

THE GANGSTER SQUAD

By
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Based on *Tales of the Gangster Squad*
By Paul Lieberman

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THE WARNER BROS LOGO

Coyotes prowl the dark, pacing back and forth, agitated.

COHEN (V.O.)
LA's virgin territory...

EXT. SAN FERNANDO VALLEY - SUMMER EVENING

COHEN (V.O.)
Everything's wide open out here.

New cars in the driveways of new 'ranch' homes. PARENTS on porches, watering lawns. CHILDREN on roller skates and bikes, chasing the last light of day. Children scatter from two CARS tearing through the idyllic neighborhood.

Coyotes bold with hunger. Mouths open in demonic grins.

Cohen's GOONS in a CHEVY pursuing MEN in a CADDY, firing at them. Screams. A TRICYCLE overturned, wheels spinning.

COHEN (V.O.)
*Nothin' but a coupla rookies
runnin' these chickenshit rackets.*

The chase continues down the block, over front lawns, cars blasting through picket fences. The street gives way to graded lots, surveyors stakes, and the subdivision's hedge-lined wooden BILLBOARD along the highway displaying an All-American nuclear family. **OWN A PIECE OF PARADISE!**

The coyotes' eyes glow in the night like abalone coins.

Mickey Cohen's goons FIRE into the Caddy, the driver slumps, the Caddy swerving up over a berm, SMASHING into the billboard, BURSTING INTO FLAMES. Panicked people running out into the street, watching the fire climb the billboard, consuming the painted family...

COHEN (V.O.)
Out here, I'm Cortez.

INT. SLAPSY MAXIE'S NIGHTCLUB (COHEN'S TABLE) - NIGHT

MICKEY COHEN is not a large man, but his malevolence fills a room, fills your lungs like poison gas. Like you could almost choke to death just standing next to him. A former boxer, Cohen still moves with athletic economy, the way Hemingway writes, not a syllable wasted.

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A WAITER pours water from a pitcher, clean water flowing over Cohen's hands into a champagne bucket. Cohen washes ugly boxer's hands, his knuckles like little skulls.

COHEN

Somethin' they never seen before.

Next to Cohen is KARL LENNOX, a Kodiak with a crewcut, Cohen's bodyguard and Grand High Executioner. *Frazetta's *Death Dealer* in a fedora. He's a former state trooper.

Opposite Cohen is JAMES RAGAN (50s), Chicago Gangster who operates the Continental Wire Service. Ragan's brought his own muscle, a professional killer named ROURKE.

RAGAN

You been out here in the sun too long, Mickey. You're crackin' up.

Cohen leans over to pull a Remington .45 from the shoulder holster in Lennox's coat.

COHEN

You know Jimmy, for my money a Remington's still the best Roscoe on the market. Simple. Reliable. Blow a tunnel in 'em a kid could drive his toy train through.

Expertly locking back the slide, stripping out the mag.

COHEN

And what's Remington makin' now? Universal Automatic Computers. Addin' machines, store information in these little vacuum tubes.

Ragan watches Cohen disassembling the finely-machined pistol, laying out its components with total mastery.

COHEN

We're livin' in the future, Jimmy. The atomic age. We got a bomb can cook a city in less time'n a takes me to tell you about it. They're buildin' Jet fighters in El Segundo'll fly faster'n the speed of sound. You believe that?

(beat)

Jimmy, listen. I got all the guns I need. More'n I need. But information, speed... Brother, that's the future of our business.

(MORE)

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COHEN (CONT'D)

(beat)

See, right now, your Continental Wire and Trans America, they both feed all the same dope on all the same races, but the two wires're competin' with each other. That's the old way, Jimmy. And we both know it's a goddamned waste.

Cohen reassembles the gun. In his hands, the components almost leap back together, as though eager to please him.

COHEN

But, if you combine 'em? You'd have one wire - just one - feedin' every book west of Chicago.

RAGAN

A wire that you'd control.

COHEN

Your taste alone would be twice what Trans America takes in now.

RAGAN

Yeah. You know, Capone tried to muscle me. Ten years ago. I've seen the sour end of a gun before, Mickey. More times than you been laid. And I ain't impressed.

Ragan stands to leave. Something flickers behind Cohen's eyes, something stalking behind the bars of its cage.

HARD CUT TO:

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS - LATER THAT NIGHT

Coyotes KEEN and CRY, circling like lion-colored sharks in the shadow of the HOLLYWOODLAND SIGN. Overlooking LA.

COHEN

(doing Bela Lugosi)

The cheeldren of the night. What music they make...

Two CADILLACS facing opposite directions, engines REVVING. Their Taillights form a huge red clover in the dirt, where RAGAN lies between the two cars, chained to their rear bumpers. Ragan's about to be pulled apart.

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Lennox has his gun in Rourke's ribs. An impatient coyote darts in for a bite but Cohen kicks at it and it circles beyond his reach. Cohen picks up a rock and throws it, scattering them. But the coyotes come right back.

COHEN

(re: coyotes)

It's the damndest thing, Jimmy. You know I been up here so many times. They see me, they know they're gettin' a treat.

RAGAN

You're certifiable, Mickey. Sick.

COHEN

(laughing)

You were beggin' me a minute ago.

RAGAN

That's when I thought you were a man. But you're somethin' else, Mickey. Somethin' rotten.

Cohen nods. The CARS drive in opposite directions, pulling the chains taut between them. Ragan SCREAMS. Wheels spin, spitting dust until some crucial part of him gives way.... And the coyotes move in.

COHEN

Yeah, but you're impressed now, huh, you son of a bitch?

Lennox forcing Rourke to watch the scrum of coyotes snarling, snapping in the dust, fighting over his boss.

COHEN

(to Rourke)

The rest of your life. Every breath you take from now on is a gift from me. Understand?

(off his nod)

Now, I want you to go back to Chicago and tell 'em what you've seen here. You tell 'em Los Angeles belongs to Mickey Cohen.

INT. PASSENGER COMPARTMENT SUPER CHIEF TRAIN - DAY

A milk-skinned BLONDE (18) watching the UNION STATION PLATFORM flow to a stop outside her window.

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She's a harvest festival princess from Nowhere, USA, stepping like Dorothy into Oz out into...

LOS ANGELES 1949

INT. UNION STATION - MOMENTS LATER

The vulpine MITCH RACINE (28) watches WOMEN passing through Union Station the way a croc watches toddlers wade the Ganges. Racine sidles to our blonde, smiles.

O'MARA (O.S.)

The better to eat you with.

From across the station, two plainclothes LAPD DETECTIVES slyly scope Racine handing our blonde his BUSINESS CARD.

SGT. JOHN O'MARA (30s): A thousand yard stare shaded by his fedora. Military brush cut. A square jaw you'd break your knuckles on. When George S. Patton said "A hasty plan violently executed is better than a perfect plan next week," he was talking about O'Mara. He gets it done. He lives in a bicameral world where there is good and there is evil. Killed his share of Krauts and didn't lose any sleep over it. Doesn't give his word lightly. But he'll die to keep it. A trained commando who fights like a Viking bezerker. You fuck with him at your peril.

O'Mara's partner, DETECTIVE SGT. WILL HENDRICKS(30s) is softer, sadder. He was 4-F, stayed behind while his buddies went off to save the world. He's nobody's hero.

HENDRICKS

You figure his card says MITCH
RACINE: PIMP AND BLACK DAHLIA
SUSPECT?

But our blonde looks like she can't believe her luck.

O'MARA

Looks more like MITCH RACINE:
TALENT AGENT to me.

EXT. THE CROESUS BUILDING - SUNSET

Racine pulls her suitcase out of a CAB, and squires our blonde into the 10-story beaux-arts CROESUS BUILDING.

INT. O'MARA'S PLAIN DETECTIVE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The moment they pull up to the Croesus, Hendricks turns white, like they've crossed into a minefield.

O'MARA (INTO RADIO)
*William 60. We're Code 6 at the
 Croesus Building. Olympic and
 Main. Requesting additional.*

HENDRICKS
 The hell are you doing?

O'MARA
 What does it look like? He's gonna
 give her a bad time in there.

ADAM 21 (OVER RADIO)
*Adam 21. You're coming in
 broken, repeat. We've got a
 BO radio.*

ADAM 18 (OVER RADIO)
*Adam 18. We're going to
 have a delayed response due
 to a dead dog obstructing
 eastbound roadway on
 Wilshire.*

HENDRICKS
 See? No one's comin' anywhere near
 this. John, for Christ's sake,
 this is Cohen's place.

O'Mara pulls his .38 REVOLVER, wrist-flicks the cylinder.

HENDRICKS
 I don't want any part of this.

O'MARA
 Then stay out of my way.

INT. CROESUS LOBBY - SECONDS LATER

O'Mara walks in alone. 4 THUGS by the elevator look him over as the IRON DIAL above the elevator cage STOPS at 9.

INT. 9TH FLOOR HALLWAY - SUNSET

Racine and our blonde step from the elevator to head down the hallway. Mounting dread. All the doors PADLOCKED.

RACINE
 We hold all our screen tests up
 here, kiddo. *Away from the crowds.*

INT. CROESUS LOBBY - NIGHT

The BRUISER behind the BELL DESK seems to sniff O'Mara, his hand caressing a .45, unseen behind his desk.

O'MARA

I'm here to meet someone.

BRUISER

Yeah? What's her name?

O'Mara smiles playfully, just looking for a good time.

O'MARA

I don't know yet. I was hoping maybe you could help me with that.

THUG 1

We got a someone or two upstairs.
Come on. I'll introduce you.

INT. 9TH FLOOR ROOM - NIGHT

Racine knocks on the door. It opens on THREE THUGS around a table. Whiskey and cards. Eyeing her like a rare steak.

BLONDE

Thanks, Mister. Really. But I changed my *mind*-

-wincing *Oww!* as Racine vice-clamps her tricep.

INT. CAGE ELEVATOR (ASCENDING) - NIGHT

O'Mara riding up with FOUR THUGS. Brawlers with scars, cauliflower ears. The elevator's cramped. Tension mounts.

O'MARA

I mention I'm partial to blondes?

He smiles awkwardly at Thug 1, and WINCES as Thug 2 JABS the business end of a **PISTOL** into O'Mara's kidney.

THUG 1

Alright, big guy.

(snapping fingers)

Pistola. Butt-first. Or my buddy burns one through your back porch.

O'Mara reaches *INSIDE HIS COAT*. *O'Mara's unseen hand closing around the .38 in his shoulder holster.*

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THUG 2

Nice and easy there, Dutch.

Thug 1 glimpses the **BADGE** on his belt.

THUG 1

You're a cop? Christ, buddy, you soft in the head or something?

O'Mara **HEAD-BUTTS** Thug 1, and simultaneously **FIRES BACK** under his left arm. **BLAM!** The bullet **PUNCHES** out through the back of his coat to *hit* THUG 2 below his collar bone. Thug 2 drops his pistol. O'Mara kicks it away, the gat clanking as it tumbles down the elevator shaft. O'Mara brings his .38 out of his coat, but Thug 1 **SEIZES** his wrist, the gun firing wildly through the floor-

INT. 9TH FLOOR ROOM - NIGHT

-Racine bear-hugs her. She STOMPS on his shoe, writhes away, but Thug 3 catches her, tearing her blouse. Racine SLAPS her! They hold her. MURPHY BED draw-bridging down-

INT. CAGE ELEVATOR (STILL ASCENDING) - NIGHT

-O'Mara's commando training kicks in and he serves them up some Jiu Jitsu he picked up overseas: blurring FISTS, ELBOWS, vicious throat-CHOPS! Not balletic, brutal.

Thug 1 is raising his gun, but O'Mara traps his arm, **FORCING** his arm OUT the bars of the cage. The 9th FLOOR comes DOWN past the rising elevator like a guillotine - **BREAKING** the thug's arm! **GYAAAAAAAAAAH!**

And O'Mara hears his **gun clanging away down the elevator shaft**. *Shit*. Now, he's up here alone, and unarmed. But turning back is not who he is. A soldier doesn't give up ground he's taken. At the 9TH FLOOR, O'Mara exits the elevator, running down the hall, following her **SCREAMS**.

INT. 9TH FLOOR ROOM - NIGHT

She **SCREAMS**, struggling on the bed while Thugs 5 & 6 hold her down. *Knock! Knock!* Racine opens a gleaming **STRAIGHT RAZOR**. Her terrified eyes reflected in the blade face.

RACINE

Make another sound you're dead.

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She nods, frozen, as they FOLD the Murphy back up into the wall with her captured inside it. *Knock! Knock!*

Racine opens the door and meets O'Mara's FIST. Racine CRASHING back into a table. O'Mara follows him in, hand jammed in his coat pocket, *hoping it LOOKS LIKE A GUN.*

O'MARA

Mitts in the air. All of you.

Racine narrows his eyes at O'Mara, smelling bullshit.

RACINE (CONT'D)

I don't think so ... Ten bucks says this guy ain't even heeled.

THUG 3

You got a bet.

THUG 4

Yeah, I'll take some of that.

A tense moment. O'Mara's bluff holding by a thread.

O'MARA

Come on over and find out.

Racine makes his move, stepping toward O'Mara, grinning now. Holding his straight razor behind his leg. O'Mara pulls his finger out of his coat, points it at Racine.

O'MARA (CONT'D)

Bang.

INT. MURPHY BED - CONTINUOUS

In the darkness BEHIND the Murphy bed, our Blonde hears FURNITURE BREAKING. FISTS POUNDING. GROWLS of BRUTALITY.

INT. ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The Murphy bed OPENS. Shattered furniture. Thugs moaning. Sgt. John O'Mara is the last man standing. Panting, he shows the girl his BADGE to let her know she's safe.

O'MARA

Welcome to Los Angeles.

I/E. SLAPSY MAXIE'S NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Klieg lights. Limousines under the portico. Neon: SLAPSY MAXIE'S. A long line of REVELERS waiting to get in the door. **SGT. JERRY WOOTERS** (30s) BADGES the DOORMAN, walks right to the front of the line. Near the entrance, PETE, 13 going on 33, living on wits and moxie, is shining a GUY's shoes. Pete looks up as Wooters passes him.

PETE

Yeah, he's in there.

WOOTERS

(tossing two bits)

Thanks, Pete. How's your mom?

PETE

How the hell would I know?

Wooters waltzes into the club like Fred Astaire. He doesn't look like a cop, doesn't move like one, or think like one. Hair pomade-slick, a month too long. He's a *bon vivant*, never met a woman or wager he didn't like, serious about bachelorhood and little else.

Wooters glides upstream past swift WAITERS, CIGARETTE GIRLS who give him the eye. He loves the action. Black-seamed stockings. Everything the traffic will allow.

Wooters finds shylock **JACK WHALEN** at his regular table. Whalen's a cornfed bruiser, Jethro Bodine meets the Hulk. He's eating a steak, washing it down with whiskey.

WOOTERS

Jack Whalen. I have a warrant for your arrest.

WHALEN

What's the charge?

WOOTERS

Usury.

WHALEN

The hell is *usury*?

WOOTERS

Loan sharking, dumbass. You going to come along quietly?

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WHALEN

Cousin, I never done anything
quietly in my life. I surely don't
aim to start now.

A stare-down, cop to crook. Both break out LAUGHING.

WHALEN

Take a pew, Brother Jerry. Steak a-
la-cart-e here ain't exactly
pizen.

The waiter brings Wooters a steak and whiskey, unbidden.
Wooters nods inquisitively toward **MICKEY COHEN** at his
table by the stage, his Praetorian Guard in evidence,
Cohen's coterie of **SYCOPHANTS** around him, paying tribute.

WHALEN

Word is Jimmy Ragan's gone to his
reward. Cohen's on the warpath.

WOOTERS

(re: Cohen's table)
Can't tell the players without a
program.

WHALEN

Well, let's see. Readin' left to
right, we've got the *honorable*
Judge Krauss, Max Solomon, Burbank
Police Chief Elmer Jackson, and
one Eugene W. Biscailuz, *the* high
Sheriff of Los Ang-ell-eez County.

Next to Cohen sits **JEAN FARADAY**, a GI pinup by Alberto
Vargas. World-weary, effortlessly sexy.

WOOTERS

(re: Jean)
You skipped the series MVP.

WHALEN

Jean Faraday. Cohen's... *etiquette*
tutor. He's gettin' sophisticated.

WOOTERS

I haven't been sophisticated in
weeks, not for lack of tryin.

Cohen's henchman, JIMMY WREVOCK glances over at them.
Whalen toasts Wrevock from across the room. *Fuck you.*

INT. COHEN'S TABLE AT SLAPSY MAXIE'S - CONTINUOUS

Cohen preaching his gospel to JUDGE KRAUSS, SHERIFF BISCAILUZ, ELMER JACKSON. Fear and greed in their eyes.

COHEN

Ragan retired. Guess he was bein' pulled in too many directions. And he was kind enough to turn his wire service over to me.

(beat)

Every book between here and Chicago, all of 'em need the action on races across the country. They'll dry up without it. And as of right now, my wire's the only place they can get it.

(beat)

Remember this moment. So you can tell your kids about it. Tell 'em you were there at the beginning.

Cohen's entree arrives first.

COHEN

Roast peacock. Romans couldn't get enough of it. Guys had class.

JEAN

(whispers to Cohen)

Other fork, darling.

COHEN

Tonight, we're celebratin' the birth of a new city. Right here, on the ruins of Los Angeles.

Looks trading around the table. Puzzlement. Dread.

Another WAITER rushes up with a HOUSE PHONE.

WAITER

Call for you, Mr. Cohen.

A moment, Cohen hangs up, whispering to JUDGE KRAUSS.

KRAUSS

Of course, I'll take care of it.

Krauss lifts an oyster, sucks flesh off the shell, like a reptile. Krauss' eyes all over Jean.

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CONTINUED:

JEAN

(to Cohen)

I thought I told you to keep that rotten creep away from me.

She gets up, storms off. Wooters watches her walk. Her dress could stand up by itself. Legs about 40 feet long.

WOOTERS

Doesn't seem right, you know, that he should have so much, when others have so little.

WHALEN

You sound like a pink pamphlet, pal, but this ain't Russia. It's LA, penalty for poachin the King's deer in this town is still a permanent vacation in a pine box.

WOOTERS

Well, yeah. But I'm starving.

AT THE BAR: Jean sees Wooters coming, but doesn't let on. She opens her cigarette case, plucks out an Old Gold as he arrives, lifting his **U.S. NAVY ZIPPO** to her cigarette. She closes her hand over his, bringing his flame closer.

JEAN

Thanks.

(looking him over)

Jean.

JERRY

Jerry.

JEAN

Say Jerry, I'll just bet you have a ducky war story behind that lighter. Come on, I thought all you guys had war stories to make a girl go weak in the knees.

WOOTERS

Hmm. Well, we were shot down once. Spent a day and a half floating in the Pacific with sharks circling us. They were bigger than the raft. You could feel them brushing up against it in the dark.

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JEAN

Ooh. Don't tell me. You dove in with your knife between your teeth and fought them off like Johnny Weissmuller - who's right over there by the way.

WOOTERS

No, what I did? I bet my buddies a PBY would get to us before the sharks did. I took them for a hundred bucks a piece. Are you weak in the knees yet?

JEAN

(exhaling smoke)
Sure I am. Let's see. You're not quite big enough to be a shylock. So what's your racket, handsome?

WOOTERS

I'm a Bible salesman.

JEAN

Lookin' to rescue a scarlet lady from her life of sin, that it?

She glances back to Cohen's table. Good food. Champagne.

JEAN

Take me away from all this and make an honest woman of me?

WOOTERS

No, ma'am. I was just hoping to take you to bed.

JEAN

You sound like my kind of cowpuncher, Jerry.

INT. CROESUS HALLWAYS - NIGHT

The aftermath of O'Mara's battle: O'Mara moves down the dark halls, AXES the heavy **PADLOCKS** off the **DOORS**. And the **DOORS SWING OPEN**, one after another, to reveal..

Young **WOMEN**: Vacant-eyed, pale. **NEEDLE-MARKED ARMS**, struggling on stained mattresses, bound to bed frames. Turning their heads in shame as O'Mara cuts them loose.

I/E. STAFF 1 (CHIEF PARKER'S CAR) - MORNING

STAFF 1, the Chief's unmarked, bullet-resistant **BUICK DYNAFLOW** smoothly negotiates downtown traffic. Behind the wheel is the Chief's Driver, **OFFICER DARRYL GATES** (23).

Behind Gates, sits LAPD **CHIEF "WHISKEY BILL" PARKER** (44) a hard man from the Dakota Territory. His car's equipped with a RADIO PHONE and CAR PHONE. A NIGHTSTICK and ITHACA SHOTGUN mounted up against the bulkhead. And Parker's personal touch: a built-in bar, WHISKEY and GLASSES.

Parker pours himself a few fingers of I.W. HARPER, sips, grimaces. Next to him on the seat is The Los Angeles Examiner. Headline: **GANGLAND VIOLENCE PLAGUES SOUTHLAND**.

EXT. THE CROESUS BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

LAPD COPS hold back a gathering CROWD, including a DOZEN **REPORTERS** and **PHOTOGRAPHERS**. STAFF 1 cruises by the chaotic scene. Through his tinted window, Parker watches shattered WOMEN, now wearing cop's uniform tunics over their stained clothes, squinting against the sun as COPS lead them to AMBULANCES. The scene both lurid and tragic.

PARKER

Cohen's place... Who did this?

REPORTERS now zombie-mob Parker's car, crowding the tinted windows, cameras FLASHING. Shouting questions.

REPORTER 1

Chief, what do you think about those girls locked up at the Croesus?

REPORTER 2

When're you gonna do something about Mickey Cohen, Chief?

Parker ignores them as Gates drives away.

INT. LOS ANGELES CITY HALL (DETECTIVES' BULLPEN) - DAY

LAPD Headquarters. Wooters leaning back, his chair up on two legs, his feet braced against a desk, dictating his report to the Watch Commander's cute SECRETARY.

WOOTERS

...After I arrested him, Whalen managed to somehow *escape* from my vehicle while I was stopped for a red signal. Damnedest thing.

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Now, O'Mara drags the cuffed Racine and company through the bullpen. The secretary looks up, gasps. Wooters looks up, sees O'Mara's swollen face. He isn't surprised.

WOOTERS

What happened to you this time?

O'MARA

They resisted.

But Racine and his goons look even worse...

WOOTERS

So what happened to them?

O'MARA

They resisted.

WOOTERS

Sheesh. You're workin' too hard.

O'Mara sees **MAX SOLOMON**, pin-striped mob lawyer, walk out of the Watch Commander's Office. Racine smiles knowingly.

INT. WATCH COMMANDER'S OFFICE - DAY

O'Mara brings Racine before **LT. QUINCANNON** (50s) at his desk. Lt. Quincannon's face booze-blotched and baggy.

QUINCANNON

Weren't you supposed to be on a Dahlia Stakeout?

O'MARA

I was.

QUINCANNON

So what the hell are you doing? Hendricks tells me you went in there without a warrant.

O'MARA

It was exigent circumstances.

QUINCANNON

Judge Krauss saw it differently.

Quincannon hands O'Mara some folded court DOCUMENTS.

O'MARA

Habeas corpus. For all four of them.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

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O'MARA (CONT'D)

Yeah, I didn't know better, I'd think somebody here stiffed in a call.

QUINCANNON

Listen, you've been transferred, what? Five times, in six months? That's gotta be a record. And you keep steppin' on corns like they give a merit badge for it. We got rules around here, O'Mara. Do yourself a favor and learn 'em.

O'Mara storms out of Quincannon's office. Wooters watches him go. And after a moment, Wooters follows O'Mara out.

EXT. STEPS OF CITY HALL - DAY

Alone in the rain, O'Mara leans against one of the columns in front of LOS ANGELES CITY HALL. He watches Racine and the others walking out free men.

A 1948 Packard Custom 8 **LIMO** pulls up, idling there on Main. Racine and the others don't look so cocky anymore.

O'Mara watches a HUGE MAN get out of the Limo. We recognize him as **KARL LENNOX**.

WOOTERS (O.S.)

Cohen's bodyguard. Former State Trooper, name of Karl Lennox.

Wooters now standing there, just getting some air.

WOOTERS

He was a gift from the Attorney General. Do you know the Attorney General? Neither do I.

Racine and his men climb into the Limo. Lennox and O'Mara lock eyes through the rain. Lennox doesn't smile at him so much as bare his teeth as he touches his hat brim.

WOOTERS

Look, I'm sure I'm not the first guy to tell you this, but please don't feed or tease Mickey Cohen.

O'MARA

Doesn't it bother you, Jerry?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOOTERS

No. Not for a long time.

Watching the limo pull away, O'Mara looks like a wolf with his leg in a trap. Nothing he can do about this.

INT. O'MARA'S HOME - DUSK

The modest home is the best they can manage on an honest cop's salary. The milk is powdered, the furniture second-hand. On the mantle about the fireplace, a FRAMED PHOTO of Connie and O'Mara at his ACADEMY GRADUATION. A younger O'Mara in his Class-A Uniform, his wife CONNIE on his arm. Around the house, the ceiling leaks into Yuban cans.

CONNIE O'MARA, pretty, whip smart, with her own war souvenirs, hands hardened by Lockheed Martin, lounges in an easy chair, a used copy of Chandler's The Little Sister braced on her pregnant belly. Old copies of True Detective in the magazine rack, her girlish vices.

Connie lifts the Yuban can, dumps water into the sink. When she comes back, **O'Mara is in the doorway**, looking like a kid who's torn the knees of his church trousers.

CONNIE

God damn it, John!

O'MARA

Wait, wait. Listen-

CONNIE

-You PROMISED me.

O'MARA

I know, I know, but this time-

CONNIE

-stood right where you're standing now and promised me-

O'MARA

-Will you just listen a minute? I swear to you, Scout's Honor, I didn't go lookin for it this time.

Gone the adrenaline. Gone the bravado. He's fucking hurt and she can see it in his every step.

CONNIE

John, you go looking for it every time you leave the house.

INT. O'MARA'S BATHROOM - LATER

O'Mara in the bathtub. Raw. Alone. Powerfully built, but heroics have cost him. Battle scars lace bare skin.

He watches Connie walk in. She kneels next to the tub and dips her washcloth into the pink water. She wipes his bloody arm where Racine's razor bit through his sleeve.

O'MARA

Some pimp. He was gonna put the hurt on this poor kid who didn't know any better. Fact, she looked a little like you. Well, you know, not nearly as pretty, but-

CONNIE

-Smooth talk isn't your line, Sarge.

O'MARA

-No, I'm serious. I don't know, maybe it was the way she wore her hair, reminded me of that time we went to Catalina before the war.

CONNIE

You weren't like this before the war.

O'MARA

It was simpler over there. They wore gray uniforms and I killed as many as I could. I was good at it. Never bothered me.

(beat)

What bothered me was all the people over there who... you know, when the Krauts came for their neighbors, they just stood there, watched. They let it happen.

CONNIE

I don't mind living like Ma & Pa Kettle and I don't need a new pair of shoes every week. I married an honest cop. You're kind, you don't talk too much, and you're a demon in the sack. But I don't need a hero, Sarge. I need a husband. So you do not have permission to go belly flop on a grenade. Not when we're expecting company, read me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She steers his face to hers.

O'MARA

Loud and clear.

He kisses her, winces, wraps his arms around her. And in spite of everything, she can't stop herself from melting into him as he climbs from the tub, enveloping her, soaking her clothes.

CUT TO:

TIGHT ON: *Gloved hands SNAPPING a PADLOCK over the bars of that CAGE ELEVATOR where O'Mara battled earlier.*

COHEN (V.O.)

*Whores don't grow on trees.
They're like mustangs. You gotta
catch 'em wild, break them before
you can train them to do tricks.*

INT. THE CROESUS (DESERTED HALLWAYS) - LATER THAT NIGHT

Cohen's MEN roll 50-gallon drums down dark hallways.

COHEN (V.O.)

*Means I need a quiet place to lock
the girls up, keep them hopped up
on Mexican dope. This cop came out
of nowhere, like an early frost.
And now my whole crop's ruined.*

His men feeding rag-ropes, tied together like magician's kerchiefs, into the spigot of each drum. **Fuses.**

INT. CROESUS LOBBY - NIGHT

Racine and his thugs sit on the couches. They're terrified, facing **MICKEY COHEN** and his **PRAETORIAN GUARD: KARL LENNOX, NEDDY HERBERT:** A hawk-faced hitman. **JIMMY WREVOK:** A fell creature with a scar down through his left eye, leaving that eye milky and gibbous. And **JOHNNY 'STOMP' STOMPANATO:** All-pro murderer with looks that land him in bed with the likes of Lana Turner.

RACINE

Mr. Cohen, I swear to God-

COHEN

*You're talkin' to God, Mitch. So
maybe you better swear to me.*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cohen's eyes, like the eyes of Nag, Kipling's King Cobra, seem to have the power to hypnotize. Racine's already pissed himself and still he cannot look away from him.

RACINE

I swear to You, sir, if it hadn't
a been for that cop-

COHEN

-You think I'm sore at this cop?
Hell, no. He's a square Joe, this
guy, rescues a damsel in distress.
Goddamn hero is what he is. Guy
deserves a medal. In fact...

(to Lennox)

What's this guy workin'?

LENNOX

Homicide.

COHEN

Naw. That's rough duty. Let's fix
him up with a nice sit-down job.

Lennox smiles wolfishly.

LENNOX

I already took the liberty, sir.

INT. CROESUS HALLWAYS - NIGHT

ZIPPOS FLICK open to LIGHT the gas-damp rags...

COHEN (V.O.)

*Tomorrow, this place is all over
the front page. I got to start all
over somewhere else. We had a good
thing goin, Mitch. But, you know
what they say. All good things
must one day burn to the ground
for the insurance money.*

Almost simultaneously, the barrels **EXPLODE**, swirling
flames fill the Croesus hallways like dragon's breath.

INT. ELEVATOR SHAFT - NIGHT

Fire climbs the shaft like a chimney. We hear **SCREAMS...**

INT. CROESUS LOBBY - NIGHT

RACINE

Mr. Cohen, I'm so sorry. I swear.
It won't ever happen again.

Cohen reaches out to ruffle Racine's hair, then gives him an affectionate punch on the jaw.

COHEN

I know it won't, kid.

INT. CAGE ELEVATOR - NIGHT

RACINE and his thugs have been LOCKED in the ELEVATOR:

They pile on each other, crabs in a trap. Clawing each other, rabid to escape the FLAMES. The cable **SNAPS**. And the elevator **FALLS** down, down into the fires of hell.

QUINCANNON (PRELAP)

O'Mara! Get in here.

INT. LA CITY HALL (QUINCANNON'S OFFICE) - NEXT DAY

O'Mara stands, facing Quincannon like a firing squad. Quincannon smiles, sliding fresh-cut **ADMINISTRATIVE TRANSFER ORDERS** across his desk to O'Mara. O'Mara doesn't even need to look at them. His eyes on the Lieutenant.

QUINCANNON

I'm transferring you to
Bunco/Forgery, effective
immediately. You're through in
homicide, O'Mara.

INT. BUNCO/FORGERY SECTION - DAY

O'Mara's tucked in the corner of the backwater BUNCO UNIT surrounded by MIDDLE-AGED DETECTIVES. Washouts and burnouts, fat-asses and save-asses, circling racing forms, crosswords, playing solitaire, tipping flasks into coffee mugs. One DETECTIVE snoring at his desk. *Christ.*

O'Mara opens the *The Los Angeles Times*. The HEADLINE: **IN WAKE OF SCANDAL, CROESUS BUILDING CONSUMED BY FIRE.**
O'Mara draws *devil's horns* on the PHOTO of MICKEY COHEN.

GATES (O.S.)

Sergeant O'Mara?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'Mara turns to see OFFICER GATES.

GATES (CONT'D)

I'm Darryl Gates.

O'MARA

Who the hell is Darryl Gates?

GATES

The Chief's driver. He would like a word with you, Sergeant.

INT. CHIEF PARKER'S OFFICE - DAY

Parker's office is immaculate, Spartan, more imposing for its lack of adornment. The large window behind Parker's desk looks out over Los Angeles. O'Mara stands at parade-rest before CHIEF PARKER. Parker opens O'Mara's FILE.

PARKER

You're a violent man, Sergeant O'Mara. Multiple allegations of brutality. Excessive force. You've been transferred hither and yon. I understand you even found some trouble out in Harbor Division.

O'MARA

It was a kidnapping, sir. I had a known pederast spotted near the boy's school at the time of his abduction. I questioned the suspect and he refused to cooperate. He asked for a lawyer.

PARKER

And?

O'MARA

And he got one. Eventually.

PARKER

I understand the suspect suffered a concussion while he was waiting.

Gates tries not to smile.

O'MARA

I brought the boy home safe, sir.

Parker signals to Gates, who pours two whiskies.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PARKER

Please, sit.

Gates places them in front of Parker and O'Mara.

PARKER (CONT'D)

You worked with the French
Resistance during the war. Trained
at Camp X, did you not?

O'MARA

I've never heard of Camp X, sir.

PARKER

No. No, of course you haven't.
Two Purple Hearts. Silver Star.
Croix De Guerre. With your service
record, one would assume you are
not unskilled in guerilla warfare.

O'MARA

I survived. A lot of better men
didn't. That why you brought me
here, sir? To hear war stories?

PARKER

I want to talk to you about the
war for the soul of Los Angeles,
Sergeant.

Parker moves to the window, looking out over Los Angeles.

PARKER (CONT'D)

Our forebearers fought savage
Indians and Mexican Banditry to
win Los Angeles. And now we're
losing her to an *Eastern crook*.

(off O'Mara)

Gambling houses and brothels
outnumber schools in this city.
Every night, people are openly
gunned down on our streets.
Ordinary citizens, Christian
families caught in the crossfire.
This isn't a crime wave, Sergeant.
This is an enemy occupation.

(beat)

And yet the Los Angeles Police
Department has not solved a single
gangland homicide in over ten
years.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

O'MARA

Well, you've got some of the best
cops money can buy here, sir.

PARKER

You're right. Thank you for
volunteering, Sergeant O'Mara.

O'MARA

You're welcome, sir. To do what?

PARKER

What I cannot. Not officially.
You're going to wage a guerilla
campaign against Mickey Cohen.

O'MARA

What about the Feds, sir?

PARKER

Hoover refuses to acknowledge the
existence of the Syndicate. We
stand alone, Sergeant, against a
barbarian horde.

Torn between love and duty, O'Mara looks almost like an
alcoholic fighting the urge to take a drink. And losing.

O'MARA

I'll need men. And weapons.

PARKER

Recruit a small squad. Half a
dozen men at most. And keep it
quiet, is that clear? Anonymity
will be your greatest weapon
against Cohen. Secrecy will be
your sword, and your shield. Cohen
owns almost nothing in his own
name. He has others do his killing
for him. And we'd grow old before
we found anyone within his
organization willing to testify
against him. Arrests are useless,
worse than useless, because if
Cohen learns of your existence, I
won't be able to protect you. *So
you're to make no arrests.*

O'MARA

Then these orders are of a
sanctionary nature, sir?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

PARKER

Absolutely not. I will not condone murder, is that understood?

(O'Mara nods)

With Cohen dead, the empire he's built would only attract others of his kind, like buzzards to a carcass. But if you shatter his operations here, he'll be forced to move on to Las Vegas or some other godless Gomorrah.

(beat)

Los Angeles is a damsel in distress and I need you, Sergeant, to save her.

JEAN (PRELAP)

You are my kinda cowpuncher, Jerry.

INT. GARDEN OF ALLAH (BUNGALOW 12) - DAY

Jean and Jerry lying amid tangled sheets, spent.

JEAN

God almighty. How long were you marooned on that raft?

He rolls over and kisses her. For a long time.

JEAN

Smooth talker. I bet you say that to all the girls.

(sighs)

So where have you been all my miserable life, Jerry the Bible Salesman?

WOOTERS

Surviving.

JEAN

Honorable profession. What made you give it up?

He smiles.

JEAN

He'll kill you if he finds out, you know. I hope I'm worth it. What am I saying? Of course I am.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOOTERS

What the hell are you fooling with
Cohen for anyway? I mean, he
doesn't seem like your type.

JEAN

I'm his type. That's what matters.

INT. O'MARA'S HOME - NIGHT

O'Mara sits next to the flickering fireplace with a stack
of LAPD PERSONNEL FILES. Connie enters. He doesn't hide
the files from his wife, but he wants to.

CONNIE

What're those?

O'MARA

Well, I just got reassigned.

CONNIE

'Course you did.

O'MARA

So I'm just supposed to recruit a
few guys for this new outfit.

Seeing right through him.

CONNIE

Oh yeah, what kind of outfit?

O'MARA

A small squad. Five or six guys.
And we're supposed to, um, well...
We're going after Mickey Cohen.

O'Mara braces for impact, but Connie says nothing. She
just calmly walks over, picks the framed ACADEMY
GRADUATION PHOTO off the mantle and HURLS it into the
fire! Glass shatters. Fire eats their younger selves.

O'MARA

Jesus, CONNIE!

He gets up.

CONNIE

Don't you come near me!

O'MARA

Okay. Okay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONNIE

Why, John?

O'MARA

We moved out here, you said we'd found paradise, remember? Wind was right, we'd smell the ocean right through that window. That's what kept me going when I was over there. Getting back here to you. Raising our family here. You want me to let Cohen poison it?

Connie looking out the window, her breathing normalizes.

CONNIE

Government car comes up our street. Two Army officers get out of it, right out there. Dress uniforms. And I can see them checking addresses. They're coming here. To tell me you're dead.

She turns to face him.

CONNIE

I watched the street every day after that until you came home. But you didn't, did you? This isn't about Cohen. This is about what happened over there.

(beat)

Get rid of it, John. Cut it loose and come back to me.

There's a battle behind his eyes. All he can say is:

O'MARA

I'm tryin.

And Connie breaks down because she knows it's the truth. Somehow that's the worst of it. He can't find his way back to her. And she's powerless to do anything about it.

INT. O'MARA'S KITCHEN - MORNING

The kitchen clean. O'Mara sits at their small kitchen table with a pile of PERSONNEL FILES and coffee. Connie carries a plate of bacon and eggs to the table, pours OJ. And with a sigh, she reaches across the table to open the files. O'Mara watches her sharp eyes scan them. Backing his play despite everything. God, how he loves her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'MARA

You're somethin else, you know it?

CONNIE

Somebody has to help you stay alive.

(takes a bite, reads)

Top of his class. Top of his class. This one made detective before his thirtieth birthday.

O'MARA

What's the matter, boss?

CONNIE

If I'm Cohen, these are the first cops I'm going to buy. They'll be Lieutenants in a few years.

O'MARA

So you're saying I need to find other bums like me.

CONNIE

There's nobody like you, Sarge.

(kissing him)

I'm saying you shouldn't be looking at boy scouts for this.

INT. KISS KISS CLUB - DAY

O'Mara enters the cavernous club. Heart-shaped booths. The club populated with HOODS and Hollywood HANGERS-ON, TALENT AGENTS, STAG-FILM PRODUCERS. On stage: The atomic redhead, TEMPEST STORM, has the place under her spell.

CONNIE (V.O.)

You can't just keep kicking down every door in town. You're going to need someone who can open a few of them for you. Someone with inside dope.

O'Mara makes his way through the club, finds WOOTERS leaning on the bar with a whiskey, watching the show.

O'MARA

Jerry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOOTERS

Hey, I'm conducting surveillance
here, Sarge. Very sensitive case.
You're gonna queer the whole deal.

O'MARA

I'll try to be discreet.

INT. KISS KISS CLUB - MINUTES LATER

Now on stage, LILI ST. CYR performs in a clear bathtub.
Wooters and O'Mara side by side at the bar, talking.

O'MARA

I'm putting a squad together.
(off Wooters)
I need an Indian guide knows the
terrain. Figured you might-

WOOTERS

-I don't do that anymore.
(beat)
Who's the lucky winner this time?

O'Mara taps a NEWSPAPER there on the bar. Wooters sees
O'Mara's finger on a FRONT PAGE PHOTO of **MICKEY COHEN!**

WOOTERS

You're Section 8, you know it? No
wonder they keep bouncing you all
over the damn city. Christ, how do
you know I won't just turn around
and sing for my supper? Make a
goddamned fortune.

O'MARA

I survived over there, in part,
because I'm a fair judge of men.
(beat)
The hell happened to you, Jerry?

WOOTERS

I got smart. Got tired of stickin'
my finger in the dike. Case you
hadn't noticed, whole damn town's
underwater. So you better learn to
swim, Sarge, and fast.
(beat)
You're not gonna change a damn
thing here.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOOTERS (CONT'D)

You're just going to wake up one morning walking on the wrong side of the grass. And for what?

O'MARA

My home. My family. Nobody gets rich in this line. You got nobody in your life worth fightin' for, what the hell are you doin' here?

WOOTERS

Surviving. You oughta try it.

So O'Mara misjudged him. He walks out.

EXT. CENTRAL AVENUE - BRILLIANT NIGHT

O'Mara DRIVING down CENTRAL AVENUE, Bee-bop Babylon. ZOOTSUITERS with flashy ties and diamond stickpins, LADIES with frills and feathers, heading straight for that vertical neon beacon at 42nd and Central: **CLUB ALABAM**.

CONNIE (V.O.)

Excessive Force. Insubordination.

INT. O'MARA'S HOME - NIGHT

O'Mara and Connie are on their bed with a bowl of popcorn and a BOX marked **ADMINISTRATIVE DISCIPLINE**. More pilfered PERSONNEL FILES spread out on the bed around them, the officers' MUGS clipped to each manila. Connie is reading from the file of **OFFICER AARON 'ROCKY' WASHINGTON**.

CONNIE

(passing it over)

Sounds like a man after your own dear heart, Sarge.

INT. CLUB ALABAM - NIGHT

CHARLIE PARKER *blowing* 'Lester Leaps In.' Hypnotic, ecstatic bebop. And over at the BAR, enjoying the show...

O'MARA (V.O.)

Rocky Washington. First Negro Lieutenant on the department. And the first one to ever hand back his bars.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROCKY WASHINGTON (30s) They call him the Sheriff of Central Avenue. A carved-oak statue in trench and fedora. The descendent of a runaway slave and a Mescalero Apache.

Right now, Washington has his eyes on a dangerous dope-peddler, name of **DUKE DEL-RED**. Across the room, Del-Red passes a **BINDLE** of **HEROIN** to a lovely **GIRL** in chiffon.

O'MARA (V.O.)

*Threw his whole career away to go
back to walking a beat down on
Central Avenue.*

Washington's **SWITCHBLADE** is out of his pocket, thumbing the button -*shickt*- the blade gleaming as Washington wrist-flicks his knife, the blade **BUZZES** through the air like a *shuriken* **THUNKING** into Del-Red's palm, stigmata-pinning his bejeweled right hand to the wall. Del-Red **howls**, the music stops, and the girl scurries away.

Del-Red still pinned, reaches for the knife, hesitates.

WASHINGTON

It's okay, Del. Don't wiggle it now. Be better if you just yank it straight out.

Del-Red closes his eyes and **PULLS**. The crowd *gasps* involuntary sympathy.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Good boy. Now, wipe the blade on your trousers. Both sides.

Humiliated, Del-Red cleans the blade on his **WHITE TROUSERS**, painting them with blood. Ruined.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Now close it up. And give it here.

Washington's palm out. Del-Red shame-crosses the room and places it carefully in Washington's waiting hand.

WASHINGTON

Now, git. And don't let me catch you boys in here again. You just lost your Alabam privileges.

Del-Red leaves. And **CHARLIE PARKER** instantly picks up where he left off. **O'Mara approaches Washington.**

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

O'MARA

Sergeant John O'Mara. Buy you a drink, Lieutenant?

WASHINGTON

Well, seein' as I'm on duty, Sergeant. You better buy me two.

INT. CLUB ALABAM - BAR - NIGHT

O'Mara and Washington drinking whiskey.

O'MARA

File says you gave back your bars. Doesn't say why.

WASHINGTON

They put me in charge of a unit roundin' up Japanese for 'Forced Relocation' out to Manzanar. Didn't sit with me. So I turned in my bars and I've been walkin' a beat on Central ever since.

(beat)

They need me down here. This damn heroin's eatin' Central Avenue right down to the bone. I lost my niece to it. Year ago. But you already knew that. It's there in my file, isn't it, Sarge?

O'MARA

I'm sorry.

WASHINGTON

Department didn't blink. I'm the only law there is down here.

A moment...

O'MARA

What if I told you I could take you upriver, Washington. All the way to the headwaters. No more pimps and pushers. You can plug it up right at the source.

Beat. And a smile breaks slowly across Washington's face.

EXT. CON KEELER'S HOUSE - SUNDOWN

OFFICER CONWAY KEELER puttering in his open garage. Smallish, wiry guy. Wife shoves chow into his mouth like feeding coal into a furnace. But his engine burns faster and brighter than most. Keeler's working on his son's bike with the same precision that he does everything.

O'Mara walks up Keeler's driveway. O'Mara glances around the garage. Military-grade **ELECTRONICS EQUIPMENT**, state-of-the-art, experimental stuff, on Keeler's workbench. Keeler finishes. The wheel spins smooth as glass. Keeler flips the bike, righting it for his son, **CHARLIE**.

CHARLIE

Thanks, Dad.

As his son rides away, Keeler turns to face O'Mara.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - LATER (NIGHTFALL)

Up and down the street, MEN lean LADDERS against their homes, help their WIVES, KIDS up to their ROOFS. Picnicking up there, all of them watching the sky.

KEELER

(re: his neighbors)

Rocketdyne's test-firing their new missile up in Santa Susana. It's supposed to be faster than the V2.

Keeler's wife MARCIA hands O'Mara and Keeler coffee.

KEELER

Thanks, baby.

O'MARA

Thank you, ma'am.

She gives O'Mara a look of suspicion and then climbs up into their tree house to watch the launch with Charlie.

O'MARA

Heard you were the best wireman on the department. And now they got you working traffic.

KEELER

Vice wanted a wire on a little bookie named Robbins. A nobody.

O'MARA

They only ever pinch the nobodies.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEELER

So I recorded the usual chatter,
you know, wagers, markers. Then
one night Robbins started going on
about this new outfit called
Guarantee Finance. Said it was
going to put them out of business.

O'MARA

You take that to vice?

KEELER

They lost the tapes. I woke up
writing tickets. And Robbins died
of lead poisoning.

Treehouse: Keeler's wife and son wrapped in a blanket.

O'MARA

Yeah, they tell me it's
contagious. Look, the other guys
I'm askin, none of 'em have
families. So if you want to think
this over...

Just then, a WHITE FIRE lights the horizon like an acute
sun. CHEERS from the rooftops around them as the NAVAJO
ROCKET pierces the night sky, trailing smoke. Kids waving
sparklers, little American flags. Parents hold them,
watching it climb, faces full of awe, pride, hope.

KEELER

It's not so much the traffic
tickets I mind. Look, I can shovel
shit with the best of 'em. I was
in the Army for Christ's sake. But
this right here, a brighter
future, this is what we fought
for, isn't it?

O'MARA

Yep.

KEELER

Well I sure as hell didn't sign up
just to hand it all over to Cohen.

O'MARA

Yeah, me neither.

INT. O'MARA'S KITCHEN - DAY

O'Mara and Connie at lunch. Canned tomato soup and crackers. Connie takes a breath and slides a copy of **TRUE DETECTIVE MAGAZINE** across the kitchen table to O'Mara.

O'MARA

The hell is this?

A *Stanley-Borack* painted cover of OFFICER MAX KENNARD, gun blazing. Headline: **GUNFIGHT ON GLENDALE BOULEVARD.**

CONNIE

He's shot more crooks than any LA cop in the last hundred years.

O'MARA

Connie, I can't just pull some guy out of a magazine like he's a decoder ring.

Off her deadly look.

EXT. OLVERA STREET - DAY

O'Mara **CROSSES HIMSELF** as he walks past the ornate wooden CROSS, entering PLAZA OLVERA. *Charro* STREET MUSICIANS & white-lace *folklorico* DANCERS. And *Cafe Caliente*.

INT. CAFE CALIENTE - CONTINUOUS

Tex Ritter's 'Rye Whiskey' curling from a radio. Sitting with his back to the wall, **OFFICER MAX KENNARD** (*ken-nerd*) A laconic Texan. Hands-down the deadliest cop in LA. He holds an Ohio Blue-tip kitchen match between his teeth.

Kennard's young partner: **OFFICER NAVIDAD RAMIREZ**, open-faced Mexican kid, former all-Valley sprinter. Immigrant's son, eager to prove himself. Kennard cautiously watches O'Mara approach his table.

O'MARA

Mind if I join you fellas?

Kennard shrugs, eating beans. O'Mara pulls up a chair. Kennard signals the dusky WAITRESS for *doz cervezas*.

O'MARA (CONT'D)

John O'Mara.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KENNARD

Max Kennard.

RAMIREZ

Navidad Ramirez.

KENNARD

It's a mouthful, ain't it?
Christmas Ramirez-

RAMIREZ

-Navidad.

KENNARD

Aw, it's alright for a burlesque
dancer, but I keep tellin him
that's no kinda name for a lawman.

Ramirez rolls his eyes, a teenager at the mall with dad.

O'MARA

(to Kennard)
I talk to you a minute?

KENNARD

Go on, Na-vee-dad. Get some air.

Ramirez gets up from the table, heading outside.

O'MARA

Kid's not going to last long
riding with you.

KENNARD

Nobody'll work with him. On
account of his heritage. Yahoos
wouldn't know the difference
between plug tobacco and a pinch
of shit.

I/E. CAFE CALIENTE - MINUTES LATER

Kennard doctors his beer with hot sauce and lime. O'Mara
drinks, counting the NOTCHES scalloped into the butt of
Kennard's magnificent **.45 Caliber Colt Peacemaker.**

KENNARD

True Detective. Nothin' true in
it. Thanks to those chuckleheads
every *pistolero* in LA wants to be
the man who took Max Kennard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ramirez lingers just outside the door, unseen, listening.

O'MARA

You didn't learn to shoot like
that on the job.

O'Mara sets his bottle down at the edge of the table-

KENNARD

Well, Sarge, let's just say I
misspent my youth.

O'MARA

I'm going after Mickey Cohen. And
I'm looking for a gun hand.

-and O'Mara's finger deliberately **pushes the beer bottle off the edge of the table**. The bottle *falling* through empty air on its way to the tile floor as O'Mara BRINGS his hand up from under the table, DRAWING, his finger pointed like a gun. But Kennard's faster, drawing his PEACEMAKER, beating O'Mara, even as his left hand **CATCHES the bottle without spilling a drop**. Kennard smiles, business end of his Peacemaker against O'Mara's chest.

KENNARD

Wouldn't you know it? I just
happen to have one.

EXT. UNDER THE OLYMPIC BRIDGE - SUNDOWN

O'Mara's meager, ragtag squad is now assembled in the shadows on the LA river. **Kennard, Washington, Keeler.**

O'MARA

Listen. There's no glory in this
assignment. No medals. No
promotion. But I'm here to tell
you there's death in it, waiting
for the guy who hesitates, the guy
who flinches.

(off The Squad)

Some of you may have heard about a
Syndicate rule against killing
cops. But I am here to tell you
this Mickey Cohen is a different
animal. And he will not hesitate
to take your life. That's what
Mickey Cohen has in store for us
if we're caught. Lead. That's our
prize for comin' in second.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'MARA (CONT'D)

(beat)

Anybody wants out, now's the time.

Washington. Keeler. Kennard. None of them are going anywhere. O'Mara nods, satisfied.

O'MARA

This unit does not and will not exist. We wouldn't last a week trading body blows with Cohen. Our only advantage is that he won't know who we are. So I have only one rule in this outfit.

O'Mara holds up his **LAPD BADGE**.

O'MARA

You wanna ride with me, you leave these at home. Carry nothing that identifies you as a police officer. Because make no mistake, what we do from here on out will not be legal. We're not solving a case here. We're going to war.

(beat)

Cohen's juice comes from three sources: gambling, prostitution, and dope. That's where we'll cut him. He bleeds enough profit, he'll have to pack up his circus and take it on the road.

Movement in the shadows. They all whirl on the sound, GUNS drawn... **Navidad Ramirez** steps out, hands up.

RAMIREZ

Take it easy. I'm on your side.

O'MARA

Oh, for Christ's sake.

KEELER

Wait, who the hell is this guy?

KENNARD

He's a huge pain in my ass is what he is. In fact, yeah, why don't you boys just go on and shoot him.

WASHINGTON

You let him follow you here? Yeah, nice goin' there, Hoppalong.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KEELER

What the hell do we do now? Kid's
heard everything.

RAMIREZ

I sure have. And I want in.

O'MARA

(to Kennard)
He's your mess, cowboy.

RAMIREZ

So when do we start, Sarge?

O'MARA

Tonight. We're hitting his casino
across the river in Burbank.

EXT. SUNSET STRIP - NEON NIGHT

Conga-line TRAFFIC down the glamorous SUNSET STRIP.
Cohen's LIMOUSINE pulls up under the portico of **THE**
MOCAMBO. PHOTOGRAPHERS, proto-paparazzi are waiting.

Lennox gets out of the car, opens the door for Cohen.
FLASHBULBS pop as Cohen squires Jean out of the limo.

REPORTER 1

Mr. Cohen, how's the haberdashery
business?

COHEN

Booming.

Reporters laugh.

REPORTER 2

Hey, Mickey. Mickey, whatever
happened to Jimmy Ragan?

Cohen turns. A hush falls. Gulp. He's gone too far.

COHEN

I never killed anyone... that
didn't deserve it.

INT. THE MOCAMBO - NIGHT

Carnivale decor. PARROTS, MACAWS, and MONKEYS on perches.
On the stage: CARMEN MIRANDA sings "South American Way."

Mickey leading Jean to a table by the stage. Here sits **IGNAZIO "JACK" DRAGNA** (58): silver-haired Sicilian "vintner" who ran the rackets for the Black Hand before Cohen moved in. Dragna's a gray wolf in a bespoke suit. Charming. Cultured. Everything Cohen is not. Whalen stands by the table, acting as Dragna's bodyguard.

COHEN

Hiya, Jack.

DRAGNA

Mickey.

Whalen is Dragna's muscle. Lennox is Cohen's. Dragna nods Whalen away. We see Jean wants no part of this.

JEAN

Say fellas, if it's okay with you
I think maybe I'll bend my elbow,
while you boys bend your ears?

She heads for the bar.

COHEN

What's on your mind, Jack?

DRAGNA

What you did to Ragan, that was disgraceful, Mickey. Man rode the train out here from Chicago to sit with you in good faith. I don't get you. You had the world by the ass out here. All the prestige, purse, and pussy any man could ask for. And you go and poke Chicago in the eye. For what? The hell is it you want now?

COHEN

More, Jack. I want more.

Whalen and Jean over at the bar, having drinks.

WHALEN

Say, kid, why don't you just turn Jerry loose 'for he gets hurt.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEAN

Jerry's a big boy, Jack. Trust me.

WHALEN

He's my friend, Jean.

She considers this. Glancing over at Cohen and Dragna.

WHALEN

Think they'll bury the hatchet?

JEAN

Sure, right in Dragna's head.

BACK AT THE TABLE:

DRAGNA

Listen, there's a way we've always done things out here-

COHEN

-You listen, old man. This ain't Chicago. This is the Wild West. And I been readin' up on it. You heard a' Manifest Destiny? Means take what you can, when you can. So I'm takin' it all away from you, Jack. It's my destiny.

DRAGNA

You know, Mickey, I may be old and slow, but I have some friends who are neither. You're not one of us, and you never will be, or I wouldn't have to explain this to you, but if you do this, if you touch me, you'll wake up with all your best parts stuffed in your mouth.

COHEN

Do I look worried, Jack?

Cohen stands, turns his back on Dragna, and heads for the door. Jean downs her drink, nods to Whalen, follows him.

EXT. CABANA CLUB - LATER THAT NIGHT

Wooters passes a newsstand, heading for the Cabana Club's awning when PETE approaches with his shine box.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETE

Shine?

WOOTERS

Make it quick, Pete.

Pete's hard-worn hands fly over Wooters' shoes. Wooters distracted by a **Packard** idling across the street, steam curling from the tailpipe...

PETE

Keep your head down, Jerry. Word is Cohen's movin' on Dragna.

WOOTERS

You got better intel than any cop on the department, kid. Ever thought about becoming one of us?

PETE

No thanks, Jerry. No future in it. All the money's on the other side.

A **BLACK CADILLAC** pulls up to the curb. The **DRIVER** opens the door for **JACK DRAGNA** and his wife, wearing a fur.

WOOTERS

Tell me about it.

Pete finishes up Wooters' shoes, his palm out for a tip. Wooters palms Pete a folded bill.

WOOTERS

Vegetables.

Four **MEN** now get out of the **Packard**, moving with purpose, heading straight for Dragna. Wooters recognizes the gibbous-eyed **JIMMY WREVOK** and four **HATCHETMEN**, trench coats like vampire-capes as they cross the street. Wooters knows what's coming and **SHOVES** Pete behind a cab.

WOOTERS (CONT'D)

Get behind the engine block.

SUBMACHINE GUNS swing up out of their coats to unleash a **TORRENT**. Lead flies through parked cars and **PEOPLE** as easily as it flies through the night air. Dragna's driver falls dead. Dragna pulls his wife behind his car. Wooters ducks, rounds buzzing by his ears.

An **LAPD PROWL CAR** rounds the corner. Bad timing. Wrevock's crew turns their guns on the cops! **Windows implode. Fenders ulcerate.**

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The prowler car swerves, plows through the newsstand. **COPS** scramble for cover. **BYSTANDERS** cower, wounded, bawling. Pete hunched behind the cab, palms over his ears.

Dragna takes the opportunity to make his move, dashing with his wife toward the entrance to the club. Wrevock draws a bead on Dragna, his submachine gun spraying, the bullet-impacts chasing Dragna across storefronts...

...as Wooters watches Dragna run past Pete. A tornado of flying lead follows Dragna, disintegrating all in its path, **heading straight for Pete**, who's still crouched behind the cab, right where Wooters told him to stay.

Now Wooters **is sprinting to reach Pete**, running hard to beat the gunfire, to get to Pete before the bullets do.

Pete's up against the cab, helplessly watching the geysers of powdered sidewalk getting closer to him. Pete turns to Wooters, all his streetwise attitude gone, scared eyes pleading. And Wooters **watches the rounds hitting Pete square**. The boy's eyes going wide with shock. Wooters' palms pressed over Pete's wounds. Wooters trying to hold the life inside him, and watching it leave the kid's eyes. Gone.

And we watch Wooters transform. The long-dormant cop in him awakens. Wooters stands with Pete's blood on him. He DRAWS his .38, facing their submachine guns.

Wooters **FIRES** squeezing the trigger, not jerking it. His .38 barely audible against the HOWL of the full-auto submachine guns. Wooters fires into a hatchetman's chest.

Wrevock watches the guy next to him flop facedown. *Huh?* He scans the street, draws a bead on Wooters. But Wooters is faster. He **FIRES** again, his .38 round passing through Wrevock's bicep. The sting merely annoys Wrevock.

WREVOCK (CONT'D)

Come on. Let's blow.

Backing toward their Caddy, firing to cover their escape. Wooters' revolver clicks empty. He moves fast, **SNATCHES** a shotgun from the LAPD prowler. The cops cowering.

COP

Jerry, don't be stupid!

He jacks a round into the chamber, charging out into open street. **BOOM!** Tromboning the slide. **BOOM!** Knocking one of Wrevock's Hatchetmen off his feet. The others pile in and burn rubber. Wooters chases them, **BOOM!**

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Another blast, shattering the Caddy's rear windshield as it screeches around the corner.

HATCHETMAN (O.S.)
*Oh Christ, I'm bad hurt. Somebody
call a doctor. You, flatfoot, come
on, buddy. Ring the doc, willya?*

Wooters walks over, stands over the moaning Hatchetman, who's trying to hold himself together. A full load of buckshot in his gut. Recognition in the man's eyes.

HATCHETMAN (CONT'D)
Hey, I know you, right? Yeah,
yeah, you're Jerry Wooters.

Wooters points the shotgun at the man's face.

WOOTERS
Used to be.

And pulls the trigger. **BOOM!**

EXT. MARIPOSA HORSE STABLES IN BURBANK - NIGHT

Here in the tight shadows, O'Mara watches his squad prepare for their first raid against Mickey Cohen. They look like men about to jump out of a perfectly good airplane. O'Mara hands out kerchiefs to each man.

KEELER
The hell is this?

O'MARA
So they won't see our faces.

WASHINGTON
You're shittin me.

KENNARD
They're gonna think we're knockin'
the place over.

O'MARA
That's the general idea. Destroy
the equipment. Burn the money.
We're in and out in ten minutes.
And back across the river before
they even know what hit 'em.
(beat)
Bound to be some trouble boys in
there.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'MARA (CONT'D)

One of 'em wants to impress Cohen,
put a round in his gut. He'll make
a lot of noise, scream about how
god damn much it hurts, ought to
discourage his buddies.

Their faces tight as they tie on their kerchiefs.

O'MARA

We do this, there's no going back.

RAMIREZ

We gonna do it or talk about it?

EXT. MARIPOSA ROAD - SECONDS LATER

A tumble weed drifts across the dirt track between the LA river and Riverside Drive. The squad watches a war party of 'COMANCHES' crossing Mariposa. The scene surreal.

COMANCHE 1

Think the Great Spirit's with us
tonight, Chief?

COMANCHE 2

Hell, He better be. Squaw need'm
new pair of moccasins.

The Comanches LAUGH, on their way into Cohen's million-dollar **RIVERSIDE CASINO**: resembles a plantation, *Tara* on the LA River. Laughter, music leaking from the windows. Past the Casino, O'Mara can see the Warner Bros **WATER TOWER** against the night sky. The Comanches are extras.

INT. CASINO - NIGHT

The squad walks into the smoke-choked casino, momentarily stunned by the scene on the casino floor. It looks like a costume party in here, the CROWD salted with more EXTRAS. A WAITRESS with a tray full of BEER walks by the squad.

WAITRESS

Who're you guys supposed to be?

ROMAN CENTURIONS playing slots, CONFEDERATE SOLDIERS around the roulette table, COWBOYS and INDIANS at blackjack, and a dozen UNIFORMED COPS shooting craps. But their BADGES say **CITY of BURBANK**. They're REAL cops. The cops jostle and laugh, caught up in their craps game, each cop carries a **.38 REVOLVER** in a clamshell holster.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEELER

Those aren't costumes, are they?

O'MARA

No, they are not.

KENNARD

Dirty sombitches're guardin' the place for Cohen. Call it, Sarge.

O'MARA

Abort. We're not killin' any cops.

Three cops notice them, break from their game, heading straight for the squad. Washington deftly plucks a heavy prop TOMAHAWK from the sash of a passing Comanche...

WASHINGTON

Get ready to run.

Three Burbank cops pull their PISTOLS.

O'MARA

We're not lookin' for trouble.

COP

Well, you found some.

The other cops leave the craps table, heading this way.

FAST: Kennard's hand slips under his coat, coming out with his Peacemaker, fanning the hammer. **BLAM! BLAM!** The Pistols spark and LEAP right out of two cops stinging hands as Washington **THROWS the tomahawk** at the third, the blunted weapon spinning through the air to KNOCK the cop's pistol off target! It FIRES, shattering the bottles on the waitress's tray. The other Burbank cops shield their eyes from flying glass and O'Mara and the squad **RUN-**

EXT. MARIPOSA ROAD - CONTINUOUS

-like hell across Mariposa Road. Burbank cops pouring, out, FIRING wild. Kennard SHOOTING back over his shoulder putting a round through a cop's FOOT, dropping him. *ARGH!*

EXT. MARIPOSA HORSE STABLES - CONTINUOUS

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! Dust geysers chase the squad through the stables. Fence posts splinter split-seconds after Ramirez runs past them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'Mara FIRES into the ground in front of the horses.
Horses spook, LEAPING their corrals, BREAKING fences.
Cops dodging the stampeding HORSES.

I/E. THOMAS' FORD SHERIDAN - CONTINUOUS

Keeler climbs behind the wheel, but the engine won't turn. **BLAM!** Hunching as his windshield shatters. O'Mara and Washington run to the back of the car, putting their backs to the trunk, PUSHING it. **BLAM! BLAM!** The Burbank cops fire, hitting the fenders. Kennard gets FIRING **BOOM! BOOM!** Explosions of dust backing up the Burbank cops.

KENNARD

Put your back into it, Hoss.

WASHINGTON

Shut up and shoot, Peckerwood.

Keeler POPS the clutch, the engine ROARS to life, tailpipe belching smoke. TIRES spin, kicking up a *blinding* STORM of ROILING dust. O'Mara and Washington are now running to get into their Fords as they barrel down the cement slopes of the Los Angeles River. Chaos.

And when the dust clears, the two Fords are gone, and Washington and O'Mara are both left standing there, surrounded by BURBANK COPS, all pointing pistols at them.

COP 1

Hands in the air!

COP 2

Now!

Washington and O'Mara put their hands up. They're caught.

SPEEDING DOWN THE LA RIVERBED:

The two Fords speed down the semi-dry banks of the LA River, splashing through shallow water, runaway horses galloping alongside them. Keeler glances over into the other Ford, **Washington and O'Mara aren't in it!**

KEELER

(shouting across)
Where the hell are they?

KENNARD

I thought you had 'em!

He SLAMS on his BRAKES, both cars spinning out.

INT. SLAPSY MAXIE'S NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

A packed house, everyone having the time of their lives.
A WAITER with a PHONE working his way to Cohen's table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cohen takes the receiver, his palm over his other ear, receiving the bad news. Jean checks her makeup.

COHEN
(into phone)
When? Who're they workin' for?
Well, they gotta be workin' for
somebody. No, no...

I/E. BURBANK POLICE STATION - NIGHT

COHEN (V.O.)
...I'll send a 'bail bondsman'
over to pick 'em up.

Small-town cop-shop. A few prowlers outside. Malevolent. Mayberry as written by Stephen King. *A skeleton crew working this late hour. The fewer witnesses the better.

INT. CHIEF JACKSON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

OFFICER 'CUB' FUNSTON, the sadistic jailer, and burly OFFICER WINTER haul O'MARA and WASHINGTON into the Chief's office in handcuffs. They've been worked over.

Chief of Police, the corrupt and debauched **ELMER JACKSON**, *who we recognize from Cohen's table at Slapsy Maxie's. Sitting behind his desk, Jackson wears an ice cream suit and chews plug tobacco. A stuffed bear stands behind him.

FUNSTON
Nigger had this on him.

Funston places Washington's stiletto on Jackson's desk.

CHIEF JACKSON
(to Washington)
You packin' a pig-sticker, *Bwana*?

Funston drops a LEATHER BELT around Washington's throat and PULLS, cutting his air, forcing him to face Jackson.

CHIEF JACKSON
You must be out here from Chicago.
Or maybe from goddamned Mars
'cause everybody down here on
Planet Earth knows that Mr.
Cohen's place is sacred ground.
(to O'Mara)
Dragna put you up to this?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'Mara gives him nothing. Chief Jackson's eyes flick to Funston. Funston smiles, drawing his TRUNCHEON. He CLUBS O'Mara to the floor. Chief Jackson leans over and spits tobacco into the spittoon. Shakes his head, lamenting.

CHIEF JACKSON

You'd best believe I'm askin' you
a lot nicer than Cohen's gonna.

INT. SLAPSY MAXIE'S - NIGHT

Jean and Cohen on the dance floor. Cohen moves with surprising grace. After all, he was a boxer.

COHEN

New York, you're a rat in a maze,
can't ever see the horizon, and
when you're not freezin' your ass
off you're sweatin' through your
shirt. Everybody livin' right on
top of each other. You wouldn't
believe how god damned filthy it
is. Whole lousy place. Diseased.

Wooters walks into Slapsy Maxie's. Wooters looks nothing like he did the last time we saw him here. Gone is the bon vivant. Pete's blood is still on his clothes.

COHEN

But out here you can breathe. The
air's dry. Clean. You can taste
it. And it changes you.

Cigarette girls, revelers stare, backing away as Wooters walks past them, straight toward Cohen and Jean...

COHEN

That's why the strong ones came
west, kid. Out here, a guy's got
room to be more'n what he was.

Cohen and Jean cheek to cheek. Cohen can't see Wooters coming, but Jean can. She's terrified. Wooters looks like a sleepwalker, outside his body, reaching into his coat-

-From out of nowhere, Whalen GRABS Wooters, the big man's country strength steering Wooters away from Cohen into-

INT. MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Wooters struggles. Whalen SLAMS Wooters against the wall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WHALEN

Listen to me. LISTEN. I heard about what happened and I'm awful sorry about Pete, but you gotta screw your head back on, cousin. Good'n tight. There's a war on.

WOOTERS

Yeah, no shit.

WHALEN

But it ain't yours. None of it. So don't you pick it up. Don't even touch it, hear? Just leave it lay.

WOOTERS

What's Dragna doin' about it?

WHALEN

Dunno yet. I guess somebody just hit Cohen's place in Burbank.

(off Wooters)

And I know they think it was Dragna's guys, but I can tell you for a natural fact it wasn't.

WOOTERS

Wait, wait. *What?*

WHALEN

Craziest thing I ever heard. Coupla strong-arm boys made like to knock over Mickey's Casino.

Crazy indeed. Wooters understands exactly what happened.

WHALEN

Elmer's boys nabbed two of 'em and Cohen's sendin' some guys over there now.

WOOTERS

Aw, Christ.

And Whalen sees the truth on his old friend's face.

WHALEN

Are you tellin me they're cops?!!?

WOOTERS

I gotta go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WHALEN

Jerry, think a minute. You get in this, won't matter you're a cop. Won't matter you're my friend. You'll catch a contract same as anybody else. Every hired gun this side of the San Jacinto'll be lookin to hand Cohen your head. And that's a mathematical fact.

WOOTERS

I know.

And Whalen watches Wooters walk out.

I/E. BURBANK POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Funston and Winter lead O'Mara and Washington down to the LOCKUP, SHOVE them sprawling on to the floor of their CELL. Moth-eaten bunks. A slop bucket. Washington and O'Mara share a look. They are *so fucked*.

WASHINGTON

Always knew I'd die in Burbank.

O'Mara lifts the mattress off the bunk, tears a BEDSPRING from the frame. He steps on the spring to straighten it.

O'MARA

They won't kill us here. But Cohen'll send somebody to pick us up. And then you'll wish they had.

O'Mara's practiced hands working the spring into his own handcuffs, the old commando picking his cuffs in seconds.

O'MARA

Watch the corridor, willya?

O'Mara reaches out through the bars to fit the end of the spring into the lock on their CELL DOOR. Washington keeps watch. O'Mara works the spring into the lock. Washington hears something and turns to see hands LOCKING a CHAIN around the BARS of their cell WINDOW.

WASHINGTON

Uh, Sarge, you ain't gonna believe this. But the Ringo Kid's outside.

Outside, Kennard crouches in the bushes, test-pulling the chain.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And we SEE the other end of the chain is looped around the BUMPER of the FORD SHERIDAN parked on the street. Ramirez hunched down behind the wheel.

WASHINGTON

(to Kennard)

Christ, you know that's about the dumbest thing I've ever seen.

KENNARD

Hear that, Naveedad? Hoss got himself pinched and I'm the dummy.

EXT. BURBANK POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Keeler pops the JUNCTION BOX and pulls a pair of BOLT CUTTERS, *ready to cut the power*. Keeler looks over to see a guy get out of his car and head into the front lobby.

INT. LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

WOOTERS walks into the lobby, wearing a long overcoat, and a tough-guy sneer. The desk officer looks him over.

DESK OFFICER

Help you with somethin, pal?

WOOTERS

Yeah, you can get off your ass and bring me your prisoners.

INT. LOCKUP - MOMENTS LATER

Funston and Winter lead Wooters back to the cell. O'Mara pulls the spring out before they see it. Funston fits his key into the lock. **O'Mara recognizes Wooters**, but he doesn't let on. *So he was a fair judge of men after all.*

FUNSTON

(something fishy)

You got here awful quick.

WOOTERS

Mr. Cohen's in a hurry.

FUNSTON

Just one guy?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOOTERS

I can handle 'em. With plenty left
over for you, if you want some.
Now, open it.

INT. LOBBY

But Cohen's two real **GOONS** walk into the lobby now.

DESK OFFICER

Help you fellas?

GOON 1

Yeah, we're here to pick up some
garbage. Two bags.

INT. LOCKUP

The DESK OFFICER and Cohen's goons running back to them.

DESK OFFICER

Hold it! He's bullshit!

Funston turns to Wooters. *Wooters PUNCHES him and-*

-Keeler CUTS the POWER, plunging them all into DARKNESS-

*-Kennard signals. Ramirez FLOORS it. The chain TIGHTENS,
but instead of pulling the bars off the building, the
chain TEARS THE BUMPER OFF THE CAR!*

-Confusion. Wooters fighting in near-total darkness.
Washington reaches his cuffed hands through the bars and
pulls WINTER'S HEAD against them. O'Mara reaches through
the bars, turning the key. The door clacks open and
O'Mara LUNGES out, a palm-strike putting Funston down,
O'Mara's elbow smashing the desk officer's temple. One of
the goons pulls his GUN. Wooters grabs it. BOOM! BOOM!
The muzzle FLASHES like a strobe light, illuminating the
brutal moments of the fight - panels in a graphic novel -
as Wooters expertly twists the wild-firing gun away.
Cohen's men, the desk officer, all beaten to the ground.

INT. CHIEF JACKSON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Chief Jackson frozen in the darkness, hearing the BRAWL
and GUNSHOTS outside his office. He hears his door open.

CHIEF JACKSON

Who's there?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He strikes a match. It FLARES, revealing Washington smiling, flicking open his stiletto.

WASHINGTON

Bwana's a Swahili word. Means
'Sir,' got that?

Jackson flinches. The blade moves like lightning, nicking Jackson under his chin, just a shaving cut. A reminder.

CHIEF JACKSON

Yes, sir.

And Washington blows out the match. Darkness.

EXT. BURBANK POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara, Wooters and Washington run out of the police station to meet Keeler, Kennard, and Ramirez. All of them piling into Wooters car and the Ford, peeling out.

KEELER

Wait, now who the hell's this guy?

O'MARA

Jerry Wooters. He's one of us.
(to Wooters)
And I thought you were smart.

WOOTERS

Guess maybe I felt like doing
something dumb for a change.

EXT. JACK DRAGNA'S VINEYARD - NIGHT

Dragna's Tuscan-style ESTATE in the Santa Monica Mountains. **MEN IN BLACK** moving like wraiths through Dragna's vineyard, stalking toward his quiet home.

The **MEN IN BLACK** close on the house, grotesque monsters, huge eyes, proboscis snouts. They're wearing **GAS MASKS**, carrying **M-3 GREASE GUNS** fitted with suppressors.

SENTRIES stationed on Dragna's veranda, smoking, talking. One sitting reading the NEWSPAPER, rifle leaned against the house. The men in black raise their weapons *Pfft! Pfft! Pfft!* **SILENCED BULLETS** fizz through the cool night air. The sentries fall. *Pfft!* A last bullet pierces the sentry's newspaper - a burning hole Bonanza-map spreads over Cohen's photo to REVEAL the guard slumped, dead. Bodies everywhere, fog rises from their wounds.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

I/E. DRAGNA'S ESTATE - CONTINUOUS

The men pull **SMOKE GRENADES**, toss them. Grenades SMASH through windows, the house fills with colored smoke.

Dragna's armed BODYGUARDS cough and scramble, blinded by smoke. While the masked men in black move through the swirling smoke like sharks through water, firing silenced weapons. *Pfft-pfft-pfft-pfft!* Percussive, hissing whispers. A MAID runs from the kitchen. *Pfft!* She falls.

Jack Dragna hustles his WIFE down the hall, holding a towel over her mouth to protect her from the smoke, stepping over the bodies of his men, trying to escape.

They run right into a MAN in a gas mask. She SCREAMS through the towel as he raises his M-3. *Pfft-Pfft!* Smoke clears. Standing over the bodies of Dragna and his wife, the gunman removes his gas mask. We see it's **Lennox**.

EXT. AGUA DULCE CANYON - DAY

BOOM! BOOM! Gunfire echoes off the rocks where bandits once hid. **BOOM! BOOM!** Two man fire-teams move through the adobe GHOST TOWN converted into a '**Hogan's Alley**.'

Casings hit the dirt as Wooters and O'Mara shoot the course together, where they're supposed to work as a team and cover each other as they move through the maze, but **Wooters and O'Mara are way out of sync...**

Wooters is a competent shooter, but O'Mara is a *machine*, **BAMBAMBAMBAM!** O'Mara firing so fast his .45 sounds like a MAC-10, **FIRING** at 'GANGSTERS' (overcoats stuffed with pillows and sandbags). Wooters has to stay out of his way. You get the feeling, if it came to it, O'Mara would shoot through Wooters to hit his enemies.

Kennard leans against a car, watching them all practice. Washington doesn't like it.

EXT. AGUA DULCE CANYON - LATER

The squad reloads their guns on the hoods of their FORDS, trunks full of AMMO BOXES and *EASTSIDE BEER*. They pass around a church-key can opener, sipping warm beer. Washington downs his beer, calls over to Kennard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WASHINGTON

You gonna break leather,
Hoppalong? Or just watch the rest
of us?

Kennard tosses his empty CAN into the air, DRAWS his revolver in one blurring motion, FIRES - **BOOM!** - kicking the can further up in the air. Walking swift and calm, Kennard FIRES and FIRES, keeping the can aloft, bouncing it skyward with all six bullets. *Whoa*. Kennard plucks another empty CAN off the hood of a Ford.

KENNARD

Get on up here, Naveedad.

Ramirez's hand on his gun. Kennard TOSSES the CAN. Ramirez draws, FIRES. **BOOM!** Miss. Kennard tosses again. **BOOM!** Miss. Again. **BOOM!** Miss. Again. The squad chuckles.

KENNARD (CONT'D)

Don't shoot where it is, son.
Shoot where it's gonna be.

Determined, Ramirez holsters a final time. Kennard TOSSES the CAN. Ramirez FIRES. **BOOM! BOOM!** But he can't get it.

Now, Washington steps forward and hands Kennard an empty can. He nods and Kennard TOSSES the CAN skyward. But instead of pulling his gun, Washington lets his **SWITCHBLADE** drop from his sleeve into his palm -*shickt*- and THROWS the knife. The can CRUSHED against the throat of a PAPER TARGET, pinned to it by the switchblade.

KENNARD

Beginner's luck.

EXT. AGUA DULCE CANYON - DAY

O'Mara, Wooters, and Keeler stand around one of the cars. O'Mara expertly disassembles his Colt .45, placing the pistol's components on the hood of his car, wiping away the dust, taking a soldier's emotionless care with the weapon upon which his life will depend. Wooters drinks.

Keeler now opens the morning paper the hood of the car. He pales.

KEELER

Jesus Christ...

Wooters see the HEADLINE: "**Mob Massacre!**" And GRISLY PHOTOS: The BODIES of Dragna and his wife.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEELER

They killed everybody in the house. His wife. They killed the maid for Christ's sake.

O'Mara glances at the paper, then turns back to his gun.

WOOTERS

We did this.

O'Mara blows dust from the barrel of his gun

O'MARA

How do you figure?

WOOTERS

Because we went after Cohen's casino. He thought we were Dragna's guys. This was get-back and you damn well know it.

O'Mara continues to reassemble his weapon, his hands swift and sure. He's done it blindfolded, many times.

O'MARA

There's nothing for it.

The components again take deadly form. O'Mara slides a full mag into the well and holsters his pistol.

KEELER

Jesus Christ, how can you just-

O'MARA

-Because it's war. And people die in war. Whether we like it or not.

Beat. Wooters and Keeler share a look.

KEELER

Sarge, I don't want any more civilian casualties.

O'MARA

Talk to Cohen.

KEELER

I'd rather listen to him.

He opens the trunk, revealing LISTENING EQUIPMENT Buck Rogers would covet. Cannibalized parts. Fuck Macgyver.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WOOTERS
Bug one of the clubs?

Keeler shakes his head.

KEELER
His house.

I/E. COHEN'S MANSION (HOLLYWOOD HILLS) - NIGHT

Mickey Cohen's **MANSION**: mission architecture, borrowed class bristling with artillery. Powerful **FLASHLIGHTS** sweep over the grounds as **SENTRIES** patrol the perimeter with GERMAN SHEPHERDS on short leashes, **CARBINES**.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara, Wooters, and Keeler crouch. They're wearing all black. Applying charcoal to their faces. Tense.

WASHINGTON
Callin' this crazy would be an
insult to crazy people.

Washington crouches at the base of the tree, an **SCR-536 HANDHELD TRANSCEIVER** to his ear. These guys are still dressed like characters out of a Chandler novel, but they move like modern commandos.

Above them, lying panther-like on the branch of a banyan tree, kitchen match in his teeth, Kennard **PEERS** through a **HUGE M1 SNIPER SCOPE**, an **INFRARED LIGHT** attached to the bottom of his rifle. *First-generation **NIGHT VISION**.

KENNARD'S POV (THROUGH NIGHTVISION):

A *green-tinted image* of the **SENTRIES** making their rounds.

KENNARD
Takes 'em boys about three minutes
to make it around the house.
You'll have to rawhide it, Sarge.

O'Mara pulls a bottle of **AMMONIA**, sprinkling all three of them with it. It stinks to high heaven.

WOOTERS
How's this gonna throw off the
dogs? We just stink of ammonia.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'MARA

I don't know, it worked in France.

Keeler and Wooters share a look. Christ.

KENNARD

Well, it's workin' on me. *Shoo*.
Why don't you boys get a'goin'.

O'Mara, Wooters, and Keeler shoulder their SATCHELS.

EXT. BOTTOM OF THE HILL - NIGHT

Ramirez waits in one of the Ford Sheridans, parked under an oak tree, watching the road for headlights. He receives Washington's transmission on a matching 536.

INT. CULVERT - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara leads the three of them crawling through the narrow culvert toward the dim circle of moonlight at the other end. Then O'Mara stops near the mouth of the culvert, mouth-breathing, watching as the SENTRIES' FLASHLIGHT BEAMS pass over the corrugated steel opening.

A GERMAN SHEPHERD suddenly fills the mouth of the culvert, blocking the light, *sniffing*. The dog's head and shoulders inside. THE DOG LOOKS DIRECTLY AT O'MARA, sniffs, dismisses him and moves away.

O'Mara, Wooters, and Keeler ninja-creep across the lawn, crouch at the side of the house and POP the SCREEN off the crawl-space. Wooters and Keeler slip under the house. O'Mara waits by the opening, keeping watch for sentries.

Wooters and Keeler CRAWL through the dirt to where a sliver of LIGHT comes down through the seams around the ACCESS PANEL from the crawl space to the house.

INT. HALL CLOSET (COHEN'S MANSION) - CONTINUOUS

Wooters silently opens the panel and pops out. Keeler follows. Wooters cracks the closet door, peering out.

At the end of the hall, GUNMEN sit, smoking, watching the windows, CARBINES lean against their chairs. Three of them playing cards. If any of them looked back, they'd see Wooters and Keeler dashing into the MASTER BEDROOM.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

FRAMED PHOTOS of Cohen with CELEBRITIES. Several of young Cohen the boxer. A Championship Belt. Next to Cohen's bed is an identical, smaller bed. Cohen's dog, MICKEY JUNIOR, looks up at them, seems to shrug, and lays down again.

Keeler opens his satchel, unfurls his canvas tool kit on Cohen's bed. Wooters watches the hall while Keeler unscrews the back of Cohen's new EMERSON TELEVISION.

I/E. FORD SHERIDAN - NIGHT

Ramirez shifts and fidgets. He has to pee. Finally, he gets out of the car and runs down into a gully, unzips.

KENNARD'S POV (THROUGH NIGHTVISION):

The SENTRIES with their dogs are halfway around the house now, heading back toward O'Mara.

KENNARD
The hell's takin' so long?

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Keeler fits BUG and transmitter into the back of the TV.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS - NIGHT

Cohen's 1948 Packard Custom 8 LIMO heads up his street.

I/E. COHEN'S LIMO - NIGHT

The DRIVER takes them up familiar switchbacks. COHEN riding in back with JEAN at his side.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS - NIGHT

Ramirez is zipping up when the headlights hit his back. He crouches in the gully as Cohen's limo PASSES, then scrambles up out of the gully to the car. **IT'S LOCKED!** The keys left dangling from the ignition. His walkie-talkie on the passenger seat!

KENNARD'S POV (THROUGH NIGHTVISION):

The guard is coming around, heading right for O'Mara!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KENNARD
(to Washington)
Guard's gonna be right on top of
him. I'm takin' him now.

EXT. COHEN'S MANSION - NIGHT

O'Mara sees the guard coming now, he pulls his pistol.

I/E. FORD SHERIDAN - NIGHT

Ramirez SMASHES his window with a ROCK, grabs the walkie!

RAMIREZ
He's coming back! Repeat. Cohen's
on his way back to the house!

WASHINGTON
(to Kennard)
Thought he was watchin the road.

EXT. COHEN'S MANSION - NIGHT

O'Mara crouches, pointing his pistol at the approaching guard, who still hasn't seen him. Washington's HOOT-OWL calls across the canyon. The guard and his dog TURN at the sound. Just then, TIRES crunch up the gravel driveway. HEADLIGHTS. Cohen's LIMO has returned. The guard does an about-face and heads out to greet Cohen.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

They HEAR the FRONT DOOR now. Keeler's fingers fly, screwing the panel back on the TV, **dropping the last screw**, as Wooters GRABS Keeler and YANKS him out.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Men taking Cohen's coat. Mickey Jr. greets him. LETTY (50) Cohen's housekeeper, carrying in his dessert: a HUGE ICE CREAM SUNDAE and a CIGAR, on a platinum tray.

LETTY
Dessert, Mister Cohen.

COHEN
Letty, you're the tops.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jean heads back toward the bedroom to powder her nose.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Keeler RUNS across the hall, drops into the crawlspace. Wooters glances back, **sees Keeler's TOOLS left on the bed!** He grabs them and RUSHES back into the hall-

-and RUNS RIGHT INTO JEAN!!! She doesn't scream, but it's a near thing. They just stare at each other. Keeler WATCHES Wooters put his finger to his lips. All she has to do is shout. He can't help himself, gives her a quick KISS. She waves him into the crawlspace. Closing the closet door behind him, delicious smile on her red lips.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS - DAY

On the mesa, two-hundred yards above Cohen's Mansion, O'Mara parks his FORD SHERIDAN well down the block from a **HALF-FINISHED HOME** with a FOR SALE sign. He and Wooters head up to the house. O'Mara carries a paper sack, pulls aside a section of tarp, like a curtain.

INT. ABANDONED HOME - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara places the sack on a desk. Keeler reaches in, pulls butcher paper off an egg salad sandwich and hands half of the sandwich back to O'Mara. Bottles of coke.

Keeler has converted one of the finished rooms into his FIELD OFFICE. His LISTENING EQUIPMENT mad-scientist arrayed around the room. Some preliminary notes up on a school CHALKBOARD. O'Mara and Wooters enter, impressed.

KEELER

So far I've learned Johnny Stomp
is balling Lana Turner. Sinatra
sounds pretty sore about it.

O'MARA

I'm pretty sore about it myself.

KEELER

And Judge Krauss is a world class
whoremonger. Creep can't get
enough of Mickey's girls.

O'Mara scans Keeler's notes on the chalkboard: PAINT
STORE/LA BREA. FLOWER SHOP/SUNSET. GROCERY/GOWER.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEELER

The locations of some of his books around town. But it's hard to keep up. He must have a ton of 'em.

(beat)

And there's something else, something he's building. I don't know. It's big. Whatever it is.

A car engine. O'Mara ducks out. Keeler turns to Wooters.

KEELER

Anything you wanna tell me, Romeo?

WOOTERS

It's nothing.

KEELER

Didn't look like nothing.

Then Keeler's distracted by something he HEARS on the wire. O'Mara and the rest of the squad enter.

KEELER

(snapping fingers)

Wait a minute, wait. Yeah, here we go. Heroin shipment coming in.

The men perk up. This is what they've been waiting for.

O'MARA

Where?

KEELER

Shit. I don't know.

WASHINGTON

Bet I know someone who does.

EXT. BROADWAY DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - DAY

LA's White Way. The Palace, The Roxie. Finding **DUKE DEL-RED**, the zootsuit heroin dealer from the *Club Alabam*. Del strolls out of the THEATER.

WASHINGTON (O.S.)

There's our little Judas now.

Staked out across Broadway, O'Mara, Wooters, and Washington surveil Del from their car. Kennard, Keeler and Ramirez parked behind, waiting for the word.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'MARA

Take him at the corner.

Wooters cranks the ignition, but their crappy Ford won't turn over. Washington turns to Wooters.

WASHINGTON

You're kiddin, right?

Del recognizes Washington, *BOLTS!* O'Mara, Wooters, Washington and Ramirez dodging TRAFFIC and TROLLEYS on BROADWAY. Horns blare. *And the balls-to-the-wall foot chase is on!*

Del is *fast*, threading through pedestrians, the squad on his ass. Del streaks across HILL STREET, causing a three-car pileup. Crunched fenders. Radiator steam. Washington VAULTS the wreck, sliding across hoods, closing. Del ducks into...

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING (STAIRWELL) - CONTINUOUS

Del taking the stairs three at a time. Two burly MOVERS with a huge ARMOIRE block the stairwell. With the squad closing, Del makes a desperate **LEAP** across the stairwell. Washington reaches the armoire, **LEAPS** across four stories of air, catches the railing, *almost slips*, continues up.

EXT. ROOFTOPS - CONTINUOUS

Del leaping rooftop-to-rooftop. Washington in pursuit, dodging through hanging laundry. Washington TACKLES Del. They roll, both men CRASHING through a skylight *into...*

INT. 'ART PHOTOGRAPHY' STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Del lands on a PHOTOGRAPHER *-uff!* Washington lands in bed next to BETTY PAGE posing in opera gloves and garters. Del scrambles up, RUNS for the door. Washington grabs a BULLWHIP from Betty's bedpost and CRACKS it, the whip wrapping around Del's neck, stopping him in his tracks! Betty smiles at Washington, covering her breasts, barely.

WASHINGTON

Ma'am.

EXT. ALLEY - MINUTES LATER

Washington WALL-SLAMs Del, wrenching Del's arm up behind his back. The rest of the squad watch out for witnesses.

WASHINGTON
Cohen's got some medicine comin.
Everybody's gonna get well, right?
(SLAMS Del)
Where's he bringin' it in?

DEL-RED
Man, I don't know.

He presses his thumb to the puncture wound on Del's palm.

DEL-RED
ARRGH! Damn, wait. Wait.

WASHINGTON
Don't you lie to me, boy.

DEL-RED
Washington, they'll kill me.

WASHINGTON
Not if you leave town they won't.

His eyes flick from Washington to O'Mara. He gives up.

DEL-RED
Burbank Airport...Friday night.

Washington and O'Mara share a look.

EXT. BROADWAY - MINUTES LATER

The squad stands around their crappy Ford Sheridans.

WASHINGTON
We hit these guys tomorrow, we're
gonna need some fresh horses.

Ramirez SMILES.

EXT. CHAVEZ RAVINE - DAY

Fighting cocks strut, their legs leashed to stakes in the dirt, as the Fords pull up in front of a LARGE BARN in need of paint, dust drifting across MEN loitering in front of the barn. **MEXICAN GANGSTERS** from WHITE FENCE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Suspenders. White tanks, hair nets. Fedoras. Pistols in waistbands. These men are the guardians of the barrio.

The Squad's two crappy FORD SHERIDANS rattling up a dirt road. They climb out of their Fords and we see the homeboys from White Fence don't much cotton to strange *gueros* in their barrio. O'Mara sees the gangsters fanning out and for a moment it looks this is going to end badly.

Then the scudding dust clears and the leader, the one they call **SLEEPY**, recognizes **RAMIREZ**. Sleepy SMILES, walking across the line to HUG Ramirez. Relief floods.

RAMIREZ

This is my cousin.

SLEEPY

Call me Sleepy.

Wooters nods to the other *pachucos*, calling each in turn.

WOOTERS

So that would make you Sneezy?
Grumpy? And you must be Stabby.

A moment of tension, before the pachucos burst out laughing at the joke. The squad joins them, uneasily.

INT. BARN - MOMENTS LATER

Sleepy OPENS the huge BARN DOOR, letting light into the best-kept secret in the ravine. Sunlight gleams off FENDERS, BUMPERS. ENGINES hanging from chains. This is White Fence's **proto-chopshop**. The two FORD SHERIDANS drive in. Sleepy regards the two cars with great pity.

RAMIREZ

(*Spanish*)

[I need your help. We're going to war with Mickey Cohen.]

SLEEPY

[And that's why I love you. You're crazy.]

The knife scar running from Sleepy's eye to his jaw.

SLEEPY

Cohen's no friend of mine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sleepy WHISTLES to his homeboys, who wheel over two STRAIGHT EIGHTS. 424 cubic inches of beautiful chrome. Sleepy caresses the lead Ford, comforting the sick.

SLEEPY

Daddy's gonna make you beautiful.

EXT. BARN - 48 HOURS LATER

The squad stands in awe. Behold the Sistine Chapel in Chavez Ravine... Their FORD SHERIDANS unrecognizable, *transformed* into muscular **HOT RODS** - sleek, gloss, gleaming. They look like they could fly. Brought to life by Sleepy's tender ministrations. He puffs with pride.

SLEEPY

Take care of my daughters.

WOOTERS

Sir, let me assure you. Our intentions are strictly honorable.

EXT. BURBANK AIRPORT - NIGHT

Wheels BARK against the runway as a **LOCKHEED SUPER ELECTRA** touches down. A TOWER SEARCHLIGHT swings over a backwater BURBANK AIRPORT. Mothballed B-17s and P-38s in front of Quonset HANGARS. **BURBANK COPS** on horseback clop along the PERIMETER FENCE, shotguns across their pommels.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

Lying prone in a field between the airport and HOLLYWOOD WAY, O'Mara PEERS at the plane through the **M1 SCOPE**. Next to him, Wooters holds his SCR-536 walkie-talkie.

O'MARA'S POV (THROUGH NIGHTVISION):

The GROUND CREW chocking the wheels of the Super Electra. The CARGO DOOR opens. More BURBANK COPS guard the plane.

O'MARA

It's like a military operation.

WOOTERS (INTO 536)

Still think planting that wire was nuts?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WASHINGTON
(over radio)
Hell yes, I do.

EXT. SUPER ELECTRA - NIGHT

A CONVOY approaches the plane. Two **PACKARDS** leading a 3/4 Ton Canvas-topped **DODGE TRUCK**. Cohen's MEN climb out of them and begin off-loading heavy BUNDLES from the plane. One of Cohen's lieutenants, **CORWIN GRIMES** supervises.

I/E. BOTH FORD SHERIDANS (MOVING) - NIGHT

The squad's cars stalking the Packards at a distance. O'Mara driving Wooters and Keeler in the lead car. Washington driving, Ramirez and Kennard in the other.

WOOTERS (INTO 536)
Stand by until they cross the
river into LA. We don't need
another dance with Burbank PD.

Burbank cops peel off as the Convoy turns up SAN FERNANDO ROAD, lined with FARMS, FILLING STATIONS, a few HOMES.

O'MARA (CONT'D)
Okay, take 'em.

The supercharged SHERIDANS *accelerate* after the Convoy.

I/E. PACKARD (FAST) - CONTINUOUS

Grimes sees the FORDS coming up in his REARVIEW. But instead of flooring it to escape, he lets up on the gas, dropping back to cover the dope-loaded truck's escape.

GRIMES
We just picked up a couple a tics.
Burn 'em off the road.

Grimes SLAMS on this breaks, a controlled four-wheel drift, letting the two Fords roar past him. The gunmen with him leans out the window with his Carbine, **FIRING**.

INTERCUTTING:

I/E. WASHINGTON'S FORD - CONTINUOUS

BAM! BAM! BAM! Washington, Kennard, and Ramirez all duck as gunfire punches through their fender. Washington panic-CRANKS the wheel to the left, takes his Ford off-road into a CORNFIELD. STALKS breaking over the GRILL, whipping the windshield, as they drive.

Grimes drives after them. Another Packard breaks off to follow. The two Packards pursuing Washington's Ford like orca swimming through the tall corn, gunmen FIRING.

RAMIREZ

Okay, that's it.

Ramirez opens his door, climbs out on to the running board of the speeding Ford, wind whipping his clothes.

WASHINGTON

The hell's he doin'?!?!??

Bullets fizzing past him as Ramirez edges his way up to Washington's door. Kennard leans out his window, FIRING back to cover him. Ramirez opens Washington's door.

RAMIREZ

Move over, pops. I'm driving.

Ramirez takes the wheel as Washington slides over. Ramirez skillfully CRANKS the wheel left then right, the car swerving like a running back dodging a tackle, then-

I/E. PURSUING PACKARD (GRIMES POV)

-the Ford just disappears in the corn!

GRIMES

Where the hell are they?

I/E. O'MARA'S FORD (FAST) - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara POURS IT ON, determined. Wooters leans out his open passenger window, FIRING.

I/E. PACKARD (FAST) - CONTINUOUS

Gunman 2 climbs over into the backseat and opens the **WINE CRATE** resting there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Inside the slots meant for wine bottles are a dozen Model 24 *Stielhandgranate* **POTATO MASHER GRENADES**. The gunman pulls one out, rolls down his window and YANKS the pull cord, igniting the **FUSE**.

I/E. O'MARA'S FORD (FAST) - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara see the gunman's torso pop out of the Packard's back window, his arm cocked, tossing the-

WOOTERS	O'MARA
Oh, you gotta be-	- <i>Grenade!</i>

O'Mara **SWERVES** up on to the shoulder as the potato masher tomahawks through the night air to - *plink!* - bounce off the road next to his car, **EXPLODING** just behind them.

KEELER

Okay...

WOOTERS

Back off, John. John!

O'Mara accelerates.

O'MARA

You want out, there's the door.

EXT. CORNFIELD

The Ford appears **behind** the two Packards, Ramirez at the wheel. Leaning out the window, Washington **FIRES**, killing the other driver, his car **swerving** into Grimes' Packard, both cars rolling. Grimes' car landing on it's side.

I/E. PACKARD AND WOOTERS CAR - CONTINUOUS

Gunman 2 SIDE-ARMS the next grenade. This one **LANDS - CLANG! - ON THEIR HOOD**, in the well between the wipers and windshield! Wooters and O'Mara exchange *HOLY-SHIT* looks. O'Mara **SLAMS** the brakes, the car **SPINNING OUT** as Wooters hooks his arm out his open window, his fingers scrabble the hood for the grenade, but he can't reach it!

Wooters ducks back inside the car - BANG! BANG! - **FIRES** his .45 out through the windshield - **PUNCHES** his arm out through the bullet-broken glass windshield, fingers closing around the grenade. He **FLINGS** it away. The grenade **EXPLODES** mid-air as their car rockets past it.

I/E. PACKARD - CONTINUOUS

Holding them like a juggler, the gunman now PULLS the CORDS on **TWO GRENADES** at once. He's about to throw them-

-when **RAMIREZ'S FORD** blasts out of the cornfield, trailing broken cornstalks, barreling right at them.

GUNMAN

Holy-

And Ramirez RAMS into the Packard, jarring both grenades from the gunman's fingers. The gunman frantically tries to pick them up off the floor-

-but he's not quick enough. **KABOOM!** The explosion PUNTS the Packard into the night sky like a coffee can with a cherry bomb under it. O'Mara DRIVES **under** the flaming car before it CRASHES back in a fiery heap on San Fernando.

O'Mara's POURING it on, determined to catch that TRUCK.

The squad's two Fords finally close in on the TRUCK and force it off the road, down into the LA RIVER. The TRUCK rolling end over end, spilling bundles of powder...

HARD CUT TO:

EXT. MULHOLLAND DRIVE - NIGHT

Both cars pull into a quiet dirt turnout overlooking LA. O'Mara gets out of his car and OPENS his TRUNK. Two THUGS crammed back there - a bloody mess, but alive.

O'MARA

Get out.

The men limp to the shoulder, overlooking Los Angeles.

WOOTERS

On your knees. Both of you.

Both men comply. The squad surrounding them.

O'MARA

You boys run dope for Cohen.

THUG 1

You're dead. All a' you. You just ain't got the sense to lay down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'MARA

You got it ass backward, bo.

O'Mara puts his gun to Thug 1's head.

KEELER

Whoa, whoa...

O'MARA (CONT'D)

Smell that. You know, sometimes
when those Santa Anas start
blowin' up here you get the
damnedest hay fever.

(beat)

*You feel a sneeze coming on,
partner? A real loud sneeze?*

THUG 1

Go to hell.

O'Mara moves his revolver to the left and FIRES! **BOOM!**
Inches from the thug's ear, shattering his eardrum. The
thug writhes on the ground, clutching his ear. Screaming.

KEELER

JESUS CHRIST!

O'Mara puts his pistol to Thug 2's head. Keeler moves to
intervene. But Washington GRABS Keeler's arm.

O'MARA

How about you? You got hay fever?

Wooters pulls at O'Mara's shoulder. O'Mara shrugs it off.

THUG 2

Who the hell are you?

O'MARA

You don't remember me? Buddy, I'm
the thing under your bed. I'm the
last face you're gonna see.

O'Mara takes that in, then gun-points the lights of LA.

O'MARA

See that? It ain't New York and it
ain't Chicago. This is the City of
Angels. And you don't belong here.

(beat)

I want you out of my city. I catch
either of you here again, you're
gonna sneeze, all over yourselves.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

And O'Mara KICKS the thug off the cliff.

EXT. HILLSIDE BELOW MULHOLLAND - NIGHT

Thug 1 TUMBLES down the steep slope in a cloud of dust, hands clawing for purchase, CRASHING down through bushes, rolling into the street below. Scraped and moaning. A second later Thug 2 follows him down. Alive, in pain.

EXT. MULHOLLAND DRIVE - NIGHT

Washington, Kennard, Ramirez and Keeler pull away in one of the Fords, leaving O'Mara and Wooters there alone.

O'MARA

You got somethin' to say to me?

WOOTERS

Yeah. I think I probably knew a dozen guys like you. I know the look. Caught a bad one over there and it hitched a ride back with you. Most of them crawl in a bottle, eat a gun. Or they go lookin' for somebody to take care of it for 'em.

O'MARA

Yeah, well that ain't me. Let me tell you somethin', Jerry. I was never much of a cop. But I'm a hell of a soldier. It's the only thing I've ever been any damn good at. Because you don't have to be smart. You just have to be willing to do what the other guy won't. You have to be willing to make yourself into the thing that scares 'em. That's all. That's what it takes to win. Anything less gets you killed.

INT. GUARANTEE FINANCE - DAY

Cohen leads his top MEN and a dozen 'INVESTORS' through the space that will become Guarantee Finance. MOVERS are hauling furniture. Cohen watches the place taking shape.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COHEN

May not look like much now. But
this... this is my masterpiece.
Guarantee Finance. It's a god
damned money machine.

HOOVES thunder over racetracks across the country...

COHEN

Listen, we've got dope and whores
locked up. But pari-mutuel
wagerin', off-track bettin',
that's where the real money is.

*Sports wires running from post to post... Across the
country MEN at gas station pay phones, phone booths in
bars, soda shops, placing bets...*

COHEN

I'll be up and runnin' in a few
weeks. And when I am, all the wire
traffic west of Chicago's gonna
flow right through this place.
Millions of dollars movin' through
here every year.

*BOOKIES take incoming bets over banks of phones,
scratching post-times, jockey changes, track conditions,
results on big totalisator boards...*

INVESTOR

What about The Syndicate?

COHEN

They're the past. This is the
future. Money I pull outta this
place, I can pay off the
Syndicate, and every politician
between here and 'Frisco. Inside a
a month I'll have the entire West
Coast sewn up with ribbon.

Lennox now leads Grimes out of the elevator, brings him
before Cohen. Cohen sees Grimes' face. Something's wrong.

COHEN

Spit it out.

GRIMES

Sir, someone hit the shipment.

COHEN

Who was it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GRIMES

I don't know, sir. Guineas from
back east. Maybe Ragan's people.

Cohen sighs.

COHEN

Well, these things happen.
(beat)
Karl.

Lennox HOOKS his oaken arm around Grimes' throat as Cohen
lifts a Thor Silver Line POWER DRILL from a worktable...

INT. GARDEN OF ALLAH (BUNGALOW 12) - DAY

Wooters sits in the breakfast nook of her small kitchen.
Jean at the stove, in a short kimono, hair mussed. She
slides eggs, bacon from the skillet to his plate.

JEAN

Don't get any ideas. Nobody's
fitting me for a checkered apron.
I just figured you mighta worked
up an appetite.

WOOTERS

Why didn't you peach to Cohen?

JEAN

I don't know. Maybe I'm bored.
Maybe the favorite hasn't paid off
in a while and I feel like playing
a long shot. Maybe I just like you
that much, Jerry.

(beat)

You know that time you came at him
in Slapsy Maxie's, I actually
thought that was about me. Why
didn't you tell me you're a cop?

He has no answer.

JEAN

He'll probably plant us both. But
that stirs you a little, doesn't
it, Jerry the Flatfoot.

WOOTERS

Maybe. That why you're with Cohen?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEAN

I came out here to be a star. I figured this face I couldn't lose and wouldya believe? I figured wrong. Jerry, I'm a walkin' talkin' cautionary tale. Maybe a dozen frocks in the closet.

She pulls a COFFEE CAN out of the pantry, removes the lid, and shows him the crumpled dollars stuffed inside.

JEAN

And this... between me and the street. I'm open to suggestions.

She waits, wanting him to tell her he wants her to leave Cohen, but Wooters doesn't dare ask her. And there, just glimpsed beneath her bluster, we see it breaks her heart.

EXT. O'MARA'S BACKYARD - DAY

Backyard cookout. Bottles of beer on the picnic table. Marcia Keeler and little Charlie are there. O'Mara is at the barbecue. Washington and Kennard watch little Charlie running patterns, Ramirez tossing him the football.

KENNARD

(re: Ramirez)

His dad had a pushcart in Boyle Heights. Wouldn't pay protection to the Black Hand. They beat him to death. Ramirez saw it happen.

WASHINGTON

The hell did you do before you came on the job?

KENNARD

Lot I ain't proud of.

INT. O'MARA'S HOME - DAY

Wooters taps on the screen door, late to the party. Connie mixing potato salad, her back to the door.

CONNIE

Come in.

WOOTERS

Jerry Wooters, Mrs. O'Mara.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She wipes her hands, turns to him, extending her hand.

CONNIE

Please. Connie.

Wooters sees she's pregnant and can't hide his reaction.

CONNIE

I know, I know. What kind of man
would take on a job like this with
a wife in my condition?

WOOTERS

A soldier, I guess.

Through the window, they can see O'Mara at the barbecue.

CONNIE

My husband's the bravest man I
know, but he's not much for
abstract thinking. Duty and Honor,
to him they're as real as I am. I
want you to understand that,
because I can't be out there with
him. And if it comes down to a
choice between his life and his
duty...

WOOTERS

You want me to nudge him toward...

CONNIE

Why I selected you.

A moment. Looking through the window at the squad.

CONNIE

I handpicked all of 'em, except
the Mexican kid. I don't know
where you guys got him. I picked
you because you seemed...
sensible.

Connie reaches for the potato salad. Wooters awkwardly
takes the bowl to carry it outside.

WOOTERS

John's a lucky man, Connie.

EXT. O'MARA'S BACKYARD - DAY

The party picks up steam. The radio on. Beer and burgers. Laughter. O'Mara sidles close to Wooters, asks quietly.

O'MARA

How's your love life these days?

Wooters throws a look at Keeler.

O'MARA

He's worried about you. So am I. Jerry, one of these nights she's gonna get bored, or scared, or he'll hand her a rock and she'll roll on us in a fit of gratitude. Or maybe he'll just hear she's got a new swain. And I'm not about to wind up wearin' a wooden kimono because you went native.

WOOTERS

She wouldn't do that.

O'MARA

Boy. You got petticoat fever, pal. And I can't carry you sick. Savvy?

WOOTERS

Coyotes woulda shit you out all over the desert, wasn't for me.

(beat)

Listen, I got it under control.

O'MARA

Sure you do.

EXT. O'MARA'S BACKYARD - MINUTES LATER

Keeler hands Marcia his Polaroid Model 95.

KEELER

Picture of the boys, baby?

The Squad stands shoulder to shoulder. She snaps one.

MARCIA

Okay, one more.

But suddenly, the squad's faces all change, their smiles disappearing. Something like awe on their faces. CHIEF PARKER stands in O'Mara backyard. Richard the Lionheart.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PARKER

Gentlemen, I would congratulate
you all, on a job well done...

GATES is carrying two sacks full of groceries. Steaks
wrapped in butcher paper. More cold beer.

PARKER

But then, well, I was never here.

EXT. O'MARA'S BACKYARD - MINUTES LATER

Parker and O'Mara standing apart from the others. Connie
brings over two beers. Hands one to O'Mara and one to...

CONNIE

Your majesty.

O'Mara's mortified.

PARKER

You have an elegant home, Mrs.
O'Mara.

She smiles mirthlessly, curtseys, and walks away.

O'MARA

This was... unexpected, sir.

PARKER

Well, that is the nature of Grace,
Sergeant. It comes to us unbidden.
But I'm not here just to deliver
steaks and approbation. I could
have sent Gates to do that.

(beat)

When the Archangel Michael led
God's Army against Lucifer, he
fought without mercy until he'd
cast him out of the Kingdom of
Heaven. Offer him no quarter.

O'MARA

I'm not a quarter kinda guy, sir.

*And we HEAR Xavier Cugat's MONDONGO take us into the
following sequence of machine-gunning scenes...*

INT. BACK ROOM CASINO - DAY

The SQUAD, their faces halved by kerchiefs, forcing GAMBLERS, DEALERS against the wall. AXING roulette tables and SLOT MACHINES, bleeding coins on to the floor...

EXT. SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD - NIGHT

The squad shouting orders as PROSTITUTES (boas, heels) and JOHNS (some without pants) flood out of a FLOWER SHOP/BROTHEL, a peepshow pouring on to the Boulevard, JUDGE KRAUSS among them. Ramirez kicks him in the ass.

INT. GUARANTEE FINANCE - DAY

WORKERS, ELECTRICIANS, pulling spools of wire, soldering. Others hauling in big SWITCHBOARDS. It's coming together.

EXT. A SERIES OF LOCATIONS - WEEK AFTER WEEK

More **MOLOTOV COCKTAILS** SMASH and SMASH and *SMASH* through the fronts of COHEN'S ESTABLISHMENTS all over town...

KEELER AT HIS CHALKBOARD: One by one, Keeler **CROSSING OUT** each TARGET LOCATION they hit: ~~PAINT STORE/LA BREA.~~ ~~FLOWER SHOP/SUNSET.~~ ~~GROCERY/COWER,~~ even as Keeler scribbles NEW TARGETS up on his chalkboard...

...**FLAMES EXPLODING** out of a SERIES of WINDOWS...

INT. PRESSES - NIGHT

...NEWSPAPERS rolling off PRINTING PRESSES... *The Los Angeles Times. The Los Angeles Herald. The Daily News.* Headlines like, **MYSTERY MEN STRIKE AT MICKEY COHEN. NEW FORCE IN LA UNDERWORLD. GANGSTERS OR VIGILANTES...**

INT. COHEN'S MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Cohen THROWS the NEWSPAPER in his FIREPLACE, watching flames blacken the headline: **MOVE OVER MICKEY!**

COHEN

(to Lennox)

Find these bastards. Kill 'em all.
Kill their families. Kill their
dogs. Find the chinaman who cleans
their shirts and kill him.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COHEN (CONT'D)
Then dig everybody up and kill 'em
again.

EXT. CROSSROADS OF THE WORLD - DAY

The squad in kerchiefs HAULING Cohen's GOONS out of a CADILLAC, SHOVING them against the wall. Washington PRIES open the Cadillac's TRUNK, puzzled by what's inside.

WASHINGTON
Hey...

O'Mara comes around to the back of the car. The trunk is packed with SPOOLS of WIRE and PHONES. What the hell?

O'MARA
(to one of the goons)
Expanding, huh?

GOON 1
You're dead, pal. You're all dead.

O'Mara DRIVES the butt of his shotgun into a kidney. The squad kicks the crap out of them while O'Mara tosses a **MOLOTOV COCKTAIL** into the car. Jogging away. **KA-BOOM!**

INT. ABANDONED HOME - DAY

Keeler listening to the wire.

COHEN (OVER WIRE)
*...I don't want 'em anywhere near
Guarantee Finance, hear me?*

Keeler's ears perk up. He puts **GUARANTEE FINANCE** up on the board, BIG LETTERS...

INT. ABANDONED HOME - LATER

The squad gathered around Keeler now as he *underlines* **GUARANTEE FINANCE**....

O'MARA
The hell is Guarantee Finance?

KEELER
It's an H-bomb, Sarge. It's his crown jewel.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEELER (CONT'D)

He killed Ragan so he could take over his Continental Wire Service, means Cohen's now got the only wire between here and Chicago. Guarantee Finance Corporation is a front. He's building the Central Book for the Western United States. With Dragna gone there's nobody to stop him.

(beat)

Listen, if he gets that thing up and runnin, inside a week it won't matter what we do. Because he'll own the whole damn state.

O'MARA

Where is it?

KEELER

Address on file at the business Registry doesn't exist. But we gotta find it.

O'Mara gives Wooters a hard look...

EXT. ABANDONED HOME - DAY

O'Mara and Wooters alone now.

O'MARA

You heard what he said. We don't have a lot of time here, Jerry.

WOOTERS

I'm not gonna get her killed.

O'MARA

Ask her. Or I will.

WOOTERS

Stay away from her.

(beat)

Oh yeah, I know you're willin' to do what the other guy won't, right? Become the thing that scares 'em. But answer me this, what happens when it's all over, John? How the hell do you change back?

EXT. GRIFFITH PARK - DAY

Jean and Wooters ride horses through the park. She rides as if she were born on a horse. He barely holds his own.

JEAN

He's looking for you, you know?
Only he thinks you're a bunch of
Syndicate guys from Chicago.

(beat)

Why don't you quit while you're
ahead, partner? Why don't we get
outta here, Jerry, the two of us?

Steeling himself. Wooters doesn't like doing this.

WOOTERS

Jean, listen. I need your help.

He's been using her all along.

JEAN

I shoulda known. I mean, otherwise
what's the point of a cop
schtupping a gangster's moll,
right?

WOOTERS

Where's Guarantee Finance?

It breaks her heart.

JEAN

Forget it, Jerry. You're not that
handsome. And I'm not too keen on
riding a railroad tie to the
bottom of the Silver Lake
Reservoir. I'd prefer to ride a
gravy train, thank you, all the
way to the end of the line.

(beat)

So long, Jerry. Been a hoot.

She spurs her horse, galloping away. Leaving him there.

INT. COHEN'S MANSION - DAY

Jean fixes herself a stiff drink, downs half of it. And Letty, Cohen's housekeeper, notices tears in Jean's eyes.

INT. KEELER'S GARAGE - DAY

Keeler working hard at his workbench, the mad scientist with his soldering gun, assembling a strange BLACK BOX. Two wires sprouting from it. A dial, toggle switch and a large battery. His son Charlie enters the garage.

CHARLIE

Mom wants to know when you're gonna put up the lights.

KEELER

Soon as I'm done here. Hand me that wire stripper.

Charlie hands it to him. He tinkers.

KEELER

Son. Your dad's a genius.

EXT. RAIL YARDS - DAY

The squad gathered at the base of a telephone pole. Keeler's putting on his tool belt and satchel.

KEELER

Okay, up there you got Pacific telephone. Western Union. But that third one...

He indicates the wires running pole to pole.

O'MARA

That one's Cohen's.

Keeler strapping on leather logging boots.

KEELER

Yep. He's the only game in town.

They watch Keeler shimmy up the pole. He pulls out his CUTTERS and snips the wire.

O'MARA

So that's all there is to it. We just cut the wire.

KEELER

They'll have someone out here to repair it in a couple hours.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Keeler opens his satchel. His BLACK BOX is inside. He clips the box's two small wires to Cohen's wire.

KEELER

Sonar. Guarantee Finance's gotta
be the terminus of the wire,
right? So I ping the wire and the
echo tells us how far away it is.

INT. ABANDONED HOME - DAY

The squad gathered around a map of Los Angeles spread out over the table, weighed down at the corners. Keeler uses a distance measuring tool to draw a radius. His finger traces the circle... And Keeler taps a spot on the map.

WOOTERS

Are you shittin' me?

THEATER ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Christmas Lights up and down the street. The squad crouched behind a NEON theater marquee, looking across the street at **SLAPSY MAXIE'S NIGHTCLUB**: Blinds drawn over windows above the club. Movement behind the blinds. A bundle of **WIRES** running from telephone poles to the roof.

KEELER

They're gonna have an alarm, and
it won't ring to the cops. Ten
minutes to find it, disable it.

O'MARA

You got five. We hit and run.
Nobody engage unless you have to.
Shootin' starts we're gonna have
the sheriffs on our asses.

INT. SLAPSY MAXIE'S - MINUTES LATER

The squad (minus Keeler) moves through the raucous crowd, tuxes, carrying music cases, they're tonight's entertainment. All around them, GUYS cat-calling COCKTAIL WAITRESSES slinging drinks like a volunteer fire crew. The place decorated for Christmas. A weather system of cigarette smoke. Wooters in his element. O'Mara stiff.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'MARA

You're the one who wanted to do something dumb. Well, can't think of anything dumber than this.

WOOTERS

Loosen up, willya? You look like a goddamned mortician.

O'Mara clocks GUNMEN walking the floor, blending with the crowd. He sees Cohen's table is empty, for now. RESERVED.

EXT. TELEPHONE POLE - NIGHT

Keeler lumberjacks up the pole, looks down at sidewalk pedestrians. He GRIPS the LINE, crossing his legs around it, to pull himself across the street hand over hand...

INT. SLAPSY MAXIE'S (BACKSTAGE) - NIGHT

A HUGE SENTRY blocking the STAIRS. As the squad unsnaps their MUSIC CASES, Kennard sidles up to him, pulls his pistol, FLIPS it to HAMMER the guy's skull, but instead of going unconscious, the sentry YOWWWLS! Holding his head! Shit. Washington WALLOPS the sentry with a sap, but-

SENTRY

OooooOOOOW! STOP IT! CHRIST!

-Guy still won't go down. Washington covers the guy's mouth while Kennard clubs him again. He drops. Ramirez peeks out the curtains, the club roar covered the sound. O'Mara pulls the walkie-talkie from his music case.

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

O'MARA (OVER WALKIE)

Keeler?

Keeler at the junction box with his bolt-cutters, **SNIPS!**

KEELER

You're all clear.

Wooters tosses an ITHACA SHOTGUN. O'Mara CATCHES the weapon, RACKS it as he and Wooters head up the stairs. Washington, Kennard, and Ramirez wait behind.

O'MARA

Cover our rear flank.

INT. GUARANTEE FINANCE (SECOND FLOOR) - CONTINUOUS

A HUGE ROOM. SWITCHBOARDS. OPERATORS place SLIPS into LAMSON CYLINDERS, fed into PNEUMATIC TUBES, to be pinned to the HUGE TOTALISATOR. O'Mara and Wooters enter.

O'MARA

Pardon me. Ladies. LADIES! May we have your attention please?

Operators look up. One pushes the HIDDEN ALARM. Nothing.

WOOTERS

Take the rest of the night off.

INT. BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Ramirez watches the curtains as OPERATORS come down the stairs. Washington and Kennard usher them out the back.

KENNARD

Quietly, ladies. Thank you.

INT. GUARANTEE FINANCE (NEXT ROOM) - NIGHT

O'Mara and Wooters peer in at a sea of TANKER DESKS, **COUNTERS** in green visors at each desk, fingers flipping through DOLLARS. They bundle the BILLS and place them into canvas bags. GUNMEN watching with submachine guns.

Deep breaths. This is it. O'Mara and Wooters charge out into the counting room, Ithaca shotguns up, shouting.

O'MARA

DROP 'EM!

WOOTERS

DO IT NOW!

*

*

O'Mara pulls a CART full of CANVAS BAGS. Unsnaps a bag. O'Mara sees the THOUSANDS: Frodo gazing upon the ring.

GUNMAN

Forget it. You'll never make it out of here with that kale, buddy.

O'MARA

You guessed it.

O'Mara pulls his bottle of lighter fluid, *DOUSES THE MONEY*. Wooters flicks his NAVY ZIPPO. *WHUMP!* Flames RISE in a mini-mushroom cloud. One of the gunmen goes for his submachine gun. He fires. **BUDDABUDDABUDDA!**

INT. BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

The sound of GUNFIRE brings gunmen RUSHING to the stairs.

RAMIREZ

Here they come.

Kennard, Washington and Ramirez come out FIRING. The Club lights up with **GUNFIRE**. Glasses BURST. Plaster punching out from the walls. People scramble for the exits.

INTERCUT AS NEEDED:

INT. GUARANTEE FINANCE - NIGHT

O'Mara and Wooters trading rounds with Cohen's gunmen, BLASTING fast as they can PUMP out twelve-gauge shells. Desk lamps EXPLODE. Canvas sacks burst open, kicking flaming money into the air. Fire spreads. Smoke thickens. COUNTERS leave their desks, stampede for the exit.

O'Mara shoulder rolls over a desk, FIRES, blasting a gunman off his feet. Wooters RUNS drops to his knees, FIRING as he SLIDES across the wax-slick floor, and KICKING the flaming cart into a gunman! Both the gunman and the cart crash out the window. Flaming dollars fall.

INT. SLAPSY MAXIE'S NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

A barfight with guns. The BARTENDER pulls a submachine. **BUDDABUDDABUDDABUDDAH!** Washington and Kennard both DIVE into the orchestra pit to escape gunfire. The bartender ducks behind the bar to reload.

Ramirez checks the bar mirror and glimpses, reflected in it, the BARTENDER crouched behind the bar. Using the mirror, Ramirez FIRES THROUGH THE WOOD BAR, killing him.

Washington now sees a goon with a SAWED-OFF 12 GAUGE behind Ramirez. Washington FIRES, hitting him square. More gunfire forcing Kennard and Washington to crouch behind a toppled table. They're pinned down.

WASHINGTON

Why don't you just shoot the guns
out of their hands, Hoppalong?

Kennard DIVES, sliding across the dance floor, firing. **BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!** Dropping all three guys.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KENNARD
Missed their hands.

We HEAR sirens. O'Mara and Wooters run down the stairs.

O'MARA
Roll it up. Let's move.

EXT. SLAPSY MAXIE'S - DAY

Burning ASH falls like snow. FIREMEN scramble. The duly-elected LA County High Sheriff **EUGENE W. BISCAILUZ** stands amid the wreckage with a dozen DEPUTIES.

SHERIFF BISCAILUZ
Mother of God.

There's a commotion at the sawhorses. LENNOX and JOHNNY STOMP shove GAWKERS aside to make way for **MICKEY COHEN**. Cohen stalks through falling ash toward Biscailuz.

COHEN
So, you wanna tell me what the fuck happened here, Eugene?

SHERIFF BISCAILUZ
We don't know, Mr. Cohen. Right now, I'm coordinating the-

COHEN
He's coordinating.

Cohen, the old pugilist, throws a vicious combination, taking BISCAILUZ apart like a surgeon! Ten Uniformed Deputies see it, but no one lifts a finger to intervene.

COHEN
Coordinate this, you putz!

Deputies turn their heads, looking away, as Cohen *stomps the shit* out of the High Sheriff of Los Angeles County.

INT. COHEN'S LIMO - DAY

Cohen on the huge back seat of his limo, parked down the block from the carnage at Slapsy Maxie's. Calming whiskey in hand. Lennox opens the door, gets in next to him.

COHEN
How much did they get away with?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LENNOX

Nothing. Neddy says they didn't
take the money. They burned it.

Cohen looks like he's discovered a rat infestation.

COHEN

They're cops.

LENNOX

We've never had that kinda trouble
before.

COHEN

Trust me, Karl. I've bought myself
enough cops to know what I'm
talkin about. These guys are a
special brand. They're not
interested in money. And a cop
that ain't for sale is like a
goddamned cockroach. Tough to get
rid of.

(beat)

Somebody peached to these guys.
Only explanation there is.
Somebody turned rat on me.

INT. COHEN'S MANSION - DAY

Cohen's homicidal rage builds, transforming him like
lycanthropy. **Jean hides in the kitchen**, hearing Cohen
tear his beloved home apart. He SMASHES GLASSES, PLATES,
FURNITURE. He grabs a FIREPLACE POKER, swinging. Tearing
PAINTINGS off the wall and PUNCHING HOLES in them.

Lennox, Cohen's executioner, is immune to suspicion. He
moves through the mansion with a **BUG SWEEPER**, passing the
device over the walls, furniture, phones.

Letty, the housekeeper, now ducks into the kitchen to
where Jean is hiding, and grabs Jean by her arm.

LETTY

Come on. We need to get you out of
here, Miss Jean. Before he runs
out of pretty things to break.

INT/EXT. COHEN'S MANSION - MINUTES LATER

German shepherds BARK as Letty helps Jean into the LIMO.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LETTY

Now, you don't need to come back here. Not ever. He likes nice things. But he's not a nice man.

Cohen stalks around the house looking for her, charging into his bedroom to find Lennox, finger to his lips. Lennox squats in front of Cohen's TELEVISION. **Needles JUMP.** Lennox crouches, finds the missing screw. Smiles.

INT. ABANDONED HOME - DAY

Keeler sits alone in the half-house. Reels spinning. Someone outside. He whirls, his gun up. O'Mara shoulders the tarp aside, carrying two cardboard coffee cups.

O'MARA

Maybe you oughta skip the coffee.

KEELER

You gotta hear this.

Voices on the wire.

COHEN (OVER WIRE)

Greaser's gonna meet Wrevock at Graumann's. No, no. He won't have the dope with him. I guess they go somewhere together to make the exchange... Good, I need this one.

O'MARA

Son of a bitch sounds desperate. He must be hurtin' for cash.
(off Keeler's look)
S'matter?

KEELER

I signed up for this so I could tell my boy, tell him at least I tried to do something about it. I hope he never finds out about all the things we've done.

O'Mara softens, seeing his heart's not in it anymore.

O'MARA

I need you on the wire tonight, case Cohen has a change of plan.

INT. CLIFTON'S CAFETERIA - DAY

We HEAR Danny Kaye and the Andrews Sisters' *Civilization*. Indoor waterfalls. The BOOTHS are Polynesian grass huts. Strobe 'lightning' and 'thunder' announce a storm. It RAINS inside the restaurant. JEAN finds WOOTERS in a grass-topped booth near the back. She looks terrified.

WOOTERS

You wanted to see me.

JEAN

He thinks somebody ratted. Only a matter of time before he gets around to me. I'm leaving town. You should too.

WOOTERS

I can't. Jean, you and me. I want you to know. It was never about Cohen.

He pours cream into his coffee, then pops the hinged **LID** of the little stainless steel cream **PITCHER**. Wooters steers the lid, scanning the restaurant until he catches the reflection of **Neddy Herbert and Johnny Stomp**.

WOOTERS

You sold me out?

JEAN

What? Oh, Jerry... They must've followed me. You should go. Go.

Herbert and Stomp arrive at the table. Jerry's hand drops under the table, but they don't seem interested in him. They leer at Jean. We can almost see her heart flutter.

WOOTERS

I help you with something?

HERBERT

Mind your business. We'll get to you in a minute.

JOHNNY STOMP

We just want to talk to her is all. We got a message from Mr. Cohen...

Herbert's HAND now drops into his JACKET POCKET for something. Wooters stands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOOTERS

Well, I don't think the lady wants to talk to you.

HERBERT

What lady? She's just one a Mickey's pro skirts, pal.

Wooters left hand *flashes* out, **PUNCHING** JOHNNY STOMP'S THROAT. Johnny Stomp goes down gagging and croaking.

Wooters DUCKS under Herbert's PUNCH, his right hand now coming up with his .45, **swinging the pistol like a gama, the stainless steel handle crunching Herbert's nose**, as Jerry twirls the swinging pistol into firing position.

Both thugs on the floor. Wooters standing over them, finger on his trigger, chest-heaving. He reaches into Herbert's jacket where his hand was a second ago. Pulls out a **SQUEEZE BOTTLE**. Jerry sniffs the bottle, frowns.

WOOTERS

Acid. This the message you had for her?

Wooters points the bottle toward them. Both men RAISE their hands, instinctively covering their faces. But Wooters SQUEEZES the bottle out over both their CROTCHES. **Thin smoke rising from their trousers as the ACID hits them.** And they suddenly move like they're on fire, crabbing away, fumbling their belts, wriggling, scrambling out of their trousers, until they're sitting on their bare asses on the floor of the restaurant.

WOOTERS

I see either a you anywhere near her again, I'll kill ya.

HERBERT

I know you. Wooters, right? Oh, you're gonna get yours, pal. Yeah, you and all your buddies...

Wooter pales. Holy shit. Wooters KICKS him in the face!

INT. WOOTERS' CAR (MOVING) - MINUTES LATER

Wooters drives, a serpentine route one eye on the mirror.

WOOTERS

Son of a bitch. Son of a bitch. I gotta get word to my guys.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He turns to Jean sitting next to him, in shock.

WOOTERS

What? You never had a man fight
over you before?

JEAN

Over me. But never for me.

WOOTERS

Jean. Look at me. I'm not going to
let anything happen to you.

Jerry takes another fast turn. She takes a deep breath.
He takes one hand off the wheel to hold hers.

INT. JACK WHALEN'S APARTMENT - SUNDOWN

The RADIO plays Roy Brown's *BUTCHER PETE*, Whalen's in his kitchen with a bottle of beer, frying up a steak for dinner. There's a KNOCK at his door. Whalen pulls a pistol out of his bread box, holding it behind his leg.

WOOTERS

Jack, it's Jerry.

Whalen opens the door to find Wooters and Jean standing outside. He can see by their faces they're in trouble.

WHALEN

Come on in, kids. I was just
fixin' supper.

WOOTERS

Jack, I need a favor. I need
someone to get her to the tall
corn. I wouldn't ask, but...

WHALEN

You relax now, cousin. Hear me?
Jack Whalen's on the case. I'll
get her out of town safe.

Whalen and Wooters shake hands, buddies for life. Wooters and Jean embrace, a last kiss before she goes for good.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - NIGHT

Klieg lights pierce the sky over Hollywood Boulevard.
Behind LAPD sawhorses, the sidewalks packed with
FAMILIES, CHILDREN up on dads' shoulders. Cotton candy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Grand Marshal GENE AUTRY rides his horse CHAMPION. DRUM MAJORETTES lead the Hollywood High School MARCHING BAND down the boulevard. A succession of FIRE TRUCKS draped with Christmas lights. Elaborate PARADE FLOATS: ELVES hammer toys on the 'Santa's Workshop' float (sponsored by Lucky Strike). SPACEMEN and SPACE GIRLS wave from the Lockheed *Rocket to the Stars* float. CAROLERS sing below a lamppost on a Dickensian Street float, while electric fans blow a blizzard of soap flakes over the crowd. SANTA rides a motorized sleigh. MAYOR FLETCHER BOWRON and his WIFE wave from a convertible.

EXT. ALLEY OFF HOLLYWOOD BOUVELARD - NIGHT

The gangster squad, minus Wooters, is gathered around their cars. The parade beyond the mouth of the alley.

O'MARA

We put eyes on Wrevock. Maintain surveillance until he reaches the target location. Torch the money and the dope. And we're done. Maybe for good. Cohen needs to make up what we cost him. We get the shipment, it's over. He's outta business.

RAMIREZ

What happened to Wooters.

O'MARA

Wasn't my turn to watch him.

KENNARD

Lotta civilians, this goes south.

O'MARA

So let's make sure it doesn't.

I/E. ABANDONED HOME - NIGHT

Keeler sits at his makeshift desk, listening, jotting notes. Moths batter the Coleman lantern next to him. The tarp behind him stirring like a cape in a breeze.

COHEN (OVER WIRE)

I want you to know that I'm past the anger. That part is over.

A shadow stalking toward the abandoned house, toward the lantern's light glowing behind the tarpaulin.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cohen holds Keeler's bug in his hand, speaking directly into it like a microphone.

A SHADOW at the tarp behind Keeler.

COHEN (V.O.)

What's left now is business.

And Lennox loops PIANO WIRE down around Keeler's neck!

Keeler bucks, struggles to his feet, DRIVING his elbow back into Lennox's ribs. The two men lurch and stumble, knocking the lantern off the desk. A FIRE spreads across the floor. Lennox winds the piano wire tighter and Keeler sags against him, about to pass out..

LENNOX

That bug's a nifty piece of work.
Limited range though. So what're
you, some kinda fed?

KEELER

I'm a campfire girl, asshole. You
wanna buy some cookies?

Lennox smiles, cranking the wire tighter. With his last ounce of strength, Keeler plants his feet, pushes backward, forcing Lennox to step back into the fire. FLAMES climb up Lennox's trench coat, but he doesn't flinch. He cranks the wire until Keeler is dead. Only then does Lennox remove his coat and stamp it out.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - NIGHT

Wrevock snakes through the thick crowd. O'Mara follows him at a prudent distance, his hat pulled low...

I/E. GRAUMAN'S CHINESE THEATER - NIGHT

On the marquee: RED RIVER. O'Mara watches Wrevock duck into the lobby. Kennard and Ramirez loiter in the courtyard in front of the entrance to the theater. O'Mara signals them to follow Wrevock inside.

A HAND reaches out of the crowd, grabs O'Mara's arm. O'Mara WHIRLS, going for his gun, sees it's Wooters.

O'MARA

Where the hell were you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOOTERS

Listen. He's on to us. I don't
know how, but he's on to us.

O'Mara swallows hard, resets his jaw.

O'MARA

Bound to happen sooner or later.

WOOTERS

What if he knows we're comin?
We're walkin' into a box canyon
for Christ's sake. Think about it.

O'Mara ignores him, moving forward, always forward.

INT. GRAUMAN'S CHINESE THEATER - NIGHT

Washington picks Wrevock up in the lobby, watches Wrevock walk into the DARKENED THEATER. Washington, Kennard, Ramirez enter the huge theater, moving parallel down different aisles, scanning for Wrevock...

INT. GRAUMAN'S CHINESE THEATER - NIGHT

Wooters and O'Mara join them in the dark theater. Wrevock's nowhere in sight. Washington shrugs. Did Wrevock give them the slip? Moving down aisles, searching.

KENNARD

Helluva picture.

WASHINGTON

Damn good picture.

INT. BEHIND THE SCREEN - NIGHT

John Wayne reversed on the screen. Cohen's **MECHANICS**, heavy hitters from back east, load SUBMACHINE GUNS. Wrevock knife-slits the screen, peeking out at them.

INT. GRAUMAN'S CHINESE THEATER - NIGHT

ONSCREEN GUNFIRE joined by *ACTUAL GUNFIRE*. Wrevock and the other mechanics now **FIRE out through the screen!** **BUDDABUDDABUDDA!** Bullets perforate in the screen. And the **MECHANICS** jump through the screen like a football team running through a banner, firing as they move.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Panicked PATRONS dive, crawling, scrambling toward the exits during the *stampede scene*.

O'Mara returns fire. Wooters fires, ducks back behind one of the huge octagonal pillars as plaster puffs out of it. Ramirez runs across the tops of the theater seats. The seats ulcerate, spitting their stuffing. Ramirez dives, rolls, fires.

Kennard lines up a shot and FIRES, through TWO Mechanics.

But the squad's outgunned and the mechanics press their advantage, superior firepower forcing the squad to retreat. They pursue the squad from the theater, running, returning fire as the mechanics force them out on to...

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - NIGHT

The crowd HEARS the gunfire now. O'Mara and Wooters watch the panicked crowd toppling the sawhorses, flooding into the street, over FLOATS, colliding with the MARCHING BAND, trampling each other. Running in all directions. Champion BUCKS Gene Autry off. Gene lands in the street.

The squad shooting it out with the Mechanics, dodging among the floats. Chaos. Wooters sees civilians cowering in the path of gunfire. He moves to cover their escape.

The MAYOR'S CAR crashes into a float. O'Mara and Wooters clamber over the float to fire from high ground.

O'Mara checks his flank, sees a *MOTHER screaming, prone over her two crying children, trying to shield them...*

The sight of them hits him like a bullet. What he's done. What he's become. He's frozen. EVERYTHING SLOWS WAY DOWN. The sounds of gunfire as if through water until... Wooters TACKLES O'Mara off the float, just as gunfire RIPS through the float where O'Mara was just standing.

Ramirez sees a TUBA PLAYER clutches his leg. Shot. He runs to help him, drags him out of the street. One of the mechanics draws a bead on him.

Washington runs to engage the mechanic, drawing his fire away from Ramirez. The mechanic turns on Washington, fires: BUDDABUDDA! His gunfire passing through Washington to shatter the Klieg light behind Washington.

Kennard watches Washington go down. **Washington's shot in the shoulder and side.** Jaw set against the pain. Stoic.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Washington struggles to his feet, gets behind the mayor's car. Mechanics firing, chewing up the car. He's trapped.

Kennard runs, grabs Champion's reins, RIDES him through the chaos toward Washington. Comanche-style, a boot in one stirrup, crouched down on one side of the horse, so from the mechanics' angle, Champion looks riderless until Kennard SWINGS up on to the saddle, FIRES, dropping them.

The remaining mechanics flee amid the chaos. O'Mara, Wooters, Ramirez, and Kennard gather around Washington. Hurt bad. Wooters turns to O'Mara, rage in his eyes.

KENNARD

We been had, amigo.

O'MARA

He knows about the wire!

O'Mara SPRINTS, dodging through the crowd to his car.

EXT. GARDEN OF ALLAH - NIGHT

Whalen pulls into the Garden of Allah: Hotel and Villas. It's late. The guests are asleep. Shadows. Crickets.

JEAN

I don't just want out of town,
Jack. I want out of the life. And
that money's my grubstake. It's
all I have to get started with.

Whalen can relate. He'd himself leave if he could. Whalen stows her in a fragrant slice of shadow, out of sight.

WHALEN

Wait here.

Whalen hurries past the main building, Hollywood's largest **SWIMMING POOL**, heading down a path of paver tiles into a Hobbit-village of little Bungalows.

EXT. BUNGALOW 12 - SECONDS LATER

Whalen kneels by the planter, digs out a coffee can. Whalen waits, watching the path of pavers between villas.

Whalen walks back down the dark path of pavers between the bungalows. Then Whalen **SEES** them, **COHEN, HOOKY ROTHMAN**, and **JOHNNY STOMP** coming around the main building! They haven't seen Jean yet, but they see him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jean holds her breath, watching Cohen and his men walk past her hiding place. They can't see her in the dark. They're walking past the pool now, heading for Whalen.

She can hear Whalen whistling as he walks down the path to face Cohen and his boys. She doesn't dare move.

EXT. GARDEN OF ALLAH (POOL AREA) - NIGHT

Cohen, Rothman and Johnny Stomp watch Whalen come whistling out of the shadows, not a care in the world. Underwater pool lights put blue ripples over their faces.

COHEN

Where is she, Jack?

WHALEN

You brought your trouble boys with
you just to see Jean?

Whalen takes off his jacket, lays it neatly across a chaise lounge. Rothman and Johnny Stomp step closer.

WHALEN (CONT'D)

Were you expecting some kinda
trouble, Mickey?

Whalen unbuttons his cuffs, rolling up his sleeves now.

WHALEN (CONT'D)

Or maybe you're lookin' for some.

COHEN

My dog shits more trouble than
you're gonna give me, Jack.

Rothman and Stomp launch at Whalen and Whalen plays Mickey's trouble boys a little improvised chin music, heavy on the snare drum. Wrevock and Johnny Stomp go down hard. Whalen steps over them, coming at Cohen now.

WHALEN

You're up next, you little creep.
I got somethin' here I been savin'
up special for you, Mickey.

Whalen stalks Cohen toward Cohen, Hulk hands opening and closing. Jean watches, helpless. **Cohen pulls his PISTOL.**

COHEN

My boxin' days are over, Jack.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And Jean watches Cohen **SHOOT** Whalen in the chest. **BOOM!** Whalen falls backward, arms out-flung, crashing through the still surface of the lighted pool, **sinking**. The pool light changing, now bathing Cohen's FACE in DEEP RED.

INT. O'MARA'S HOME - NIGHT

Connie asleep. Moonlight coming through the shades. The baby KICKS, waking her. A SHADOW passes across the window. Instinct. She swings her feet off the bed and gets down on all-fours just as... **Brackabrackabrackabra!** BULLETS PUNCH THROUGH WINDOWS AND WALLS around her.

Connie crawls down the hallway, hauls herself into the bathroom as the **Brackabrackabrackabracka!** Glass and splinters raining down. **Brackabrackabrackabracka!** The mirror and tiles shatter around her. Connie SCREAMS.

I/E. O'MARA'S HOME - MINUTES LATER

O'Mara screeches up to his home, the street choked with **LAPD PROWL CARS** and an **AMBULANCE**. Their little house is shot to pieces. UNIFORMS on the front lawn with shotguns. O'Mara RUNS past them, **SHOVING** the uniforms aside, up the porch. He runs down the hallway, **SHOVING past the bloody paramedics**, into the bathroom...

INT. O'MARA'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara approaches the bathtub. **He sees her BLOOD on the rim.** And everything, every atom, changes for him. O'Mara kneeling next to the bathtub, his wife curled inside, unharmed. **Their newborn baby girl suckling at her breast.**

I/E. ABANDONED HOUSE (HOLLYWOOD HILLS) - DAY

Wooters and O'Mara pulling up to the front of the abandoned HOUSE. A burned hulk. The equipment MELTED O'Mara kicks aside burned wood. A blackened skeleton obscured by wreckage. O'Mara CHARGES down the hill.

I/E. COHEN'S MANSION - MINUTES LATER

O'Mara FLOORS it, taking the car up Cohen's driveway at ramming speed, **SMASHING** through Cohen's gate, the car skidding laterally across Cohen's lawn. O'Mara's stepping out, heading straight for the house, his gun out. Wooters running across the lawn after him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'MARA

Stay outta my way, Jerry.

WOOTERS

No. Not this way, John.

He grabs for O'Mara. O'Mara whirls, swinging his pistol at Wooters. Wooters ducks under it, lands an uppercut, knocks O'Mara off his feet. His guns falls in the grass.

WOOTERS

Widow your wife. Orphan your baby.
For what? Syndicate just sends
somebody else here to replace him.

O'Mara gets to his feet, ATTACKS Wooters. They trade blows. O'Mara knocks Wooters to the ground. He picks up his gun, KICKS IN THE FRONT DOOR! **But the house is empty. Cohen's gone.**

WOOTERS

I'm out, John. I'm done.

I/E. TRAIN (UNION STATION) - DAY

Washington, Kennard, Ramirez watching the platform as O'Mara helps the fragile Connie to her seat. Connie lifts their baby from her bassinet, holds her. She glances out the window at the squad on the platform. He kisses her, but she turns away from him. He can only kiss her hair.

EXT. KEELER'S FRONT PORCH - DAY

O'Mara walks out the front door. Behind him MARCIA KEELER sits on her sofa, handkerchief, eyes red. Grief like a physical creature pinning her to the sofa.

Keeler's son CHARLIE sits alone on the porch, chin in his hands. Eyes far away. O'Mara sees Charlie's bike leaned up against the porch, the one his father fixed for him.

CHARLIE

My dad's dead, isn't he?

O'MARA

Yes.

Before O'Mara can react. Charlie lunges off the porch, grabs his bike, SLAMS it against the tree, STOMPING the spokes out of the wheel his dad fixed for him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'Mara wraps Charlie in a bear hug, pinning the boy's arms to his sides. Charlie twists, struggles, tears of rage. O'Mara holds him as Charlie turns, hugging O'Mara tight. The boy's silent tears staining O'Mara's shirt.

INT. CHIEF PARKER'S OFFICE - DAY

O'Mara stands at attention before Parker. Newspapers fanned out on Parker's desk. HEADLINES: **CHIEF'S FLYING DETACHMENT FLOUTS LAW** and **WHO ARE THE GANGSTER SQUAD?**

PARKER

The papers are calling for my resignation. And the mayor, I'm afraid, is calling for your head. I will likely be replaced by someone more amenable to Cohen. And you, Sergeant, are to go before a Board of Rights tomorrow. You will be relieved of duty. Your career with the Los Angeles Police Department is over. As for your comrades...

O'MARA

They had no idea I was acting outside the chain of command, sir. The blame rests solely with me.

PARKER

You served with distinction. I've instructed Officer Roddenberry to draft a letter of reference, which I will sign, without reservation.

O'Mara SALUTES, does an about face, heads for the door.

PARKER

I'm sorry, John. He beat us.

O'Mara pauses at the door, leaves without looking back.

EXT. OLVERA STREET - NIGHT

A BAND plays the traditional *Posadas* song while a *Posadas* procession snakes through the plaza, four BEARERS carry statues of Mary and Joseph on a platform. Sixty PILGRIMS follow, MEN, WOMEN, and CHILDREN, each carrying a CANDLE.

EXT. CAFE CALIENTE (OUTSIDE TABLES) - NIGHT

O'Mara, Washington, Kennard, Ramirez sit at a courtyard table. Washington's arm in a sling. The stink of failure.

KENNARD

So that's it. We're done.

O'MARA

We're done.

The PROCESSION moves among the tables, around them, children asking Ramirez if there is any room at the inn. **Then O'Mara looks up to see MICKEY COHEN making his way over to their table, with Lennox, the demon made flesh.**

Cohen approaches O'Mara's table. Hand dropping to his side, Washington flicks his switchblade open, holding it upside down against his wrist, ready to throw it. Tense. Ramirez reaches for his gun, but Kennard stills him. Nobody's doing anything in the middle of these kids.

COHEN

The Gangster Squad. Shtarkers're somethin' else, ya know it. I don't know whether to shoot you or ask you for your damn autographs.

Smiling at the kids, Cohen grabs a chair, straddles it. O'Mara seethes, hands balling into fists.

COHEN

Wanna kill me, dontcha, soldier?

O'MARA

I would like that very much.

COHEN

So have at it.

Tension tightens the air. It could end right here. O'Mara's prepared to die. Cohen doesn't give a fuck. But O'Mara won't start a massacre in the midst of these kids.

COHEN

Some kinda war hero, right? Yeah, I wanted to go, you know. Wanted to kill those krauts so bad I could taste it. But I was 4-F. They wouldn't take me. Said I was mentally unstable.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAMIREZ

You're kiddin.

COHEN

I want you all to understand somethin. This little dog'n pony a'yours? It didn't stop me. Mighta delayed me a little, but that's about it. Month from now, I won't even remember you, but I'm gonna make sure everybody else does.

(beat)

Now, I could tell my guys to take their time with all of you, bring a lunch, make a day of it. You'd be beggin' for a bullet before it was over. It would be easy. But then I gotta bunch of martyred cops my hands. And that's another god damn pain in my ass.

(beat)

So I'm gonna give you another option. Call it Christmas Miracle. You turn in your badges. Turn in your guns. And I'll let you leave town with your heads still attached.

WASHINGTON

I don't get it.

O'MARA

He wants to humiliate us.

COHEN

Bright boy. Go to the head of the class. I want you to walk out of my city with your tails between your legs. So the next time a cop in this town gets a wild hair up his ass, thinks he wants to play John Wayne, he'll remember what happened to you and go back to bustin' perverts in the park.

(beat)

I'll give you 'til tomorrow.

Cohen stands, joins the procession, following the kids out. Cohen and Lennox cross the plaza with the pilgrims. Fireworks. Catherine wheels SPIN. Sparks rain down on the plaza. On his way past the bandstand, Lennox climbs the stairs and whispers to the BAND LEADER.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The man looks frightened, but he nods, and they stop mid-song and begin to play the *DE GUELLO*, a haunting dirge. Pilgrims hustle out of the plaza, superstitious. Lennox looks back across and salutes O'Mara, following Cohen to their limo.

RAMIREZ

De Guello.

KENNARD

Messicans played it before they
took the Alamo. Means no quarter.
Everyone gets put to the sword.

RAMIREZ

I was born here. Nobody tells me
to get out.

O'Mara looks at his men. Sparks raining down.

INT. O'MARA'S HOME - NIGHT

O'Mara sits alone, unshaven, in his ruined, empty home. A bottle in one hand and his gun in the other. His front porch CREAKS. He raises his .45 halfheartedly.

O'MARA

Who's there?

WOOTERS

Jerry.

Wooters walks in.

WOOTERS

They got Whalen.

O'MARA

Jean?

Wooters just shakes his head.

EXT. O'MARA'S FRONT PORCH - MINUTES LATER

O'Mara and Wooters pass the bottle back and forth.

O'MARA

Keeler's dead. She's gone. And I
didn't change a damn thing. You
were right, Jerry.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'MARA (CONT'D)

I'm just going to wake up walking on the wrong side of the grass. I guess there has to be some kinda reckoning, for all the things I've done.

WOOTERS

What happened to you over there?

O'Mara fights the urge to unburden himself.

O'MARA

We were supposed to drop into *Castlenau*, but we came in too low, clipped a tree, went down in the forest south of a village called *Fources*. Smith and Malik wounded. Broken femur. Broken back. So we rigged a trellis for each of 'em, hid out in a farmhouse.

(beat)

It was supposed to be safe. The family was with the resistance. But they got scared. Sold us out.

(beat)

Smith and Malik couldn't walk. We couldn't bring 'em with us. And I couldn't risk leaving 'em. See because, you know, the krauts, they would've gotten it out of 'em. Who's in the resistance. Safehouses. All of it.

(beat)

They knew it was coming. And they looked away, you know, to spare me that at least. They looked away so I wouldn't have to see their eyes.

WOOTERS

I guess you figure dyin'll square it. I think you're wrong, but hey what the hell do I know?

A SHADOW on the street. But it's **JEAN!** Walking hesitantly toward the house. Wooters runs to her, holds her.

WOOTERS

They found Jack, I thought you-

JEAN

I know. I thought I was too. But Jack saved my life. He fought like crazy, until Cohen killed him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WOOTERS

What the hell are you doing here?

JEAN

I was gone. Exit stage left. But I couldn't. Caught a bad case of stupid, I guess. Got stuck on some badge pusher. I saw it happen.

WOOTERS

Well, that's all the more reason for you to get out of Dodge, kid.

JEAN

No, dummy. Listen to me. I saw Cohen kill Jack. I saw it. I'm a witness... I'm your witness.

O'Mara and Wooters turn to each other. *Holy ... Shit.*

INT. JUDGE KRAUSS'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Judge Krauss sips his bourbon. He looks up, startled to see O'Mara and Wooters standing over him. O'Mara is restored, clean-shaven, clear-eyed. He and Wooters razor sharp, ties straight, shoes polished to a high gloss, hat-brims just so. LAPD BADGES gleaming on their belts.

O'MARA

We need a favor, Judge.

JUDGE KRAUSS

I'm sorry. Do I know you?

O'MARA

We've never formally met, Your Honor. But it feels like we've known each other a long time. See, we've been buggin Cohen's house for a while now.

WOOTERS

Highly illegal, of course. Inadmissable in court. But newspapers aren't so choosy.

O'MARA

You're gonna retire, Judge.

O'Mara places the Affidavit on the desk in front of him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'MARA

But before you do, just this once,
you're gonna do the right thing.

Krauss shakily scribbles his signature. O'Mara looms.

WOOTERS

Now, where is he?

KRAUSS

The Park Plaza Hotel. He rented
out the whole place to hole up.

INT. CHIEF PARKER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

O'Mara and Wooters stand before the Chief. Gates present.

O'MARA

We have a warrant, sir. Signed by
a magistrate. And we know where
Cohen is. All we need is some
additional men to serve it.

PARKER

Out of the question.

O'MARA

Sir, we can hang Cohen on a murder
charge. We found a reliable
witness, sir. Someone inside
Cohen's organization who watched
Cohen murder Jack Whalen.

WOOTERS

And she's willing to testify.

Gates reacts. Parker takes this in. Wheels turning.

PARKER

I'm sorry, gentlemen. My hands are
tied here. The mayor's position is
clear. Mickey Cohen is not to be
molested in any way.

O'Mara and Wooters defeated.

PARKER

You see, the chain of command
extends beyond me. I have to
answer to the Mayor. And he has to
answer to the Governor...

(sly smile)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PARKER (CONT'D)

And of course we all must obey the State Code that requires sworn peace officers to execute any lawful arrest warrant as soon as practicable.

O'Mara and Wooters turn to each other. What the hell?

PARKER

Officer Gates, if you would show these recalcitrants to the evidence room...

INT. LAPD EVIDENCE ROOM (SUB-BASEMENT) - NIGHT

Gates unlocks the cage and leads Wooters and O'Mara into the dark storeroom, to a TABLE covered by a TARPAULIN.

GATES

Robbery confiscated these months ago. Case went nowhere, of course.

Gates hauls back the heavy tarp to reveal **THOMPSON "ANNIHILATOR" SUBMACHINE GUNS**. O'Mara hefts his old war buddy, the weapon an extension of himself, like a *katana*.

GATES

Good hunting, Sergeant.

EXT. LOS ANGELES CITY HALL - NIGHT

Clouds gather over LA. A storm coming. O'Mara and Wooters stand in front of City Hall, where they watched Racine and his goons climb into that limo a thousand years ago. Kennard appears out of the shadows. Then Washington. Ramirez. The Gangster Squad standing together again. All of them wearing their BADGES now. Cops again.

O'MARA

Tomorrow, they're takin' my badge away. But tonight I'm still a cop. I have here an arrest warrant for Mickey Cohen. For the crime of murder. And I'm bringin' him in.

The men look around. Smiles. Fuck yeah.

RAMIREZ

Think I'll tag along, if you don't mind, Sarge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KENNARD

Why the hell not?

Washington FLICKS his switchblade, SLASHES away the sling, freeing his wounded arm. Betraying no pain.

WASHINGTON

I got no other plans tonight.

WOOTERS

Let's finish it.

I/E. PARK PLAZA HOTEL - NIGHT

Lennox enters, rides the elevator up to...

INT. COHEN'S SUITE - MOMENTS LATER

Resembles a bunker. MECHANICS assemble an arsenal of wicked assault weapons. Cohen stands at the window with a drink, looking out over Los Angeles. A *Christmas Carol* on the radio, narrated by Orson Welles. RAIN outside.

LENNOX

I just got off the phone with Krauss. He says he signed the warrant himself.

COHEN

Yeah? And who's gonna serve it?
Five guys? Forget it. Five guys
won't make it past the damn lobby.

Lennox lifts his Carcano CARBINE, testing the heft.

EXT. MACARTHUR PARK- MIDNIGHT

RAIN pounds the city. Streams fill the gutters. Tires HISS through the rain as the Gangster Squad pulls to the flooded curb, step out into the driving rain. Shoulder SATCHELS carrying extra mags. They pull their Thompsons out of the trunk. Wooters offers a Thompson to Kennard, but Kennard just TWIRLS his PEACEMAKER, holsters it.

KENNARD

Think I'll dance with the one what
brung me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Water sheets off brims of their fedoras as the Squad checks their weapons. O'Mara and his men walk, not hurrying, across the park toward the Park Plaza Hotel.

I/E. PARK PLAZA - NIGHT

NEDDY HERBERT patrols the front with his BAR rifle. **HOOKY ROTHMAN** watches the street through parted curtains, a huge **LEWIS GUN** braced against the windowsill. **WREVOCK** and more **GUNMEN** loiter in the lobby with **ASSAULT RIFLES**.

O'MARA (BULLHORN)
**MICKEY COHEN. THIS IS SGT. JOHN
 O'MARA OF THE LOS ANGELES POLICE
 DEPARTMENT.**

Cohen looks out the window to see O'Mara and his men.

O'MARA (BULLHORN)
**I HAVE A WARRANT HERE FOR YOUR
 ARREST. COME OUT QUIETLY WITH YOUR
 HANDS UP AND YOU WON'T BE HARMED.**

COHEN
 Crazy sons of bitches.

The Mechanics walk out of the lobby. More and MORE of them pouring out of the building until the Gangster Squad faces a dozen heavily armed men fanned out behind parked cars on the opposite side of the street. Pregnant moment.

HEAD MECHANIC
 Hey, cop. I've got a better idea.
 Why don't you guys take a walk?

Just **RAIN** and their **FOGGING BREATH**. The Squad puts their Thompson guns to their shoulders, barrels still angled at the deck. Kennard's fingers splayed and ready to draw.

KENNARD
 You call it, Sarge.

O'Mara looks to Wooters, standing at his side. Wooters nods. O'Mara thumbs his **FIRE SELECTOR** to **FULL AUTO**.

The MECHANICS raise their weapons and...

O'MARA
Light 'em up.

The Squad raise their Thompsons and **FIRE**. 850 rounds per minute. Mechanics **UNLEASH** their own high-velocity **HELL**.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Bullets whizz, asphalt spitting. Black Hawk Down. Kennard fans the hammer of his Peacemaker, dropping Mechanics as the others scramble for cover. Rain HISSES off the hot barrel of O'Mara's Thompson. He turns to Wooters, smiles.

WOOTERS

Pretty dumb.

Smoke spirals from Wooters' compensator as he DROPS the EMPTY MAG, slams a FRESH MAG home, FIRING again.

O'MARA

The dumbest.

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

Wooters and O'Mara charge into the lobby, FIRING, breaking off in opposite directions, moving PILLAR to PILLAR, up the stairs, covering each other with suppressive fire. The two men in sync now, acting as one. A GUNMAN fires from the PARAPET. O'Mara takes him out.

EXT. PARK PLAZA - NIGHT

The battle rages. ROTHMAN fires his thick **LEWIS GUN**. 30-06 rounds ROARING out at Ramirez. **BOOM-BOOM-BOOM!** Sidewalk erupting all around Ramirez. Kennard **FIRES** back, not at ROTHMAN, but at the **LEWIS GUN** itself, Kennard's rounds *sparking* against the thick, shrouded barrel of the chunky Lewis. Each bullet impact **TURNING the LEWIS...** Kennard's forcing the unwitting Rothman to **MOW DOWN THREE OF HIS OWN MEN** before he even realizes it!

KENNARD

Careful with that contraption.

Kennard fires again, putting one through Rothman's chest.

INT. PARK PLAZA - NIGHT

O'Mara and Wooters shooting it out with Cohen's men. Wrevock stalks toward Wooters, firing, **a round PIERCES Wooters' leg**. Wooters scoots behind a pillar, tourniquets with his belt, teeth-cinches it. Taps his empty mag against his head, **SIGNALING** O'Mara that he's *out of ammo*. And Wrevock is closing in on Wooters, about to fire.

O'MARA

Jerry!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'Mara SLIDES the drum magazine across the slick floor like a hockey puck. A BANK SHOT into Wooters' palm! Wooters **SLAMS** the drum into his weapon, **ROLLS** from behind the pillar and RAKES Wrevock with gunfire. Satisfaction.

EXT. PARK PLAZA - NIGHT

Meanwhile, Washington's shooting it out with Neddy Herbert, but Washington's pinned down behind a car. Kennard takes aim at Herbert, but he has no clear shot because Herbert is firing at Washington from behind the portico. Kennard calculates, FIRES at the LAMPPOST next to Herbert, **ZING!** Sparks as Kennard's bullet RICOCHETS off the lamppost to **THUNK** into Herbert. Herbert falls.

Another GUNMAN flanks Kennard, raising his weapon to FIRE. Washington's gun clicks empty. He FLICKS his switchblade, sends it BUZZING into the gunman. THUNK!

KENNARD

Much obliged.

WASHINGTON

Don't mention it.

INT. COHEN'S SUITE - NIGHT

The sounds of GUNFIRE. Lennox hangs up the phone.

LENNOX

Elmer's got a plane waiting in
Burbank to take us to Mexico, but
we need to leave, sir, now.

Cohen pulls twin .45s, heading for the door. Lennox grabs the Carcano rifle and follows Cohen to the **elevator**. GUNMEN trail behind them like the Secret Service.

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

O'Mara and Wooters shooting it out with his gunmen. DING! The elevator DOORS open and **O'Mara and Cohen lock eyes across the lobby**. Elemental hate. O'Mara wants him bad, but trapped, pinned down by gunfire. He can't get to Cohen because two gunmen are now moving to FLANK him.

O'Mara turns and **EMPTIES HIS MAGAZINE** straight into the wall, stitching an **oblong circle** in the wall. O'Mara **LEAPS** through! Dropping his empty Thompson as he runs down the back corridor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'Mara suddenly appears BEHIND the gunmen and FIRES his .45, taking them out. Cohen walks heedlessly into the middle of the room to FIRE at O'Mara with his twin .45s.

COHEN

Yeah, here ya go, you rat bastard
son of a bitch. Have some on me.

BAM! BAM! BAM! Cohen and O'Mara like gunfighters, BLAZING at each other. A graze wound on Cohen's arm. He pays no attention. Lennox rushes out, firing his carbine to cover Cohen. Lennox grabs Cohen to pull him to cover. Cohen struggles against him. He wants O'Mara so bad Lennox has to practically drag him to cover.

O'Mara reloads. Lennox pulls the pins on two SMOKE GRENADES as he rushes out through the lobby.

EXT. PARK PLAZA - NIGHT

Hissing SMOKE GRENADES roll out, GREEN SMOKE roils, like the coming of the Wicked Witch. Lennox COMES OUT FIRING. Kennard *SHOVES* Ramirez out of the way. Bullets TEAR through Kennard. He staggers, and falls. Washington GRABS Kennard, drags him back behind a parked car, Ramirez FIRING his Thompson. **Kennard's shot in the upper chest.**

RAMIREZ

You okay?

KENNARD

Nope.

Unable to stand, Kennard twists painfully to **FIRE** his Peacemaker from a seated position. Still in the fight.

Lennox hops in Cohen's Cadillac, **REVERSES through the glass front of the building!**

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

Cohen and his gunmen make a run for the car. Wooters fires his Thompson, missing them. Cohen and the remaining gunman climb into the car with Lennox.

COHEN

Drive.

O'Mara runs, LAUNCHES off the second floor balcony to land THUMP on the hood of the Cadillac as it takes off.

EXT. PARK PLAZA - CONTINUOUS

The CADILLAC blasts out of the Lobby with O'Mara clinging to it, screeching right as Ramirez FIRES at the moving Cadillac. His Thompson **JAMS**. The car SWERVES. O'Mara slides off the hood, almost off the car, but he manages to plant his feet on the running board. Cohen FIRES out his window at O'Mara, **shooting O'Mara in the ribs!** But O'Mara hangs on, PUNCHES through the glass, yanks Cohen's gun ARM out through the glass and cranks it - **ARRGH!** - around the door post, forcing Cohen to SHOOT the other gunman in the chest and Lennox in the shoulder!

EXT. MACARTHUR PARK - NIGHT

O'Mara's thrown free, landing in the mud as the car SMASHES through the cement barrier into the lake. O'Mara blinks the mud away, sees Cohen climbing out of the car. O'Mara tries to pick himself up to go after him, but his equilibrium is gone. Lennox stalks toward O'Mara...

Wooters LIMPS painfully, raising his Thompson to take aim at Lennox, but he's too far away. No one has a good angle. Kennard can't stand anymore, but he concentrates.

KENNARD

(to Ramirez)

Get down here an help me aim.

Ramirez helps Kennard aim his Peacemaker and Kennard **FIRES, missing Lennox by a mile.**

KENNARD

Not where the sumbitch is,
goddamnit.

(coughing)

Where he's gonna be.

Lennox pulls back the bolt and RAISES the rifle, grinning his Kodiak grin down at O'Mara, his FINGER squeezing the trigger. Then **BOOM!** O'Mara watches Lennox fall. Dead.

Ramirez looks down at the Peacemaker. They did it.

KENNARD (CONT'D)

That's my boy ... Here.

Kennard removes his gunbelt.

KENNARD (CONT'D)

Wear it in good health.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He hands his rig to Ramirez. He smiles through pain. His smile fades. He's dead. Washington closes Kennard's eyes.

Cohen climbs the wreckage. O'Mara, Wooters, Washington and Ramirez converge on him. Cohen raises his gun at O'Mara. O'Mara raises his. Silence. O'Mara's final battle with himself. His finger on the trigger. He doesn't fire.

O'MARA

Mickey Cohen. You're under arrest.
For the murder of Jack Whalen.

Cohen smiles demonically, tossing the gun aside.

COHEN

Well, okay. What're you waitin'
for, lawman? Take me in.

O'Mara tosses his gun, raises his fists.

WOOTERS

Put him down, John.

THE FIGHT'S ON! Cohen and O'Mara trade savage punches. O'Mara's battle-honed hand-to-hand versus Cohen's years in the ring, the streets. A clash of professional warriors. Cohen adept not in Eastern fighting style, but highly skilled western ones. But any technique quickly gives way to elemental hate. Mud-covered men tearing into each other less like two men than two bellowing hominids.

SIRENS. BLACK & WHITES and FIRE TRUCKS arriving. The squad holds back a crowd of UNIFORMS, CIVILIANS, murmuring, pointing. *Jesus, that's Mickey Cohen!*

WASHINGTON

Stay BACK. Give 'em room.

There is no cop, no criminal. Only The Enemy. **Cohen PUNCHES O'Mara's gunshot wound.** Again. Again. O'Mara's going to pass out, but he summons everything he has, everything he is. O'Mara THROWS an explosive right-left-right-left-right and **POUNDS** Mickey Cohen into the mud!

The crowd gasps. Cohen dazed, covered in mud, blinking at the crowd of ANGELENOS gathering around... At the relief flooding their FACES, the veil of fear lifting. The nightmare finally over. The witch is dead. Hail Dorothy.

O'MARA

Take him away.

I/E. LAPD HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

O'Mara, Wooters, Ramirez and Washington march Cohen into the lobby of LAPD HEADQUARTERS. And fifty COPS in here to get out of the rain turn to look at them. Holy shit.

INT. LAPD HEADQUARTERS (BOOKING AREA) - NIGHT

Mickey Cohen sneers at us for his final BOOKING PHOTO.

EXT. STEPS OF LOS ANGELES CITY HALL - EVENING

LA NEWSBOYS snapping photos at a PRESS CONFERENCE. A line of spit-shined, handsome UNIFORMED LOS ANGELES POLICE OFFICERS. The once and future CHIEF **BILL PARKER** stands, flanked by the MAYOR and DISTRICT ATTORNEY. Gates is present. The Gangster Squad is nowhere to be seen.

PARKER

Thanks to the diligence and vigilance of the finest police force in the modern world, the reign of gangster Mickey Cohen in Los Angeles is at an end.

EXT. FOREST LAWN CEMETERY - PERFECT DAY

WOOTERS kneels at the grave of CONWAY KEELER and places a LOS ANGELES TIMES next to the marker, weighing it down with a rock. He moves from grave to grave, places newspapers near the marker of MAXWELL KENNARD. JACK WHALEN. PETE CALLAHAN. The headline: **COHEN CONVICTED**. Wooters climbs into his car, where JEAN is waiting with Mickey Jr. She leans close. They drive away.

EXT. CENTRAL AVENUE - BRILLIANT NIGHT

CAR CLUBS cruise the Ave; the REBEL ROUSERS, the HUNS, BLOOD ALLEY, cat-calling from their sleek CONVERTIBLES. Two **LAPD UNIFORMED BEAT COPS** swaggering side by side like Dodge City Marshals. One cop big and black. The other cop small and brown, with a well-fitting uniform and a .45 COLT PEACEMAKER in a non-regulation gunbelt. **OFFICER NAVIDAD RAMIREZ** and his partner **ROCKY WASHINGTON** walk down Central Avenue, nowhere these two would rather be.

EXT. AVALON HARBOR CATALINA ISLAND - SUNSET

A GRUMMAN SEAPLANE soars past the CASINO BUILDING and kisses down on the blue waters Avalon harbor. JOHN and CONNIE O'MARA are building a sand castle with their six-month old DAUGHTER. O'Mara catches sight of a milk-skinned BLONDE walking by on the arm of a young SAILOR in dress whites. She doesn't look back at O'Mara as they stroll past him. Could it be OUR Blonde? Doesn't matter. She reminds O'Mara of what he's accomplished.

CONNIE
Eyes front, Sergeant.

O'Mara smiles, kissing his wife. Finally at peace.

CUT TO:

TIGHT ON: A BLACK & WHITE PHOTO, but we're so close to it the faces appear pixelated, too blurry to make out, until we *PULL BACK* to reveal it's a DIGITAL copy of a copy of an old UNIT PHOTO of the **GANGSTER SQUAD...** *PULLING FURTHER BACK* to reveal that the photo is just one picture, half-forgotten, on a WALL covered with photos: CRASH UNIT PHOTOS, generations of eager young GANG COPS posing around SEIZED DOPE and GUNS. DIVISIONAL SOFTBALL TEAMS, the BAKER TO VEGAS LAW ENFORCEMENT RELAY RACES. GANG BANDANAS pinned to the wall like Comanche Scalps.

We're in the cramped office of the **77TH DIVISION GANG UNIT**, hardly more than a closet, underfunded, ignored. We follow LAPD GANG COPS *hustling* out of the office...

EXT. 77TH DIVISION - SUNSET

And into their BLACK & WHITES. SIRENS WAIL as the cars head out into LA. Dry palm trees over graffiti-covered apartments. LAPD CHOPPERS circle in a beautiful sunset...

THE END