. INT. WEST BANK CAFÉ DAYLIGHT

The theater spot for actors, employed and unemployed. Vince and Molly sit at the bar. He drinks a beer. She drinks a Martini, astounded at the story he's telling.

MOLLY

You did an improv for Martin Scorsese? Vincent—that's no everyday garden variety audition. You're...why you're in the *elite* corps of auditioneers.

VINCE

Yeah, it was pretty cool, all right.
 (frowns)
 But it was bullshit.

MOLLY
What do you mean?

VINCE
I made it sound like...you know...that's
the way I talk to the guys inside.
(pause, then)
That's the way my son talks. Tony.

MOLLY
That's even better. You co-opted
another's experience and filtered it
through your personality and out came a
performance. That's not bullshit,
Vincent. That's *acting*.

Vince's cell rings. He looks at it nervously.

VINCE
Hello? Yeah, this is me.
(pause—he looks confused)
You want me to come back? Why,
I forget something?

116. INT. CASTING OFFICE

The Casting Assistant is alone in the big room, on the phone.

CASTING ASSISTANT
The producers would like to see you
again with some of the other actors
who've already been cast. This would
be--Wednesday at two. Can you make it?

117. INT. WEST BANK CAFÉ DAYLIGHT

Vince on the phone. Molly's eyes are bug: she can tell what's happening.

VINCE
The other actors'll be there?
(pause)
Yeah. I gotta take off work
but...Wednesday should be fine...

Molly is jumping up and down in her seat, mouthing the words: CALL BACK? CALL BACK?

VINCE
Okay. Sounds good. I'll be there.
Hey thank you. For everything there.
And thank him for me too. Yeah.

He hangs up.

MOLLY
They called you back?

VINCE (stunned)
I guess so.

A strange pause. We can see in Molly's face that she is both excited and disappointed.

MOLLY
Oh, Vincent. Your first time out..

VINCE
Yeah, how 'bout that.
(pause)
What's wrong?

MOLLY (pause, then)
It's an old theatrical adage. Everytime a friend succeeds, a little something in me dies.

(shaking it off)
No. It's brilliant. It's the way it has to be. We meet, to have coffee and tell secrets and for me to show you the advertisement in backstage that launches your career. After all, if I'm not making history, I at least want to be a part of it!

VINCE
I ain't exactly got the part yet. What if I screw up this call-back?

MOLLY
Then you'll probably get the job!

VINCE
Yeah. Then I'll probably get the job!

Molly stands on the bar rail and yells to the other patrons:

MOLLY
Hello everyone! Listen to me! This is my friend Vincent Rizzo and on his very first audition ever he got to improvise for Martin Scorsese and they've already called him back to read with the other actors.

(and then)
And he's a *prison guard!*

The people at the bar all applaud. Way to go! Who says it can't happen?

118. EXT. ORCHARD BEACH PARKING LOT DAYLIGHT

The Jeep hasn't moved.

119. INT. JEEP DAYLIGHT

Tony and Joyce in the car. They are still kissing. He begins to unbutton his pants. She helps him. But then she stops. Looks at him. As if to convince herself--

JOYCE

S'okay, Tony. I'm not just like doin' this for revenge...

TONY

No, look, I don't care. Doesn't matter to me.

She undoes his pants. The make-out continues.

TONY (cont.)

Only lemme ask you...

(pause)

If he wasn't foolin' around on you--

JOYCE

Don't worry 'bout that. He's made his decisions. Now I'm making mine.

She looks down at his crotch. Tony's eyes are wide with anticipation. But--

TONY

Okay, but what if...what if he hadn't?

JOYCE

Hadn't what?

TONY (lost now)

Made what you thought he'd made?

Joyce stares at him. Now she's a little pissed. But she plays coy.

JOYCE (a little hurt)

Maybe you got another feelin'?

TONY

What other feeling?

JOYCE (demure)

I don't know. Like you don't like me?

Tony stares at Joyce.

TONY

This is definitely not the case.

HE CRASHES HIS MOUTH INTO HERS. And the make out continues.

120. INT. DENISE'S HOUSE DAYLIGHT

Denise, Vince Jr. and Cheryl eat a mountainous meal.

CHERYL

My parents put me on a diet of seaweed and watermelon. I thought I was gonna starve to death.

(and then, with self-loathing)

My sister's are both runway models. I hate them. All they do is throw up and go shopping. Why do I have to be beautiful too? I hate beautiful people.

DENISE

You are beautiful honey! We're all beautiful people. Only our society has taught us that we're ugly if we're not a certain weight. They teach you to be a glutton for every kind of product they sell, then they open huge supermarkets filled with food and tell you your not supposed to eat too much! Hello America! Where's the beef?

(pause)

I said, where's the beef?

Vince Jr. snaps too. Grabs the platter of spare ribs.

VINCE JR.

Um, sorry. Here.

As he serves the girls--

121. INT. WEST BANK CAFÉ DAYLIGHT

Vince and Molly, having another round. They've had a few already and this, combined with the events of the day, are sending them into the orbits.

MOLLY

I have a dear friend who was sleeping with a William Morris agent for weeks! I'm sure she would put you in touch if there was a deal to be made.

VINCE

Course, my daughter's gonna go to law school. Maybe she could help out with the...deal. You know?
(to bartender)
Hey, encore here, huh?

He makes a "two more" motion. The bartender starts mixing.

MOLLY

What about your wife, Vincent? Have you thought of how you'll tell her? I mean—she doesn't even know of your acting ambitions as yet, does she?

VINCE

No, she don't know nothin'. She thinks I gotta poker game.

122. INT. JEEP ORCHARD BEACH DAYLIGHT

Tony and Joyce making out. Once again she's heading for his crotch. Once again he stops her.

JOYCE

What?

TONY

Joyce. I can't. It's not that I don't wanna. It's not nothin' except...
Joyce. Maybe your husband...
(pause)

I mean maybe he's got something else goin' on in his life. Maybe it's not a poker game but that don't mean it's gotta be another woman.

JOYCE (sarcastic)

Oh yeah? What's he, taken a class somewhere? Puh-leeze.

Tony's eyes: wide! She's onto it and doesn't know it.

TONY

Joyce.
(and then)
I'm sorry. I can't.

He's looking ahead, frozen with the demands of his own conscience. Joyce sees that he means it. Tony's eyes:

conflicted between what he thinks is right and what his dick thinks is right.

123. INT. WEST BANK CAFÉ DAYLIGHT

VINCE

She ain't gonna believe it. No matter what I say, she ain't gonna believe it. Jesus. I gotta lot to back up and explain to her. Hard to know where to start.

The new drinks arrive. They each sip, thinking.

MOLLY

I suppose the truth is out of the question.

VINCE (quickly)

Oh yeah.

(pause, an idea)

I got it! You're my manager! We'll say that you discovered me.

MOLLY (warming to the idea)

In some strange way—my brother's an inmate or some such nonsense, and I'm a talent manager and I brought you in to read for Mr. Scorsese. Right. If she has any problems, they'll be directed at me.

VINCE (not liking that)

Is that okay?

MOLLY

Wives always hate me, Vincent. I'm used to it.

(pause, then)

City Island. Here we come.

He gets to his feet. Wobbly! So's she. They hold onto each other as they exit into the twilight.

124. EXT. RIZZO HOUSE DAYLIGHT

The Jeep pulls up. Tony and Joyce get out. Obviously, they are not talking. Tony walks a little funny. As Joyce starts up the stairs—

TONY
 Hey. Thanks.
 (pause)
 I had a great time.

Joyce looks at him, profoundly hurt and annoyed. She shakes her head patronizingly and enters the house.

Tony stares after her as the door slams. Once she's gone—

TONY
 Shit. Shit. Shit.

EXT. EXPRESSWAY DAYLIGHT

The Rambler approaches the exit sign that reads: CITY ISLAND AND ORCHARD BEACH.

MOLLY (points out)
 Oh look! You can see the bridge from here! And boats. And co-op city! What a brilliant sunset. Can we stop?

125. INT. GARAGE DAYLIGHT

Tony sits, glowering.

Suddenly Tony stands up and BANGS his head against the wall, once, twice, three times.

Scary. He pauses. Self-loathing and fury in his eyes.

Then he notices:

HIS BELONGINGS IN THE CORNER

A couple of pairs of pants and socks. Plus his duffle bag.

In his eyes, impending freedom. He throws the bag together and finds a piece of wire from a hanger on the floor. He bends it and conceals it under his shirt. Checks his appearance in the reflection of the window and then, on his way out notices

A PACK OF MATCHES ON THE FLOOR

He picks them up. *The matches from Hell's Half Acre that Vivian tossed away the previous day.*

Tony's face: staring at the caricature of the curvaceous woman on the cover. Looks on the back of the matches. Lo and behold:

AN ADDRESS: "Hells Half Acre. 2100 Route 6, Piscataway, New Jersey."

126. EXT. DRIVEWAY DAYLIGHT

Tony looks upstairs at a light in the window. He can see the glow of a television and a silhouette of Joyce.

He makes his way stealthily down the driveway, keeping his eyes on the window.

127. EXT. CITY ISLAND DAYLIGHT

The Rambler drives down the main street of the village.

128. EXT. RIZZO DRIVEWAY DAYLIGHT

Tony opens the door to the jeep. Quickly and expertly attaches the wire to the ignition head. Pigs it to another wire. A moment later, the engine starts.

He shuts the door, quickly backing out of the driveway and jamming forward, down the little street.

Tony has boosted the Rizzo's car.

129. EXT. CITY ISLAND DOCKS DAYLIGHT

Magic Hour—a glorious summertime 7PM, where the sun hangs in the air, slowly sinking. Molly and Vince stand at Island's edge.

MOLLY

Every busy city needs an island of peace. And every busy soul needs a place of repose.

(pause, then)

Tell it to me again. Your big secret.

VINCE

About Tony? Well, you know the whole thing. You're the only one who does.

MOLLY

But how did it work? How did you meet his mom? And when did you know you were leaving?

Beat. Vince looks into her and can see that she has a reason for wanting these specifics. Deep breath. Here it goes...

VINCE

Well, when I was 'bout nineteen, I met Nan who was older. And she was hot for me and I was hot to get away from my family. We drank at the same bar. And before you know it...we were living at her place in Jersey.

(pause, then)

Strange how things happen when you're not even looking.

130. INT. JEEP DRIVING DAYLIGHT

Tony drives, Reggae dance hall BLARING from the radio. He grooves along with the radio, cruises in and out of traffic and generally seems to be having a great time. Freedom!

131. INT. RIZZO BATHROOM

Joyce is brushing her teeth. But she's out of toothpaste. She opens a closet door and finds

VINCE'S BOOK

"An Actor Prepares". She stares at it, suspiciously. Opens it. Inside is a card, on which is written MOLLY CHARLESWORTH-917-463-3742. Joyce stares at the number, having at last found the enemy.

JOYCE

Bitch.

132. EXT. CITY ISLAND DOCKS DAYLIGHT

Vince and Molly.

VINCE (finishing his tale)

And then the next things she's pregnant and by then I knew she was bad news for me and I tried to get her to get rid of the kid.

(remembering the moment)

And she said to me: "I know you'll be leaving soon anyway. And I ain't getting left with nothing for myself." And that's how I knew she was having the kid and I had to just...do what I had to do.

(pause, then)

I had seventy-five hundred bucks saved from when I started working with my dad on his boat. It was gonna put me through City College. I sent it to her instead. Then I got hooked up with the prison

stuff—figured I needed a good steady income and pension. I never heard from Nan again.

MOLLY

And did you ever tell anyone else in your family?

VINCE

Nah. I didn't wanna burden nobody else. Besides, I wasn't too proud of taking off.

MOLLY

Leaving's never pretty. No matter how you do it.

A beat. Then Molly's cell phone rings. She answers it.

MOLLY

Hello...Hello...

But there's nobody there.

133. INT. RIZZO BEDROOM

Joyce hangs up the phone, pain and anger in her eyes. She mimics Molly's accent.

JOYCE

Hulew! Hulew! Bitch.

134. EXT. CITY ISLAND DOCKS DAYLIGHT

Molly and Vince. She hangs up the cell. An odd look in her eye.

MOLLY

There was nobody there.

VINCE

I hate these things—I'm always getting' wrong numbers.

MOLLY

No, it wasn't a wrong number, it was... an announcement. A ring—a bell, an indication.

VINCE

Of what?

MOLLY (smiles)
 Now, Vincent. Now's the time. You do
 have it on you, don't you?

Vince's face: blank for a moment. Then he realizes she
 means: the envelope! The secret! He pulls it out.

VINCE
 Your secret? Yeah, course.
 (before he opens it)
 You sure?

She nods. Doesn't take her eyes off him. He opens it. Inside
 is a single photograph.

THE PHOTO

is of three very young children, all grouped on a couch,
 smiling at the camera.

VINCE
 Who are they?

MOLLY (beat, then)
 My three secrets.

Vince takes this in—trying to connect the Molly he knows
 with the Molly that is being revealed. She looks him in the
 eye. Her looks says it all. He takes it in. Then, quietly—

VINCE
 Where are they?

MOLLY
 With my husband in Schenectady.

VINCE
 Schenectady? Upstate? What were you
 doin' up there?

MOLLY
 The real question is: what am I doing
 down here?
 (and then)
 That's where I'm from, Vincent. Born and
 raised.

VINCE
 Your family own some big business up
 there or somethin'?

MOLLY

My father was the janitor at the grade school. My mother left when I was six.
(the photo)
And their mother left a year ago.

Big beat. Vince connecting the enchantress he knows with the woman she's revealing herself to be.

VINCE (pause, then)

Why?

MOLLY

To see if it was possible to pretend the past never existed.
(and finally)
Don't hate me, Vincent. I thought if anyone might understand, it would be you.

Vince looks at the picture. Then at her. In his eyes, sadness—as much at himself as at her. He extends his hand. She takes it.

135. EXT. ROUTE 6 NEW JERSEY DAYLIGHT

The Jeep swerves in and out of traffic, at double the speed of the other drivers. It takes a sharp right and heads off the road.

136. EXT. HELLS HALF ACRE DAYLIGHT

The Jeep pulls in. Plenty of other rowdy cars in the parking lot. Tony parks and gets out. Feels fucking great!

137. INT. HELL'S HALF ACRE

Tony enters. A bouncer stands at a curtain. Behind him is visible the bar and the elevated dance floor. Strippers undulate. The bouncer looks at Tony.

BOUNCER

You got I.D.?

Tony pulls out his wallet. Produces a prison I.D. card. The Bouncer shrugs. Nods him in. Tony enters.

THE MAIN ROOM

Heads for the bar. Catches Bruno the Bartender's eye.

TONY

Heineken.

Bruno nods, pours a cold one. Tony puts down a twenty. Turns and looks at the stage longingly.

Three strippers, pole dancing. Hot stuff. Tony stares, trying to drink in a good long look. Then—

TONY'S FACE

--something funny here. He moves back into the main room staring at one of the strippers. Yes, it's--

VIVIAN

Wrapping her legs around the pole.

TONY'S FACE

He can't put it together. He moves closer to the stage.

VIVIAN

Wrapping legs, shaking booty. Customers pant. She opens her eyes. And—bingo! SEES TONY.

TONY'S FACE

Not wanting to be seen but frozen in place.

VIVIAN'S FACE

Not wanting to be seen, but frozen in place.

They each stare bug eyed at each other. Then she jumps off the stage and races off.

Tony goes out the front way.

EXT. REAR DOOR OF HELL'S HALF ACRE

Vivian emerges in a bathrobe and slippers. Slams the door behind her, grasps the wall and closes her eyes.

VIVIAN
Shit.

138. EXT. FRONT DOOR OF HELL'S HALF ACRE DAYLIGHT

Tony emerges, looks confused.

TONY
Shit.

The bouncer stares at him.

THE REAR OF THE BUILDING

where Vivian is trying to calm down. She furtively looks over her shoulder out toward--

THE PARKING LOT

where she stares ahead at--

JOYCE'S JEEP

Vivian's eyes: filled with suspicion. She walks to the car. Opens the door and then the glove compartment.

The handcuffs fall out. So does a cell phone.

TONY

watches Vivian discover the jeep. Fear in his eyes. He briefly looks like he might flee. But this is not an option. After squirming a little, he heads toward her.

TONY

Uh. Hi.

VIVIAN (furious)

What are you doing here?

TONY

Yeah, well, guess I could ask the same question.

VIVIAN

Does my mother know you have her car?

TONY

Does she know you're a stripper?

Beat.

VIVIAN

Give me the key.

(pause, then)

Do you even have it?

(pause, then)

You don't have it.

(a smile now)

You stole my mother's car! Didn't you?

Oh, you loser!

Tony's eyes: real fear. She takes the cell phone and dials 911.

TONY

I really think before you do anything we should talk.

VIVIAN

About what? Economic theory?

(into cell)

Hello, I'd like to report a stolen car. Yeah, I can hold.

(and then)

J-A-I-L, here he comes!

TONY

I thought you went to college.

VIVIAN

Who says I don't go to college?

TONY

What's this, your part-time gig?

VIVIAN

I don't have to tell you anything.

TONY

So you *do* go to college?

VIVIAN

I do? I mean—yes! I do but...shit, why are you even here?

TONY (the matchbook)

Cause I found this in the garage.

VIVIAN

Shit! Well, so what? My parents aren't gonna listen to anything you have to say once they find out you stole their car!

(into phone)

Hi, yes. My mother's car was stolen. License plate number is...

She doesn't know it. She goes to the back of the car. But Tony runs to the back of the car and stands in front of the plate as Vivian tries to read it.

VIVIAN

Hold on!

She runs to the front of the car. But Tony sprints there first and once again obscures the license plate

with his body. In frustration, she turns to run to the back again but—

SHE TRIPS

falling on her face and sending the cell phone skidding across the asphalt. Tony makes a diving leap for the phone and grabs it.

VIVIAN
GIVE ME THAT!

TONY
CALM DOWN!

VIVIAN
YOU STOLE MY MOTHERS CAR!

TONY
AND YOU'RE A STRIPPER!

VIVIAN
STRIPPING ISN'T AGAINST THE LAW!

TONY
DOES THAT MEAN IT'S OKAY FOR ME TO TELL
YOUR PARENTS 'BOUT WHAT YOU DO?

VIVIAN
DON'T YOU DARE! LOSER!

TONY
BITCH!

VIVIAN
JAILBIRD!

TONY
HOOKER!

VIVIAN
DON'T CALL ME THAT! I'M NOT A HOOKER.

TONY
SHOWIN' YOUR TITS FOR MONEY, WHAT'S
THAT CALLED? LIBRARIAN?

VIVIAN
I GOT SUSPENDED FROM SCHOOL AND LOST
MY SCHOLARSHIP! IT'S JUST SO I CAN
MAKE ENOUGH MONEY TO GO BACK AND NOT
HAVE TO TELL MY PARENTS WHAT HAPPENED!

TONY (laughing at this)
AND I'M A LOSER, HUH?

She hits Tony hard on his face. This stops him.

TONY STANDS

throwing her to the ground. Beat.

TONY
Oh, the hell with all of you.

HE THROWS THE CELL PHONE

across traffic and the highway. Vivian looks stunned as Tony marches to the car. He grabs the handcuffs, cuffs one end to himself and the other end to Vivian's arm.

VIVIAN
What are you doing?

TONY
I'm taking your mom's car back with you in it—so you know I really delivered. And only you know I took it and only I know you work here. That's the deal forever. Unless one of us blows it.
(then)
That's how it works where I've been and that's how it's gonna work with you and me. Got it, Vivian?

She gets it. But she looks at the handcuffs.

VIVIAN
Take these off.

TONY
Sorry. But your behavior towards me in the past few days hasn't exactly earned my trust.

Vivian's hostile glare at Tony is mixed with something else; the guilty knowledge that he's right.

139. INT. JEEP DRIVING DAYLIGHT

Tony drives with his un-handcuffed hand. Hostile silence.

VIVIAN
Why did my father bring you home?

TONY
I have no idea.

Hostile silence. Then—

VIVIAN
What was goin' on with you and my mom?

TONY
Nothing.

VIVIAN
Are you gonna tell them that I'm a—

TONY
I gave you my word, didn't I? My word is my word. Which is something you and your jerkoff family probably never heard of. Bunch of lyin' psychos.

Tony is finished. He stares ahead at the road. Vivian doesn't react overtly.

But in the mirror we see that her eyes are welling up.

140. EXT. RIZZO HOUSE NIGHT

The Rambler pulls up. Vince and Molly get out. Molly looks at the little clapboard house and smiles.

But Vince notices the empty parking space, the lack of Jeep.

VINCE
What the hell?

MOLLY
What's wrong?

VINCE
She ain't home. Maybe she went out for some food.

They mount the stairs and enter the house.

141. INT. HOUSE

Vince and Molly in the living room. Vince unpacks his pockets of keys, change. Molly sits on the couch.

VINCE
Now I'm thinkin', when she comes in I'm gonna say: "Joyce, it's time we had a talk."

142. RIZZO BEDROOM

Joyce is lying in bed. She hears Vince's voice, gets up from the bed and heads for the

143. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Where she sees Vince and Molly from the top of the stairs. She looks puzzled. They cannot see her.

MOLLY

Vincent, darling, it's the wrong way.
Women—they feel challenged by too much
honesty too quickly.

Joyce's face: *what the hell?*

VINCE

Trust me, twenty-years I've been
with her. I know what I'm talkin'
about—

MOLLY

Vincent, darling, thirty years I've
been a woman. Let me handle her. We
begin casually. No mention at all
of anything unusual going on. Before she
can even think to ask what I'm doing
here, she'll be thanking me for having
come into your life.

Joyce's face: *enough is enough.* Slowly she walks down the stairs. Molly sees her first. Looks puzzled. Motions to Vince who turns.

VINCE

Hey, you're home!

Joyce nods, face blank with shock and outrage.

JOYCE

Yeah, Vince, I'm home. Where I live.
(looks at Molly)
Who's this?

Molly stands and extends an arm.

MOLLY

Molly Charlesworth. A pleasure!

Joyce doesn't take her hand. Uncomfortable pause. Molly withdraws it and looks at Vince.

VINCE

Molly here...well, we got somethin'
to tell you.

(flustered—to Molly)

Go ahead.

JOYCE

I got something to tell you, Vince.

VINCE (eyes narrow)

Oh yeah? Well, what we got to tell is
really very important here.

JOYCE

Oh really? Well what I got to tell
is pretty important too.

VINCE

Well...is it more important or less
important than what we gotta tell?

JOYCE

How would I know that Vince? I don't
know what you have to tell me.

Beat. She has led him successfully down the path of total
incomprehension.

MOLLY (helpfully)

May I say--

JOYCE

Don't say a word, bitch.

Gasp. Molly looks astounded. Vince looks astounded. Joyce
is calm with righteousness. But the pot has begun to boil.

VINCE

Joyce! What the—

JOYCE

Prick! Into my house you bring her, huh?
Into my own house where I raised your
two children you bring this... *thing* of
yours. Well lemme tell you Vince, I'm
gonna do you a big favor. I'm gonna put
both of you outta your misery here.
I'm not gonna be insulted in my own
house. I want you gone, Vince. Out of my
life! No more running around behind my
back. No more cheap, dirty lies! No more
lying in bed wondering who else has been
touching my husband. No more lying
to myself that it doesn't matter.

I found passion today, Vince, and
it felt great. I was touched and
kissed and held and it felt like
you haven't made me feel in years!

Molly and Vince are watching the monologue, mouths agape.
Long beat.

VINCE
What are you talkin' here?

JOYCE
I'm talking about Tony!

Big beat.

VINCE
You did somethin'...with Tony?

JOYCE
More than "something", Vince!

Vince's eyes: thunderstruck. He suddenly rushes off into
the kitchen. The sound of him wrenching over the sink.

Joyce looks perplexed. Molly doesn't. She knows what's
wrong.

MOLLY
Oh dear. Greek in scope...

Just then—

JOYCE SEES THE JEEP THROUGH THE WINDOW

JOYCE
That's my car!

Joyce watches as Tony and Vivian mount the stairs, still
hand-cuffed to each other.

VINCE

stumbles back into the room, dabbing his face with a wet
cloth. What he sees is:

TONY AND VIVIAN HANDCUFFED TOGETHER

And she's in a robe.

VINCE'S FACE

Veins are popping. The thought that Tony has had both his
wife and daughter is too much. He grabs a BUTCHER KNIFE AND
CHARGES TONY.

VINCE
AGGGGGHHHHHH!!!

Everyone screams. Vince lunges for Tony. Tony jumps out of the way, dragging Vivian with him.

Vince lands on the floor in front of the door. Joyce grabs the handcuffs, trying to keep them from running.

JOYCE
Vince—get the key!

Vince gets up, fumbles in his pockets and pulls out his keys. Hands them to Joyce and wields the knife at Tony who looks terrified. Joyce unlocks Vivian who runs across the room. Tony shoves Vince away and dashes for the back door, handcuffs dangling from his wrist.

144. EXT. RIZZO BACKYARD NIGHT

As Tony jumps out, Vince comes after him with the knife.

*
VINCE
You sonavabitch bastard—you better run!
I'm gonna kill ya!! I'm gonna kill ya!!

145. INT. DENISE'S HOUSE NIGHT

Vince Jr., Cheryl and Denise are eating M&M's and watching TV. Vince's voice pierces the walls.

Vince Jr. sits up.

VINCE JR.
Dad?

Concerned looks. He gets up and goes to the window. Denise and Cheryl follow. They look—

THROUGH THE WINDOW

146. EXT. RIZZO BACKYARD NIGHT

Vince has Tony trapped by the garage.

VINCE
You piece of shit—you screwed my wife? My daughter? Who was next, my son?

TONY
I didn't screw nobody!

ON THE BACK PORCH

Molly, Joyce and Vivian stare at the scene.

VIVIAN
 He didn't screw nobody!
 (then—looks at Joyce)
 Did he?

Joyce, stymied by the goings-ons, can't answer.

VINCE AND TONY

Vince is wielding the knife, trying to trap Tony who's dodging and feinting for his life.

TONY
 Put it down, man, put it down!
 You're making a huge mistake!

VINCE
 AGGGGGHHHH!!!

HE HURLS THE BUTCHER KNIFE

It sails over the fence, cleaning missing Tony and disappearing from sight.

VINCE JR.
 Jeez, Dad. Pretty lame.

TONY
 There. No more knives, okay?
 (he approaches Vince)
 Peace. Okay? I don't know what
 you think happened here—but
 peace. Okay, Vince? Then we'll
 talk.

He's holding his hands out like a suspect apprehended.
 The handcuffs dangle from his wrist.

VINCE (pause, then)
 Okay peace.

Vince holds up his hands in mimicry of Tony. Then—

VINCE GRABS THE HANDCUFF

And yanks Tony to the ground.

JOYCE
 Leave him alone, Vince!

Tony howls in pain as Vince, in expert prison guard mode, subdues him, twists his wrist and drags him across the cement yard. He attaches the other end of the handcuff to the wooden deck.

Then he runs to the garage, grabs the other pair of handcuffs and chains Tony's leg.

Tony is now chained, on all fours, like a wild animal. Vince whacks him across the face.

JOYCE
Stop it!

VINCE (whacks him again)
Bastard!

TONY
Leave me alone!

As Vince winds up to whack him again—

JOYCE

Is moved to action. She jumps off the back porch and throws her tiny frame onto Vince's back. Pounds him with her fists.

JOYCE
Stop it, Vince! He didn't do nothing!

Vince spins around, trying to get Joyce off his back but she stays attached.

VINCE
What about your Goddam passion and all that crap?

The two of the them are now arguing while she rides piggy back on him.

JOYCE
So what about yours, Vince? Your Molly Ringwald over there who's gonna take care of everything for you and who I'm supposed to thank for "being in your life". You bring your filthy girlfriend into my house—

VINCE
She's not my girlfriend!

Joyce looks up at Molly who, appalled, shakes her head.

MOLLY
I'm his manager.

JOYCE
His what?

VINCE
For the Scorsese movie with De Niro.

JOYCE
What De Niro movie?

VINCE
That's what I was trying to tell
you! I'm gonna be in a Robert
De Niro movie directed by Martin
Scorsese!

Beat. All look at each other, puzzled.

JOYCE
What kind of bullshit is that?

MOLLY
Actually, he hasn't been signed
yet. But he auditioned today
and apparently made quite an
impression. They've called him back.

JOYCE
You auditioned for a movie today?

VINCE
Yeah and Molly here—well...she sorta...
(pause, sigh, what the hell)
...she's a friend of mine. We're in
acting class together. She told me
to go this audition here so I went.

JOYCE
Acting class? When do you go
to acting class?

VINCE
WHEN I PLAY POKER!

Pause. Nobody can figure this out.

MOLLY
It's a ruse, you see. He didn't
want you to know because Vincent
has feelings of shame and inferi-
ority about his ambitions.

JOYCE

Is this just a lot of crap?

VINCE

No, it's the truth. And I wanted to tell you about it but I knew you'd be mad about lying to you about the class so Molly here said she'd come along and...pretend to be my manager!

Joyce dismounts Vince. Stares at him. He stares back at her. So much frustration, jealousy, and sheer anger.

JOYCE

I don't believe you.

VINCE

You know what honey? I don't give a shit! In fact, I don't give two shits! You don't believe me? Fine with me. You got a few things to answer for yourself, here.

(he looks at Tony)

What's goin' on here?

JOYCE

Nothing, I was just...I was...just...

(feels scared)

You're leaving me...for her. Aren't you?

She nods to Molly. Vivian looks at Molly as if for the first time.

VIVIAN

Oh come on. Dad couldn't get her!

VINCE

You keep your mouth shut, little girl. What are you doin' running around with that animal in your robe there?

Pause. From the ground:

TONY

Tell him.

(looks up at Vivian)

Tell him!

She shakes her head, nervously.

VIVIAN

I was back at school and I-

TONY

Tell him the truth! You're all
so sick, just tell each other
the Goddam truth!

Joyce and Vince staring at their daughter. Tony looks as
well. He and Vivian lock eyes. It's clear she won't give
first so-

TONY

I stole your car. You hear me? I
boosted your Goddam car so I could
take off and get away from all your
crap! I couldn't live here
another thirty days if my life depended
on it. And if you want to send my
ass back to the cage, be my guest!

JOYCE

You stole the car?

VINCE

What's that got to do with her?

Tony stares at Vivian, who looks back at him. Beat. She
realizes it's her turn now.

Tension: Vince is preparing to whack Tony again. Vivian
must come clean or he will be hurt! As Tony stars at her-

VIVIAN

I'm...a strrr...a strr...stripper.

JOYCE (as if she misheard her)

A what?

(and then)

Oh my God. You're a what?

TONY

She's a stripper! She takes her clothes
off for money! Okay?

Vince and Joyce can't believe what they're hearing.
So each chooses not to believe it.

JOYCE

She is not!

VINCE

You lying piece of shit!

He whacks Tony hard. Vivian can't take it. As Vince
winds up to whack him again-

VIVIAN
Stop it, dad—it's true!

Big beat. Vince looks at his daughter. His eyes go to her chest.

So do Joyce's eyes.

So do Tony's eyes.

Vivian tries to make her chest look smaller. Stares back defiantly.

VIVIAN
I paid for them myself! All right?

VINCE
No. No, you go to school, honey. You got that scholarship—

VIVIAN
They took it away.
(and then)
I can re-apply next year but no more scholarship. I gotta pay for it myself. And I'm gonna.

JOYCE
Why'd they take it away?

VIVIAN
Because my friend...because this guy I know...
(pause, finally)
Because I screwed up. Me. I screwed up and got caught with...pot in my room. "Pot." That is such a stupid little word.

Long pause. The family stares at each other.

JOYCE
They kicked you outta school and took away your scholarship over an ounce? Jeez. When I was at Oneonta, I couldn't get back into my dorm after a weekend unless I was carrying an ounce!

Vivian and her mother lock eyes. She sees at once that her mother would have been her best friend if she'd let her. Tears well up!

VIVIAN

Oh, mom, I'm such a screw-up!

VINCE (not as moved)

Wait a minute, here! What about this stealing my car? You know I could have you back inside in about ten minutes if I want to--

TONY (at Vince)

Fine, do it. At least everyone's honest. You're so scared of your wife you don't even smoke in front of her!

JOYCE (looks up)

Vince—you smokin'?

VINCE

No, I quit!

TONY

Liar! And you got your wife thinking you gotta girlfriend cause you're too scared to tell her you want to go to acting class.

(and then)

And the whole time, you got some weird agenda with me and you won't tell me what it is! Why'd you get me outta prison? Why'd you bring me here?

VINCE

I told you—I was a friend of your mothers!

TONY

My mother never had a friend so good they'd do me a right turn! Everybody hated her! She's a whore and a bitch and if she put you up to getting me out--

VINCE (raging)

SHE DIDN'T PUT ME UP TO NOTHING!
NOBODY PUTS ME UP TO NOTHING, LEAST OF
ALL YOUR MOTHER! SHE WAS A GODDAM PSYCHO
BITCH WHICH IS WHY I WALKED OUT
ON HER BEFORE YOU WERE BORN!

There it is! Tony and Vince stare at each other, each mutually shocked at what's now out in the open.

Molly is wide eyed.

Joyce tries to take this in.

Vivian stands, frozen, staring at Tony.

Tony is hyperventilating, on all fours.

So is Vince, standing over him.

TONY
Are...are...you...my...father?

Big beat. Quietly, as befits the moment—

VINCE (nods)
Yeah, Tony. I'm your...father.

Holding back tears as he says it. Tony holding back tears as he hears it.

Joyce looks shocked.

JOYCE (sotto)
Oh my God.

VIVIAN
Mom?

Joyce shakes her head.

JOYCE
Nothing.

Said like: *close call*. Vince turns and stares at her. His eyes are pleading for an answer that won't kill him.

VINCE
Honey...what happened here?

Meaning Tony. Her eyes plead forgiveness back.

JOYCE
Nothing, Sweetie.
(and then, looking at Tony)
Your son was a perfect gentleman.

Tony's eyes meet Joyce's: they know what they each shared and why their day together was ultimately a success.

JOYCE (back at Vince)
Anyway, how long you known about this guy?

Meaning Tony. Vince looks at her. Shrugs through his emotion.

VINCE

I meant to tell you the whole thing, sweetie. Years ago. Really. There's so much I been wanting to tell you. It just...never seems like the right time...

Tears forming in their eyes.

JOYCE

I thought you were just...sick of me.

VINCE

Sick? No. Scared of you maybe but not sick of you. You're...you're...

He looks around. Sees Molly. She pantomimes BREATHING DEEPLY. Vince remembers.

VINCE

You're the air that I breathe.

They embrace each other. Oh, how they embrace. *Like two people who are so happy to have each other back.*

Molly watches Vince and Joyce. Something in this moment is affecting her as well. Very gradually-

MOLLY BACKS AWAY INTO THE HOUSE

Her face: she is done here.

147. EXT. FRONT PORCH OF RIZZO HOUSE NIGHT

Molly exits. Looks down the little City Island street. As the song continues, we watch Molly walk alone into the encroaching evening.

148. EXT. RIZZO BACKYARD NIGHT

Joyce and Vince hugging each other.

TONY

Will somebody please unlock me?

Vince turns and stares at his son. Tony stares up at his father.

Long beat. Tony stares at his father. A tear glistens in his eye.

Vince unlocks Tony. Tony stands. A long look between the two-wordless, but filled with apology and a never-ending

sense of how weird life can be.

And then Tony and Vince hug each other. Vince grabs Joyce.
And even Tony and Vivian grab each other.

VIVIAN (amazed)
You're my brother! No wonder I...I...
(searching, then)
...I hate you so much!

At that moment—

DENISE'S WINDOW OPENS UP

Vince Jr. stands there. As Cheryl and Denise looks on—

VINCE JR. (pleased)
You were right mom. Dad did
have sex with Tony's mom!

Joyce looks at her son. Long beat. Then—she starts to laugh.
The more she tries to stop laughing the more she cries!

Vince watches this. His tears start to mix with his
laughter.

That odd mixture again. He cries and laughs onto Joyce's
shoulder.

Now the whole family is laughing and crying together,
as the sun sets over the Bronx.

149. EXT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL MORNING

The sun just breaking. A bus pulls out of the terminal
gates. In a window of the bus we see—

MOLLY

Sitting, watching as Manhattan recedes from view, the
sun breaking over the city.

150. INT. MALAKOV ACTING STUDIO

Class is being held.

The stage is empty. Michael Malakov says:

MALAKOV
Molly Charlesworth.

VINCE (pause, then)
She's not here.

Malakov turns to Vince.

MALAKOV
Was she your partner?

VINCE
Uh, yeah. She left town, I think.

MALAKOV (shrugs)
Hm. Well, class, you now have one less actor in New York City to worry about stealing your role.

People applaud sarcastically. But not Vince.

MALAKOV (cont.)
Vince? You ready?

Vince stands and walks to the stage...

He looks out at the faces in the audience. Seems calm and sure of himself. And, after taking a pause, he begins.

VINCE
You asked me my worst secret. My most personal secret. The secret of all my secrets. I get it.
(pause, then)
But first...I'm Vince Rizzo and I want to begin by telling you about where I live.

Now we realize that the opening monologue was, in fact, a flashback from this point. Joyce Rizzo stands at the back of the class. Looking at her husband with a different set of eyes.

151. EXT. STREET CORNER DAY

Vince exits a deli with three friends. They all bid each other a casual farewell. As Vince walks away—

THE SOUND OF A GUN GOING OFF

Vince looking scared. Bullets are in the air. And THREE BULLETS STRIKE VINCE.

He collapses on the sidewalk, blood pouring from his stomach, the look of unexpected death filling his eyes.

A very long pause. During which we, in the audience, might well be thinking: *what the hell just happened to this movie?*

152. EXT. RIZZO BACKYARD DAY

A yard party in progress. The whole Rizzo family—Joyce, Vivian, Vince Jr. and Tony. EVERYONE EXCEPT VINCE.

Joyce raises a glass of red wine in a solemn toast.

JOYCE
To my husband.

153. EXT. STREET CORNER DAY

Vince, still lying on the street "dead", blood pouring from him. Finally he hears—

SCORSESE'S VOICE
Cut. Great! Thanks, everyone.

Vince opens an eye. He's helped up by some of the crew. His moment on screen—getting murdered by Martin Scorsese—is over.

Costume and props and assistants help him up, clean him, congratulate him. He looks proud. Vince is now a working actor.

154. EXT. RIZZO BACKYARD DAY

Joyce, continuing her toast. A smile now appearing on her lips.

JOYCE
To my husband. The best actor in City Island.

Now we see Vince, standing at the barbeque. He smiles at Joyce. Then Tony steps up with his toast.

TONY
To my father. *The only actor in City Island.*

He smiles at the man who is his dad. And his dad smiles back at his boy.

VINCE (V.O)
Somehow, with Tony's appearance a lot of good things happened. I shoulda looked for him years ago.

Everyone seated at the picnic table. Behind them the view of the water. New York City in the distance, clear as a friggin' bell.

VINCE (V.O.)

Every busy city needs an island of peace.
Just as every busy soul needs a place of
repose. Before, City Island was the place
where I hid from my own life.

(and then)

Now it's home. For everyone. What else you
need?

The food is on the plates. Grace time. Everyone bows their
heads.

VINCE

Yeah. We thank you for this meal here...
And to show our faith and unity...
a moment of silence.

As Vince says Grace, we see their faces. Vince. Joyce.
Vivian. Vince Jr. Tony.

Vince and Joyce look at each other. This is their bond.
This is their life.

VINCE

All right. Let's eat!

The Rizzo family starts passing the food. The water in the
background and the forever majestic skyline of Manhattan in
the distance.

Ain't life grand?