

KISS OF DEATH

FIRST DRAFT - Second Revision
3/1/94

Richard Price
212-605-2852

OMIT SCENE 1

1A INT: NICK BIANCO'S APARTMENT - BLUE-COLLAR QUEENS
- 8:00 A.M.

It's the ground floor of a two-family brick house. The decor is the triumph of pride over cash -- orderly, the furniture IKEA-type; blonde wood put-it together yourself, a nubby off-white couch -- a little too color-coordinated.

A toddler, CORINNA, is playing by herself with a bowl of dry Cheerios in the middle of the living room.

NICK, shirtless, wearing grey pants with a dark red stripe (some kind of uniform pants) chugs in, a white shirt in one hand.

NICK

C'mon, Juicy, what you doin'?

(Nick tries to clean
the mess)

Where's Mommy at, she miss the bus?

(looks at his watch, wincing,
whipping on his shirt -- speaking
to his absent wife)

Bev, I'm a workin' man.

2 EXT: N.Y.U. BUILDING ENTRANCE - 9:30 A.M.

CLOSE ON CORINNA

in a stroller parked by the building entrance. She seems to be calmly studying ...

A MIDDLE-AGED BLACK MAN, apparently homeless, who is panhandling in a cheerful bellow.

BEGGAR

I need fifty thousand dollars for a down
payment on a loft! I need fifty thousand
dollars for a down payment on a loft!
(over and over)

STUDENTS and PEDESTRIANS seem more amused than intimidated.

Nick emerges from the N.Y.U. entrance in a security guard uniform.

NICK

(gently moving him away)

C'mon, you're giving everybody a headache.

MAN

(bellowing)

All's I need is fifty thousand ...

2

CONTD

The guy won't budge or shut up. Sighing, Nick digs in his pocket, gives the guy a dollar.

NICK

C'mon, go work City College.

The guy jumps on Nick with a happy hug.

MAN

Oh! Let me kiss you!

Nick, wincing, tries to free himself as ONLOOKERS laugh.

MAN (contd)

Let me kiss you!

NICK'S POV

WE SEE BEV, his wife, late 20's, bustling along, looking winded.

NICK

(removing the beggar from his person)

Juicy ... look who's here!

BEV

(rushed)

I'm sorry ... the bus broke down in the middle of the Queensborough Bridge.

(she kisses Nick, goes to Corinna in the stroller)

Hi, Juicy! You helping Daddy?

NICK

You have a good night?

BEV

(holding Corinna)

Guy comes in about three in the morning, totally bombed, has a hamburger, says to me, "What's the biggest tip you ever got here?" I said, "Twenty dollars?" The guy tips me fifty, says, "What idiot would tip twenty dollars in a diner?" I said, "You did. Last week."

NICK

(smiling)

Are you kidding?

2 CONTD

BEV
(flashing the fifty
dollar bill)
There's some funny fish come out after
midnight.

NICK
So I remember.
(stepping up to her)
You OK?

BEV
(reciting a Nick-Bev
motto)
Whatever don't kill you just makes you
stronger.

Nick kisses his daughter, kisses his wife.

NICK
Hang in there, mommy.

BEV
(leaving with Corinna)
I will if you will.

NICK
(calling after her)
Get some sleep.

CLOSE ON NICK

His face etched with concern.

OMIT SCENE 3

4 EXT: NICK'S HOME - ESTABLISHING SHOT - NIGHT

A cookie cutter row of brick two-family homes.

5 INT: NICK AND BEV'S APARTMENT - 6:30 P.M.

Bev is in the kitchen making the baby's dinner. ROSIE is there too, holding Corinna, studying some interesting looking drapes in the living room.

ROSIE
When did you buy these? They're
beautiful.

BEV
They're bedsheets.

ROSIE

You're kiddin' me.

BEV

You got to try to find the second life in things ... It's like Hamburger Helper for your wallet.

(beat)

See, you didn't know us ... before Nick got locked up? When he was stealing cars with his cousin Ronnie and them? He was flush ... but, every dime he made, went into, or onto our bodies, you know what I'm saying? I didn't exactly have the head for House Beautiful. And now I don't have the cash for it.

ROSIE

I can't believe you guys came through that.

BEV

Me neither. When Nick got sent away? We were both pretty strung out, and when he came out, it was kind of dicey, 'cause, you know, we didn't know if we could stay clean together, but as soon as I got pregnant? It was a joke, the idea of going back to that life. It was like a miracle.

(nodding to Corinna in Rosie's arms)

She saved our lives, this little thing ...

ROSIE

(not sarcastic)

Ain't love grand ...

BEV

(with a slight tightness)

Yeah, well ... It's like, we've been through hell together ...

(beat)

but we're still here ...

Nick enters the house from work. He takes the baby.

NICK

Hey Rosie, what's up?

5 CONTD

BEV

She's gonna sit for Corinna. Do her studying down here.

NICK

Tonight?

BEV

Yeah, we got the meeting.

NICK

(wincing)

I think I wanna stay home with the kid tonight, teach her poker or something.

BEV

But we got the meeting.

NICK

I'll catch one tomorrow by the school. Why don't you go tonight, I'll go tomorrow.

BEV

(tentative)

I think it's better when we go together, don't you?

NICK

Bev, I'm beat ...

Bev looks jammed.

NICK

Sorry there, Rosie ...

ROSIE

No big thing.

CLOSE ON BEV

trying to shrug it off, but vaguely troubled.

6 INT: LIVING ROOM - 10:00 P.M.

Nick is asleep in an easy chair, the baby sleeping on his chest.

There's an insistent rapping at his door which jerks him awake.

6 CONTD

ANGLE

Nick, still holding the baby, opens the door to his cousin Ronnie (28, wiry, street sharp, Rolling Stones tongue tattooed on his neck).

Ronnie looks frantic.

RONNIE

Nicky ... I'm a fuckin' dead man ...

NICK

(cool, pissed)

What are you doin' here ... I could go back in just for talkin' to you.

RONNIE

I got eight cars on a carrier and no driver, boat's leaving in like ninety minutes.

NICK

You got a problem with your brain?
What I just say to you?

RONNIE

(desperate)

Nicky, I swear I went to three guys before you. You don't want to be involved and I respect that but I don't know who else ... If I don't get these cars on board ... You know who I answer to now? Little Junior Brown ...

NICK

(wincing)

Little Junior ... who let him out of the cage ...

(laughing)

And you want me in on this?

(closing the door in
Ronnie's face)

Include me out, Yo ...

Ronnie pushes the door open again, startling Nick with the sudden desperate violence. Ronnie is crying.

RONNIE

(holding up his broken
finger)

You see this? He thought I shorted him fifty dollars on a weekly collection.

(MORE)

6 CONTD

RONNIE (contd)

Now I got three hundred thousand dollars worth of his wheels gonna miss the boat.

(holding up the finger)

This was for fifty, OK? Are you gonna help me or what?

NICK

Ronnie ... listen to me ...

RONNIE

(weeping)

Nicky ... I love you ... I respect you ... I'll throw you fifteen hundred dollars and I swear

(touching Corinna's head)

on my niece's eyes, you'll be back in bed in two hours. Two ... hours ...

NICK

I don't want your goddamn money ...

RONNIE

(fuming, pacing)

You don't want my money? Let me ask you ... Six years ago ... two guys get grabbed jacking the wrong Benz. Who ran like a bastard, and who got grabbed, spent five months in Rikers with his mouth shut, while you were out partying every goddamn night.

NICK

(weakly, shamed)

That was a long time ago, Ronnie.

RONNIE

Yeah? I remember every fuckin' minute ... Nicky, in six years have I ever asked you for one thing in return?

CLOSE ON NICK

trapped by emotional blackmail, miserable.

RONNIE (contd)

(terrified again)

He'll cripple me, man ... please ...

I'm your blood cousin ...

Ronnie bends down, kisses Nick's hand, Nick's child.

7 EXT: NICK'S HOUSE - 10 MINUTES LATER - NIGHT

Nick exits his apartment as Rosie, in a bathrobe, exits her mother's apartment directly overhead. They meet on the sidewalk.

NICK
Did I wake your mother?

ROSIE
(half asleep still)
Don't worry about it.

Nick kisses her forehead in gratitude.

Then as they pass each other, Nick heading for Ronnie's car, Rosie for Nick's apartment, we go

CLOSE ON THEIR HANDS

briefly brushing against each other, back to back.

Nick unconsciously jerks his hand away as if he had touched something hot.

CLOSE ON NICK'S FACE

The touch was hot, provoking emotions he dare not pursue. He looks like his heart is kicking.

CLOSE ON ROSIE

watching Ronnie's car drive off. It's in her face too.

OMIT SCENE 8

9 EXT: URBAN FLATLANDS - 11:30 P.M.

A desolate area of body shops and abandoned lots; the occasional hole-in-the-wall bar.

There's a parked convoy of four massive car-carriers loaded with late model cars.

Ronnie's Porsche pulls up. Nick and Ronnie exit.

RONNIE
(chattering, adrenalyzed
with fear)

This new crew we hooked up with? It's the best. The cars? They go from here to Puerto Rico to Santo Domingo to the Middle East, South America, Asia who
(MORE)

9 CONTD

RONNIE (contd)
 the hell knows where. We don't need
 titles, insurance cards, phoney VINS,
 nothing. Just get 'em on the boat --
 get 'em on the boat ...

NICK
 (walking the line of
 carriers)
 Who we got here ...

He nods to two of the DRIVERS in their cabs: Johnny A. and
 Bobby B. -- old chop shop and car thief pals.

RONNIE
 (babbling)
 I'm telling you, man, since you went
 away? We got big. No more smash and
 grab bullshit.
 (beat)
 You know how I got a half size
 difference in my feet? How I'm always
 putting three insoles in the left shoe
 so it fits like the right? Well, now I
 see some shoes I like? I buy two
 pairs, eight and a half, and a nine. I
 just wear one from each pair. And I'm
 talking three, four hundred dollar
 kicks.
 (beat)
 I'm telling you, anytime you want back
 in ...

NICK
 Shut the fuck up ...

They arrive at the carrier Nick's to drive. Ronnie pulls
 open the cab door.

RONNIE
 (disgusted)
 Look at this ...

An unconscious DRUNK sleeps flat out on the seat.

RONNIE (contd)
This is what showed up to drive, can
 you believe it?

Ronnie hauls the guy out, drops him in the gutter.

RONNIE (contd)
 Here ...

9 CONTD

Ronnie plucks five hundred dollars from the drunk's shirt pocket, jams it into Nick's shirt pocket.

 NICK
I said I don't want ...

 RONNIE
 (brushing off his protest)
C'mon. Nothin's for free. You'll get
the rest at the port. Let's go ...

 NICK
Wait up ... don't ... you can't leave
the guy like that ... they'll cut his
throat around here.

 RONNIE
So? Good.

Nick picks the guy up and dumps him back in the cab, shoving him over to the passenger side.

 RONNIE (contd)
You know what your problem is? You're
a liberal ...

 BOBBY B.
 (from his cab)
Ronnie ... ten minute stagger?

 RONNIE
No stagger ... we just gotta go.

 NICK
We can't all go together ... we'll look
like a circus train.

 RONNIE
 (climbing into his cab)
No time, no time ...

 NICK
 (worried)
Ronnie ... you got to ...

 RONNIE
Just go!

10 EXT: STREET - BROOKLYN - NIGHT

The four transporters on the roll through the narrow streets of Brooklyn. A spectacular sight of fifty stolen luxury cars hell bent for leather.

11 EXT: HOUSING PROJECT - ANGLE - NIGHT

Some teenagers and little kids, (non-white) gawk, mouths agape as the convoy barrels past a housing project.

12 EXT: STREETS OF BROOKLYN - ANGLE - NIGHT

Ronnie in lead carrier.

13 EXT: STREETS OF BROOKLYN - ANGLE - NIGHT

Nick in second carrier, the stew bum muttering in his sleep, patting his shirt pocket.

DRUNK

Where's my damn money!

NICK

(tense, scared)

Shut up.

14 EXT: CORNER BAR - ANGLE - NIGHT

The convoy barreling past a corner bar where a bunch of men are hanging out on the sidewalk. They're a hard-ass crowd. But they too rear back in astonishment at the sight.

CLOSE ON ONE OF THE GUYS

A streety-looking thug stepping out into the gutter to stare after the carriers.

15 EXT: VERRAZANO BRIDGE - 12:00 A.M.

The convoy rolling over the deserted expanse.

16 INT: NICK'S CAB - NIGHT

DRUNK

(louder, more awake)

Who took my got-damn money!

NICK

(tense, paranoid)

I said shut up ...

17 EXT: CORNER BAR

The thuggish-looking guy who was eyeing the convoy reaches into a sedan, extracts a hand-held radio -- he's a cop.

THUG/COP

Forty-seven to base ... forty-seven to base ...

18 EXT: ENTRANCE TO PORT NEWARK, N.J. - 12:15 A.M.

The convoy hums in neutral as a GUARD opens the chainlink fence for this nocturnal off-loading. The convoy rolls inside the loading area.

19 NICK'S POV - EXT: NICK'S CARRIER - NIGHT

Through his rearview mirror he sees the guard starting to roll shut the gate, but before he can get it across, four sedans come flying up and make him open up again.

NICK
(panicked)
Shit!

DRUNK
(louder, more awake)
Somebody must think I'm stupid or
something ...

The sedans flank the caravan. The lead car pulls up to Ronnie's cab. Two men in parkas and baseball caps emerge, flash some kind of I.D. After a beat, Ronnie descends to the ground.

NICK'S POV - REAR VIEW MIRROR

Nick sees the gate sliding shut, the guard running like hell.

NICK
Shit!

NICK'S POV

Ahead. WE SEE Ronnie step down; it's a bust.

VOICE IN NICK'S SIDE WINDOW
How you doin, fellas?

Nick jumps, looks down at a black GUY in a hunter's vest and a backwards baseball cap. The guy holds up a Prosecutor's Office I.D.

NICK
(bluffing)
What ...

COP
Can I see your bill of lading?

DRUNK
(bellowing)
Who took my got-damn money!

19 CONTD

COP
Step down from the cab please?

The drunk seems finally to focus, sees the Police I.D. out Nick's window, freaks. And just as Nick opens his cab door, the drunk disoriented, panicking, pulls a gun from his pants.

NICK
No!

And as Nick reaches out to grab the gun, the drunk fires, the bullet drilling Nick's palm, exiting ...

Suddenly the cop screams as the same bullet buries itself in his face. WE SEE him fall, his hands covered with blood as they mask his eyes.

All hell breaks loose as Nick slides to the floor of the cab, ducking a firestorm of gunfire coming through the opened driver's door, as the adrenalized, enraged cops blast away at the drunk in the passenger's seat, the volley making his body jerk like an electrified frog.

Under a storm of curses, shouts and gunfire, Nick is hauled from the cab and dumped on the concrete next to the shot cop as other COPS continue in a hyper-adrenalized frenzy to blast the already dead shooter.

Taking advantage of the chaos, WE SEE Ronnie, Bobby B. and Johnny A. sprinting for the chain link fence -- up and over to freedom.

NICK'S POV

Nick on his back sees --

- 1) the moaning bloody-faced cop lying alongside him.
- 2) directly above; the solemn and massive descent of a Medevac helicopter, the whirling of its blades drowning out the sounds of hysteria and gunfire all around him.
- 3) looming over him, blotting out the chopper, a huge COP, who smiles down at him then kicks him in the head, delivering him into blackness.

20 INT: URBAN EMERGENCY ROOM - 4:45 A.M.

It's total shot-cop chaos: a mob scene of milling POLICEMEN and EMS DRIVERS. There's a shouting match between a COP and an EMS SUPERVISOR in the hallway.

20 CONTD

SUPERVISOR

There was no need for a Medevac like that!

COP

Hey! My man is down! I'm gettin him here as fast as I can!

SUPERVISOR

You had no authority ...

COP

(with other jacked up
cops)

Kiss my fuckin ass!

The above cross cut with --

21 A SEA OF GURNEYS IN THE E.R. - EARLY MORNING

Nick lays on a gurney next to the face-shot cop that shared the bullet.

The cop is shivering with shock, his legs trembling, his face still bathed in blood. His fellow officers hover around him shouting encouragement, making it hard for the Pakistani DOCTOR to do his job.

Comparatively, Nick is alone save for the INTERN who is cleaning his bloody hand. Nick's eye is swollen shut from the kick, and the wrist of his good hand is handcuffed to the gurney.

Abruptly two cops (CLEARY and COFFEY) detach themselves from their comrade's bed, shoulder away Nick's intern. One cop seizes Nick's wounded hand and squeezes. Nick screams in pain.

CLEARY

(hard-eyed)

Does that hurt?

COFFEY

(hard-eyed)

Who were the mutts that got away?

NICK

(writhing)

I don't know them.

21 CONTD

Cleary squeezes his hand again. Nick screams.

Suddenly the vengeful cops are parted and pushed to the side by a suited, bespectacled guy half their size. This is FRANK ZIOLI, the Assistant District Attorney.

D.A.

(to the cops)

This him?

(to Nick)

I want the others.

NICK

(wincing)

I don't know them, I swear.

D.A.

Hey! What do you think this is, a possession of stolen property rap? Your partner's dead. And guess what. You're getting charged with murder. The shot cop? You're getting charged with aggravated assault. Now, you want a little air on this? Right now ... give me some names.

NICK

I don't know, man. I got a call, woke me up, some guy says drive a carrier for me ... I'll pay you fifteen hundred dollars.

D.A.

Who called you ...

NICK

I don't know ... some guy.

D.A.

(fuming)

Some guy, huh? ... You're looking at felony murder, that's thirty for the body, ten more for the felony.

(beat)

Now let me ask you ... do you think, that the guy who called you ... if we had him here, you think he'd do forty years for you?

(beat)

You got a family?

21 CONTD

CLOSE ON NICK

NICK
 (heart-sick but honor
 bound)
 I don't know the guy ... I swear.

OMIT SCENES 22, 23, 24, 25

26 INT: CONFERENCE ROOM IN RIKERS ISLAND - NEXT DAY

Nick, in prison jump-suit, sits across a small table from JACK GOLD, his lawyer, who looks and dresses more like John Gotti than John Gotti himself.

JACK
 You did good, Nick ... Well, I mean
 what else could you do, right?

NICK
 (angry)
 What else could I do? ... I could've
 done plenty ...

Jack gives him a half amused, half reproachful stare.

NICK (contd)
 (defeated by reality)
 They're talking felony murder thirty
 plus ten.

JACK
 Screw them, they'll be happy with a
 class two grand larceny ... all that
 other shit
 (he makes a yak-yak-yak
 gesture with his hand)
 it's thunder without lightning.

NICK
 Class two ...

JACK
 Possession of stolen property in excess
 of seventy-five thousand dollars ...
 you'll draw five, serve three maybe
 two ...

NICK
 (jumping up)
 Two years?

26 CONTD

JACK

Look ... you gotta take the hit ... I mean what can I tell you that you don't already know?

Nick buries his face in his hands.

JACK (contd)

Hey ... you did it right, and they know that ... it's gonna be nice and easy for you inside. It'll go like a dream.

NICK

(hot)

Oh yeah? What about my family. Do you have any idea what me and my wife been through these last two years? You bastards came to me and you just tore up our life, so if you want me to do the right thing by you you best do the right thing by us. If she ain't taken care of while I'm inside, all bets are off ... You're gonna have to kill me 'cause ...

JACK

(unruffled, cutting him off)

Hey! Hey! Nick ... relax ... we take care of our own ...

27 INT: BEV AND NICK'S DINING TABLE - 2 DAYS LATER

CLOSE ON MONEY

being counted out on the table, all twenties and one ten.

ANGLE

Bev, sitting there, looking like shit, frowning at the cash.

BEV

A hundred and fifty dollars?

RONNIE

(standing over her)

Every week, out of my own pocket.

BEV

What the hell can I do with a hundred and fifty dollars?

27 CONTD

RONNIE

Hey, it wasn't like he was pulling down weekly G's out there, Bev. I mean, I'm not made out of money either.

BEV

(hand to her temple)

I can't believe this ...

RONNIE

Well ... there's another way to get it up a little.

Bev stares at him, daring him to come on to her, but Ronnie doesn't follow up on his double entendre.

RONNIE (contd)

You want to work for me at the garage? You know, run credit cards, make appointments -- strictly kosher gig.

Bev stares at him.

RONNIE (contd)

I owe him big time, Bev. Let me do this.

BEV

(crumpling, shifting gears)

What he do it for, Ronnie?

RONNIE

(after a squirming, helpless beat)

Bev, if that could be me in there ... I swear to you ...

28 INT: RIKERS ISLAND VISITORS ROOM - NEXT DAY

There's twenty numbered chairs at a long table filled with CONVICTS and VISITORS, a GUARD in a raised seat at each short end. A gigantic sign in both English and Spanish on the wall reads:

"PHYSICAL CONTACT WILL RESULT IN TERMINATION OF VISIT AND REVOCATION OF VISITING PRIVILEGE."

ANGLE

Nick and Bev, in chairs stencilled "6" on the back, face each other across a chest high divider.

28 CONTD

NICK
Where's the baby?

BEV
She's with Rosie.

NICK
How's she doing?

BEV
(angry, hurt, broken)
She misses you.

Nick instinctively reaches for Bev's hand over the divider.

GUARD
Number six!

Nick withdraws his hand.

BEV
(teary; hot whisper)
How could you do this?
(beat)
I can't make it out there by myself. I
don't understand ...

NICK
Bev, it was the middle of the night ...

BEV
What was the middle of the night? We
were doin' OK ...
(pleading for
enlightenment)
Didn't you think we were doin' OK?

NICK
(heavily)
Ronnie could've gotten killed if I
didn't ...

BEV
Yeah? He looks pretty damn healthy to
me ...

NICK
I owed him ... I can't ...
(defeated beat)
Are they doing right by you?

28 CONTD

BEV
 (teary -- it's not about
 "compensation")
 Make it right by me? You're in jail,
 Nick ...

Nick tries to touch her.

GUARD
 Number six!

29 ESTABLISHING SHOT
 EXT: WILLETS POINT CAR YARDS - DAY

EXTERIOR PAN of a half-mile square consisting of dozens of body parts and auto repair shops all cheek and jowl to each other lying in the massive shadow of Shea Stadium in Queens. It's like an unpaved medieval market place, a small ramshackle village, the village walls hung with hub caps, car guts and patrolled by packs of mutts.

Anything shady or illegal can transpire here, and often does. Among the thousands of cars in various states of disembowelment in the dozens of shops it's almost impossible to tell what's hot and what's legit.

30 EXT: L&M AUTOMOTIVE - DAY

This is Ronnie's body shop in the midst of this automotive Thunderdome. The place does legitimate work but also doubles as a chop shop -- a place where a twenty thousand dollar car can be dismantled into fifty thousand dollars worth of saleable auto parts.

There's a police car halfway into the work bay awaiting a tune-up.

31 INT: L&M AUTOMOTIVE

Ronnie and the guys in his crew are deeper into the bay, working on two cars at once. WE SEE Ronnie, Bobby B., Johnny A. (the guys who fled from the cops at Port Newark) and J.J. (who was in the Lexus with Ronnie at N.Y.U.).

32 INT: L&M OFFICE

In a small cluttered room twice the size of a phone booth Bev is running a customer's credit card for payment on a job. The walls are hung with soft-core calendars and pictures of Ronnie on various vacations.

The desk is a swamp of invoices, ledgers, credit card machines and phones.

32 CONTD

The phone rings.

BEV
L and M ... hang on.

33 INT: L&M AUTOMOTIVE

Bev appears in the work bay.

BEV (contd)
(to Ronnie)
It's your girlfriend.

RONNIE
I'll call her back.

RONNIE'S POV

WE SEE Bev through Ronnie's eyes. She's got a nice body.
She walks back to the office.

ANGLE

Ronnie, leaning on a car hood watching her walk.

34 INT: PRISON CAFETERIA/KITCHEN - SAME TIME

Nick is working in the prisoner cafeteria, his "easy" job.

The kitchen is a steaming clattery hell of slops, humidity and organized chaos. All the PRISONERS wear high rubber boots and a body-suit made out of a 33-gallon Hefty bag pulled over the head, cinched at the waist and poked through at the arms.

Nick is cleaning plates for the dish washing conveyor belt.

Someone drops a soup bowl and it explodes into shards on the floor.

All the prisoners near the accident, Nick included, furtively dip and grab a shard, hide it on their persons -- a sharp piece of crockery could come in handy one of these days.

35 INT: L&M AUTOMOTIVE OFFICE - 1 WEEK LATER

Bev working in the cubicle. Ronnie stands in the doorway watching her. It's claustrophobic and she's sweating.

Bev hangs up the phone and as she writes something in the appointment book, Ronnie, leaning over her, puts a cold open beer on the desk.

35 CONTD

 BEV
Thanks ... I don't drink.

 RONNIE
Not no more, huh?

 BEV
Not no more.

 RONNIE
 (sitting on the desk)
There was a time though, right?

 BEV
Right.

 RONNIE
I remember you then, you and Nick ...

 BEV
 (in an irritated but light
 tone)
Well, it wasn't that long ago.

 RONNIE
No it wasn't ...
 (shifting gears)
So how you holding up?

 BEV
OK.

 RONNIE
Better than waiting tables, no?

 BEV
I guess ...

Ronnie smiles at her for a beat. Bev finds herself uncomfortable under his eyes.

 BEV (contd)
What do you want from me?

36 INT: L&M AUTOMOTIVE

Before he can answer, J.J. and Johnny A. bring before him a young nervous STREET KID, about twenty-two years old.

 JOHNNY A.
 (to the kid)
G'head, ask him.

36 CONTD

KID

(nervous)

I got a '93 Infiniti outside, fully loaded.

RONNIE

(raising an eyebrow)

Oh yeah? Is it yours?

KID

Yeah, well,

(laughing)

it is now ... and ah, I heard, you know ...

RONNIE

You heard what ... I don't have nothin to do with hot cars.

KID

Yeah, well, I was in the joint with Vinny Passo ... he told me ...

RONNIE

Who the fuck is Vinny Passo? And who the fuck are you ... I don't know you ...

QUICK CUT TO BEV

knotted, stressed.

KID

(scared)

But you know Vinny, right?

RONNIE

Are you a cop?

KID

A cop? No, man! I was in the joint with ...

RONNIE

(exploding)

I don't know you!

Before the kid can respond Ronnie and the others fall on him, kicking and punching him -- a savage beating.

CUT TO BEV

quietly freaking, sipping the beer.

36 CONTD

RONNIE (contd)
 (stomping the kid)
 What am I, stupid?

37 EXT: L&M AUTOMOTIVE

The three of them throw the kid out of the work bay -- toss him right into the hood of his stolen unsolicited car.

And as the kid, bloody, wobbly, scrambles to get inside, Ronnie comes out with a lug wrench and starts smashing all the windows.

The kid peels out for his life, sideswiping a number of cars in his jerky getaway.

RONNIE (contd)
 (flinging the wrench at
 the car)
 What am I, stupid?
 (he lurches back inside)
 We're closing up! We're closing up!
 Get that car outa here ... that one
 too. Out! Out!

Ronnie paces, cursing as his mostly Latino WORKERS scramble to do his bidding.

RONNIE (contd)
 (pacing, holding his
 forehead)
 The balls on him ...

38 INT: L&M AUTOMOTIVE OFFICE - QUICK ANGLE

Bev at the desk -- gripping the empty bottle.

RONNIE (contd)
 (to Bev)
 I'm so fuckin upset I can't tell you
 ... C'mon, I'll drive you home ...

39 INT/EXT: RONNIE'S CAR - THIS TIME A DATSUN 300Z

Bev in the shotgun seat. Ronnie driving along Queens Boulevard. He pulls into the parking lot of a glass-brick facade bar/lounge, Babycakes.

BEV
 (snapping out of it)
 Where we going?

39 CONTD

RONNIE

I got to see somebody ... c'mon, I'll
buy you a sody-pop.

Ronnie takes a wrinkled brown bag from the glove compartment.

40 INT: BABYCAKES

CLOSE ON A YOUNG WOMAN

dressed in designer jeans, beauty parlor hair, laying on
her side as if on a couch, chewing gum. She mysteriously
levitates, descends, levitates, descends, suspended in
mid-air.

WOMAN

Twenty-four, twenty-five ...

PULL BACK TO SEE that she is being bench-pressed by Little
Junior (thick, muscular, crew-cut bulldog a la Bensonhurst),
who grips her by the ribs and thighs. He's using two facing
chairs as a bench.

LITTLE JUNIOR

(grunting in effort)

Jesus ... what you been eating?

They are surrounded by some of Little Junior's crew, four
other young pumped-up thugs, (PLUTO, NEPTUNE, SATURN and
MARS) who make wisecracks.

WOMAN

Twenty-eight ... c'mon, you faggot ...
twenty-nine.

Other than this little impromptu spectacle the place is
fairly empty. It's dark and cool. Behind Little Junior are
two U-shaped bars, each wrapped around a runway for topless
dancing. The runways are not being used at this hour.

There are also red naugahyde banquettes lining the wall
opposite the bar.

At one banquette sits Big Junior, Little Junior's father,
going over some paperwork. The Babycakes is his baby.

Despite his nickname there's nothing big about this guy.
He's shriveled and frail, fifty going on seventy, eaten up by
emphysema (as his son is by asthma). There are two breathing
tubes coming out of his nose connected to an oxygen porta-
pack resting on the table.

40 CONTD

He ignores his son's Olympic shennanigans even though Little Junior keeps trying to catch his father's eye.

Ronnie and Bev enter, Ronnie holding the brown bag. Ronnie plants Bev at the bar, hunches over the bar himself but without taking a seat.

RONNIE

It's nice, right? They have dancing here,

(gesturing to the runways)
you know the topless thing at night?
But I like it in the day. It's less
... frenetic.

(to the bartender)
Give her something.

Ronnie walks over to Big Junior's banquette and waits for him to acknowledge his presence.

LITTLE JUNIOR (OS)

Pop! Pop!

RONNIE AND BIG JUNIOR'S POV

WE SEE Little Junior, arms trembling, his girlfriend/barbell over head.

LITTLE JUNIOR

(voice strained)
Going for fifty! Watch!

Big Junior makes a wheezing, sighing noise of impatience at his son's childishness.

ANGLE

Big Junior taking a cursory peek inside the brown bag. WE SEE it's filled with cash (Ronnie's tithe).

BIG JUNIOR

(he speaks in a painful
labored rasp)
See our friend there?

RONNIE'S POV

In the foreground, Little Junior's girlfriend is now straddling him on the makeshift bench, feeding him a hit of asthma spray from an inhalant.

40 CONTD

In the background, a hunched over MOPE sits at one of the deserted runway bars.

BIG JUNIOR (contd)

He's in the hole again. Get some people over to his lot and take the six Pathfinders in the rear. The keys and the paper are in the glove compartments.

RONNIE

You want me to cut 'em up?

BIG JUNIOR

Nah. Junior's got 'em all sold already.

(beat)

Who's she?

ANGLE

Bev at the bar. She's drinking a real drink. Smoking a cigarette.

RONNIE

That's my cousin's wife.

BIG JUNIOR

You giving her the money?

RONNIE

Four hundred a week ... just like you said ... plus a job, which was my idea ...

BIG JUNIOR

(shrugging)

Throw her a car too.

A thirtyish black MAN with an earring, prison muscles and a silk shirt approaches, standing over the banquette.

Eig Junior nods for Ronnie to get lost, then gestures for his son to join them.

The black man takes Ronnie's place at the banquette.

ANGLE

Bev, at the bar; placid and half smashed.

On the jukebox, we hear Percy Sledge singing "When A Man Loves A Woman."

40 CONTD

RONNIE

You OK?

BEV

(dreamy distant)

I love this song.

ANGLE

A small parquet dance floor near the jukebox.

Ronnie is dancing slow and tight with the stoned Bev.

RONNIE

(in her ear)

What kind of car you like to drive?

BEV

(ineffably sad, lost)

What kind?

RONNIE

I want to give you a car.

(smoky beat)

I want to do something nice for you ...
all you been through ...

BEV

(monotone with a tinge of
ironic bitterness)

You want to do something nice for me?

LITTLE JUNIOR

(suddenly materializing,
putting an arm around
Ronnie's shoulders)

My father says take her home ...

RONNIE

I wanna finish the song.

LITTLE JUNIOR

Now, fucko.(taking a hit of
asthma spray)

RONNIE

(still holding Bev,
aggrieved but ginger)Why you always have to talk to me like
that?

40 CONTD

LITTLE JUNIOR
To her house.

41 INT: RONNIE'S APARTMENT - 1 HOUR LATER

TRACKING SHOT of Ronnie walking/waltzing/carrying Bev down a long foyer to his bedroom.

BEV
(semi-conscious)
Wait ... what ... hold it ...

RONNIE
It's OK ... it's OK ...

42 INT: BEDROOM

Bev passed out on Ronnie's bed. Ronnie starts to undress her, but doesn't get too far before he disgustedly gives up.

RONNIE
Great ...

43 INT: RONNIE'S BEDROOM - 7:30 A.M.

A PAN of the clutter and tangle of bedsheets, clothes -- sunlight throwing bars of light over the rumpled bed and its inhabitants: Ronnie, sleeping on his stomach and Bev, curled onto her side, still out from the day before.

CLOSE ON BEV

waking without moving, rapid eye movement as she tries to orient herself.

Suddenly she shoots up to a sitting position, her head throbbing, looking wildly around the room, at her watch.

BEV
Shit!

She staggers out of bed. She's half-dressed. She has no idea if she just passed out the night before or if they got it on.

She stumbles into the rest of her clothes, grabs the phone, dials home.

BEV (contd)
(whispering)
Rosie ... Rosie, I'm sorry ... I
fell asleep ... Is the baby OK? ...
(MORE)

43 CONTD

BEV (contd)
 I'm so sorry ... I'm coming home ...
 I'm coming home right now.

Still trying to deal with her hangover, her disorientation, she looks around the room for Ronnie's car keys, finds them on the dresser.

BEV (contd)
 (at the door to the
 sleeping Ronnie)
 You motherfucker ...

44 EXT: RONNIE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

The street out front is a broad and fast parkway.

Bev hits the sunlight wincing. She spots Ronnie's car du jour, the Datsun, fumbles with the keys, inserts one, and the car alarm sounds like an air-raid siren.

Stepping back, Bev struggles with the key ring, finds the remote alarm turnoff, kills the alarm.

45 INT: DATSUN - ANGLE - DAY

In the car, Bev, wild, crying behind the wheel, pulling out without looking, making another car slam on its brakes to avoid ramming her.

Bev floors it, looking back at the car she almost hit, then turns forward in time to see the truck that's about to kill her from a hi-speed head on.

46 INT: TRUCK - DAY

CLOSE ON THE TRUCK

The DRIVER's terrified face.

47 INT: DATSUN - DAY

CLOSE ON BEV

BEV
 (big eye, knowing it's
 her death)
 Nick ...

48 INT: RIKERS ISLAND DAY ROOM -

CLOSE ON TV SCREEN

A screeching car smash-up a la C.H.I.P.S. or some car/gun show.

ANGLE

Nick in a plastic chair watching the show with a glazed eye. He's flanked by other CONVICTS also zoned out, smoking, adjusting hairnets, etc.

ANGLE

GUARD in his raised glass observation booth.

GUARD
(over P.A.)
Bianco!

49 INT: PRISON CORRIDOR - DAY

Nick being escorted by a GUARD past a line of pumped-up looking CONVICTS with a basketball walking the other way.

ANGLE

Door marked Chaplain.

50 INT: CHAPLAIN'S OFFICE (PRISON) - DAY

The CHAPLAIN, a stocky, tired-looking, middle-aged black man in a priest's collar is talking on the phone as the guard knocks on the open door and steers Nick inside.

CHAPLAIN
(gesturing to a chair)
I'll be off in a minute.

ANGLE - 5 MINUTES LATER

51 INT: PRISON CORRIDOR - DAY

LONG FROZEN SHOT of the closed door, the "Chaplain" plaque.

Finally a bellow from behind the door -- Nick howling in grief and rage.

52 EXT: OUR LADY OF SORROWS CEMETERY - 2 DAYS LATER

CLOSE ON COFFIN

pneumatically lowered into the ground.

52 CONTD

ANGLE

The mourners: Nick, holding his daughter Corinna and flanked by TWO ESCORTS from the prison; Rosie; Ronnie; BEV'S MOTHER and other distant FAMILY MEMBERS.

Ronnie turns to Nick. Ronnie is in tears. He hugs both Nick and his daughter. Nick is stone.

 RONNIE

 (weeping)

I'm sorry, man. I did everything I could for her. She was a beautiful person.

 NICK

Ronnie. What was she doing in your car at 8:00 in the morning?

 RONNIE

I sent her from the shop to get something for me at my house.

 NICK

What ...

 RONNIE

 (hesitating)

My wallet.

 NICK

You sent her for your wallet?

 RONNIE

 (pointing to the open ground)

Nick ... I swear ... if that could be me in there ...

 PRISON ESCORT

 (to Nick)

Let's go.

Nick kisses Corinna, hands her to Bev's mother.

 NICK

 (awkward)

Would you let Rosie take her to visit me?

52 CONTD

MOTHER-IN-LAW
 (grey-faced, bitter)
 You know it was you driving that truck,
 don't you?

NICK
 (wincing)
 Please don't say that ...

MOTHER-IN-LAW
 (voice cracking, a
 heartbreaking raw squawk)
 And if there's a God in Heaven I don't
 understand why it isn't you going into
 the ground instead of my daughter.

POLICE ESCORT
 (gently)
 C'mon, Nick.

Nick tries their patience by stopping to hug Rosie,
 then finally turns, walking down a gentle slope with
 them towards the car -- but after a dozen paces he suddenly
 wheels and marches stiffly back to the funeral party, his
 face a mask of barely contained murderous rage.

CLOSE ON RONNIE

stepping back as Nick marches at him.

Nick's escorts try to restrain him but they underestimate the
 physical power of his anger. Even in cuffs, Nick simply
 walks through one of the escorts, bulling him to the ground
 before he's bear-hugged to a stand-still by the other,
 stronger guard.

NICK
 (bellowing at Ronnie)
 Your wallet?

Both escorts wheel him around, bum rush him down the slope to
 the car.

53 INT: VISITING HALL - RIKERS ISLAND - 3 DAYS LATER - DAY

CLOSE ON CHAIR #6 AGAIN

ANGLE

Rosie's unhappy face over the divider.

NICK
 Where's Corinna?

53 CONTD

ROSIE

(gingerly)
 Bev's mom wouldn't let me bring her
 just now.

NICK

What? She can't ... she's my daughter!

ROSIE

Nick ... give her time ...

NICK

She can't do that! She's my daughter!

ROSIE

Nick! Give her time.

NICK

What time! I have to see my daughter!

ROSIE

Listen to me. Listen to me. I'm
 working on it, OK? Just give her some
 time.

Rosie stares Nick down, soothing him with her voice, her
 eyes. Nick buries his face in his hands, shifts gears.

NICK

I'm sorry, but I have to ask you ...
 the morning she died? What time did
 she leave the house?

ROSIE

(evasive)
 I'm not sure.

NICK

You're not sure ... well, let me put it
 this way ... what time did you come
 downstairs, so that she could go to
 work ...

ROSIE

I can't remember.

NICK

7 A.M.? 6 A.M.?

ROSIE

I don't know.

53 CONTD

NICK
 (building steam)
5 A.M.? 4 A.M.?

Rosie is silent.

NICK (contd)
 She wasn't even home the night before,
 was she ... was she ...

ROSIE
 She called me from work, says she's
 coming home early, Ronnie's driving
 her, but ...

NICK
 (cold)
 Ronnie ...

ROSIE
 (distraught)
 She never made it, Nick. She never
 made it. I was there all night ... all
 night long.

Nick stares at her, Ronnie burning a hole in his brain.

54 INT: DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE ON D.A. ZIOLI

D.A. ZIOLI
 (at his desk)
Now you're giving me names?

NICK
 You want them or not?

Nick is seated before Zioli's desk. Zioli absently swivels in his chair. Two investigators, Cleary and Coffey, (the brutal interrogators from the hospital) lounge on the windowsills like flanking demon-dogs. Nick is cuffed to his chair by one hand. It's the next day.

ZIOLI
 Three months in Rikers ... it's like a
 lifetime, in'nit?

NICK
 You want them or not?

54 CONTD

ZIOLI

Well, what do you want? Early parole?
I'm not gonna do that.

NICK

Hey ... I give people up and you cut me
loose early? I won't make it through
day one out there.

ZIOLI

So what do you want?

NICK

I want to see my daughter. She's
living upstate with my mother-in-law.
She won't bring her to visit me. I
want one trip up there to see her. One
day ...

ZIOLI

Nah ...

NICK

Fuck you.

ZIOLI

OK, fuck me.

NICK

What do you want from me?

ZIOLI

(swiveling, tortuous
prick)

You mean like, in addition?

(staring at the ceiling)

Give me something else ... tell me
something I don't know.

(beat)

Surprise me ...

NICK

(fuming, calculating)

Astro Jewelers, remember that?

INVESTIGATOR #1 (COFFEY)

About four years ago?

NICK

If I give you the people on that ... do
I get my day?

54 CONTD

ZIOLI

We'll see ...

NICK

John Amato ... they call him Johnny A. Bobby B., Bobby Bannion ... they work at L and M Automotive near Shea Stadium. They kept some of the jewelry from that ... rings, I.D. bracelets. They'll probably wear them to the line-up.

ZIOLI

Anybody else?

NICK

(hesitating)

I think you should pick me up on this too.

ZIOLI

Oh yeah? Why's that?

NICK

Look, you don't pick me up they're gonna know who did the talking. Just throw me in a line-up, I'll take my chances. That's all I'm gonna say on that.

ZIOLI

Not good enough, Cheech ...

NICK

(over a barrel)

I was the driver, OK?

ZIOLI

So tell me about Port Newark ...

NICK

Same guys. Bobby B. and Johnny A. ... and me.

INVESTIGATOR #2 (CLEARY)

We counted four transporters.

NICK

(purposely omitting
Ronnie)

I don't know the fourth guy ... it was some guy I never saw before ...

54 CONTD

ZIOLI

Who was running the show?

NICK

Hey, I was out of that loop for two years ... All's I can tell you is some guy called me two in the morning, said fifteen hundred dollars drive a carrier no questions asked.

ZIOLI

Yo, Mister Money ... there is no way on God's green earth that you can convince me that you did not know the guy who called you. Look me in the eye and try it.

NICK

(his desire to fuck
Ronnie giving him the
appropriate thousand yard
stare)

I got no reason to lie ...

55 EXT: HALLWAY OUTSIDE ZIOLI'S OFFICE - 30 MINUTES LATER - DAY

WE SEE Nick in cuffs being escorted out by Cleary and Coffey.

Down the hall, we hear sounds of celebration from an out of sight squad room.

CLEARY

(to Coffey re: Nick)

Don't you think my man here should pop in, give his regards?

COFFEY

Absolutely.

56 INT: SQUAD ROOM - ANGLE - DAY

The doorway of the squad room. A HALF-DOZEN INVESTIGATORS in shirt-sleeves are gathered around the party-boy, a black investigator in white shirt and armpit holster. His back is to us. The cops are all drinking out of paper cups. A banner reads "WELCOME BACK CAL HART."

REVERSE ANGLE

Nick in cuffs, standing in the doorway, flanked by the cops.

56 CONTD

COFFEY
 (calling into the party)
 Hey Calvin! Look who's here ...

The black cop turns to the doorway mid-laugh. He wears oversized sunglasses which he raises to his forehead. WE SEE it's the cop who was shot in the face at Port Newark. He has a starred bullet scar under one eye; marked for life. The minute he sees Nick, his expression turns murderous and cold.

CLOSE ON NICK

-- worm on a hook.

57 INT: PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE - LATER THAT WEEK - DAY

CLOSE ON AN ELDERLY HARD-EYED GENT, THE OWNER OF ASTRO JEWELERS

flanked by INVESTIGATORS squinting at ...

58 INT: POLICE LINE-UP - DAY

REVERSE ANGLE

Police line-up.

CLOSE ON RONNIE'S PAL, BOBBY B.

in the line-up.

ELDERLY GENT (VO)
 Him ... that one.

59 INT: POLICE LINE-UP - DAY

ANGLE

All new line-up.

CLOSE ON RONNIE'S PAL, JOHNNY A.

ELDERLY GENT (VO)
 That's the one that hit me.

60 INT: POLICE LINE-UP - DAY

ANGLE

All new line-up.

60 CONTD

CLOSE ON NICK

ELDERLY GENT (VO)

Nah ... none of them.

61 INT: PRISONER/LAWYER CONFERENCE ROOM - NEXT DAY

Nick with Jack Gold at the table.

NICK

(acting stunned)

Astro? That was like four years ago
... who ratted us out?

JACK

Well, whoever it was, you're in the
clear.

NICK

Yeah, well, the guy never laid eyes on
me.

(beat)

Did they pick up Ronnie too?

JACK

Ronnie Lo Cicero?

NICK

Shit, yeah ... I mean the whole job was
his idea.

JACK

His name didn't even come up.

(beat)

Did anybody from the Prosecutor's
Office contact you about any of this?

NICK

Me? You think I'd talk to anybody
without you? How stupid do you think I
am?

JACK

(wary)

Yeah, well, they also got picked up on
the Port Newark thing.

NICK

Who did?

JACK

Bobby and Johnny.

61- CONTD

NICK
 (calm -- vengeance is a
 dish best served cold)
 Ronnie too?

62 EXT: PARKING LOT OF RIKERS ISLAND - 2 DAYS LATER

Nick in civvies and cuffs is being escorted to a sedan by Calvin (wearing oversized sunglasses) and Cleary. He's got his day-trip upstate to see his daughter.

Calvin hustles him into the back seat.

Cleary slams the rear door in Nick's face.

63 EXT: OZONE PARK (QUEENS) SOCIAL CLUB - SAME TIME

Lower Manhattan Members Only coffee and cards club.

On a row of beach chairs in front of the tiny club sits a MAN in his late eighties who is sleeping; a tall paunchy silver-haired MAN in his fifties (the Man), who wears a royal blue polyester running suit; Big Junior, who sits hunched over in a wheelchair; and Jack Gold, the lawyer, who is dressed to the shantung-silk nines, as usual.

In front of them, across the narrow street, Little Junior and his crew play handball in a pocket-sized playground.

BIG JUNIOR
 (wheezing, livid)
 Ronnie Lo Cicero.

THE MAN
 (scowling at the game)
 ... I never liked that kid. He never
 believed in the common good, the common
wealth ...

JACK
 He's a fuckin' rat, is what you're
 saying ...

BIG JUNIOR
 I don't need this now ...

THE MAN
 Are you gonna take care of this,
 Junior? Or you want to go out of
 house ...

64 CONTD

Nick has defeated him.

 NICK
 (tottering, but ice-cold
 in his resolve)
 Can I see my daughter now?

OMIT SCENES 65, 66, 67

67A EXT: STREET IN FRONT OF BEV'S MOM'S HOUSE -
 NYACK, N.Y. - 2 HOURS LATER

Nick (face puffy) and his escorts exit the car. Rosie stands there on the sidewalk. She's been waiting for them.

The house is an old green-shingle job; a working class home.

 ROSIE
 What happened to your face?

 NICK
 (anxious)
 Nothin' ... Rosie, I think this is a
 bad idea.
 (raising his handcuffs)
 I don't want her to see me like this.

 ROSIE
 Nick, she's a baby, she don't ...

 NICK
 Does she ask for Bev a lot?

 ROSIE
 In and out ... between me and Bev's
 mom; she's doin' better than you would
 think. I've been taking her to classes
 with me. She likes psych and economics
 ... math ...
 (Rosie makes a mezza-mezza
 gesture)

 NICK
 (emotional)
 That's great ... really ... I swear ...

Rosie, pained by Nick's suffering, looks away.

 NICK (contd)
 Rosie. I don't know what I'd do
 without you.

63 CONTD

BIG JUNIOR'S POV

He stares at his son playing handball. As if picking up on his father via telepathy, Little Junior stops playing and turns to face his old man.

CLOSE ON LITTLE JUNIOR

as we hear:

BIG JUNIOR (VO)

I clean my own mess ...

64 EXT/INT: SEDAN - TRAVELING - ROAD - DAY

The car coming to a split in the highway, veering into a service road, coming to a stop in a weedy lot.

CLOSE ON NICK

Confused, but then realizing what's about to go down. He looks resigned.

Nick is pulled out of the car. Calvin Hart steps back, carefully removes his sports jacket, his holster, his sunglasses, staring at Nick the whole time.

NICK

(sullen)

Hey ... I took the same bullet as you.

CALVIN

(to Cleary)

Take off his cuffs.

NICK

(as cuffs are removed)

Shit, man ... Do what you got to do ...

Calvin starts taking him apart.

Nick just stands there, feet planted, only using his hands reflexively to deflect some blows but absorbing most. He refuses to counterattack and possibly jeopardize his visit to his daughter.

Nick's only weapon is his resolve. He just stares at Calvin, swallowing his pain, until Calvin starts to lose heart and focus. He can't continue to pound on a man who refuses to defend himself. Finally, he simply stops.

67A CONTD

Their eyes lock for a naked beat then Nick is the one to look away, his face suffused with that same guilt-ridden verboten rush of desire for Rosie that we saw that first night, passing each other on the stairs.

Calvin moves Nick along to the house, Rosie walking behind, her face clouded as she nurses her own tormented, mule-kicked heart.

NICK
(stopping the procession,
turning)
Rosie ... you go in first.

68 ESTABLISHING SHOT
EXT: L&M AUTOMOTIVE - SAME TIME - DAY

in the shadow of Shea Stadium.

69 INT: L&M AUTOMOTIVE - DAY

Ronnie, J.J. and all the remaining crew (Bobby B. and Johnny A. were busted on the Astro job) are in the process of chopping a Rolls Royce.

The Rolls is suspended five feet in the air by a heavy chain run through the rear windows and hung from a hook.

In a rapid ballet of disembowelment, the men work with torches at the six key body points -- the nose (the hood and bumper area), the four doors, and the rear end.

When all six parts have been removed, the chassis, engine, car interior drop intact with a crash to the ground, bouncing from the impact on the four tires.

The men then immediately get to work removing the transmission, the carburetor, etc.

In the midst of this, Little Junior saunters in, with two of his crew (Pluto and Neptune) and the muscular black man (Omar) that we saw at the club talking to Big Junior.

Little Junior and his two pals carry raincoats under their arms. He's also carrying a boom box.

He makes eye contact with Ronnie and enters Ronnie's office with his two buddies.

Ronnie starts to move to join them but Little Junior gestures for him to continue chopping the Rolls.

69 CONTD

LITTLE JUNIOR

(to Omar)

You ever see a Rolls get chopped? Why
don't you watch ...

Little Junior closes the office door leaving Omar outside.

CLOSE ON RONNIE

giving his office door a wary look before returning to the
work at hand.

70 EXT: MOTHER-IN-LAW'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

The yard is small and trim, fenced in by wire mesh. The
mother-in-law sits on a metal lawn chair, arms crossed
defensively, her face set.

Corinna, Nick's daughter, plays in the sandy grass.

Nick, the cops and Rosie standing at the entrance to the
yard. Nick sees his daughter but she hasn't seen him yet.
The mother-in-law is staring daggers at Nick.

Finally Corinna looks up, sees her father and smiles. She
runs to him and her instinctual response melts all anxiety
and fear in him as this reunion, imagined and reimagined by
Nick every day since the funeral, finally comes to pass.

Nick is on his knees, crying, hugging her.

The cops look uncomfortable and unconsciously back away
towards the rear porch of the pale green clapboard house.

Rosie looks away, trying to hold in her emotions.

CLOSE ON NICK

on his knees, embracing Corinna, his chin over her shoulder,
looking at Bev's mother across the yard.

NICK

Please don't take her away from me.

CLOSE ON THE MOTHER-IN-LAW

still defensively wrapped up in herself, her face starting to
buckle; relenting from her rage.

NICK

(hoarse)

Don't you think I loved Bev?

71 INT: L&M AUTOMOTIVE - DAY

CLOSE ON THE ROLLS

-- or what's left of it -- a skeleton on wheels -- the seats are being lifted out, the hubcaps are being pried off, the body frame is being torched into sections.

The office door opens and Pluto sticks his head out.

PLUTO

Ronnie ...

He head-motions for Ronnie to come into the office.

72 INT: L&M AUTOMOTIVE OFFICE - DAY

Ronnie walks in. His desk is covered with a heavy-gauge plastic drop-cloth.

Little Junior's at the far end of the desk sporting his yellow rain slicker. The other two are also wearing slickers.

RONNIE

(doing a double-take,
nervous)

Junior, who the fuck are you, the
Gorton Fisherman?

Little Junior grins like it's a good joke then produces a CD which he pops into the boom box that he brought.

LITTLE JUNIOR

Ronnie, I want you to listen to this
... an oldie but goodie ... concentrate
on the words.

Then we hear the opening of House of Pain's "Salutations."

HOUSE OF PAIN

The time has come, for everyone to
clean up their own back yard, before
they go knockin' on their neighbors'
door ...

LITTLE JUNIOR

(stops the CD)
You hear that?

RONNIE

(nervous)
The bass was too heavy.

72 CONTD

LITTLE JUNIOR
 (patiently, putting on
 finger-
 less weightlifter's
 gloves)

The time has come for everyone to clean
 up their own back yard.

(beat)

Clean up their own back yard. Did you
 hear that?

The two others grab Ronnie's arms as Junior takes a hit of
 asthma spray.

RONNIE
 (panicking)
 What ... what I do, Junior?

Little Junior turns the music back on then wades in and
 smashes Ronnie in the face.

RONNIE (contd)
 (moaning)
 Oh ma ...

It's the last words we hear from Ronnie.

CLOSE ON LITTLE JUNIOR

Big-eyed, livid. Delivering blow after blow (although we
 don't see them land on Ronnie).

LITTLE JUNIOR
 You like to talk?

73 INT: L&M AUTOMOTIVE - ANGLE - DAY

All of Ronnie's crew working away, oblivious yet intuitively
 nervous.

All we hear from the office is the boom box, House of Pain's
 "Jump Around" like a hip hop anvil chorus to accompany the
 off-stage beating.

74 INT: L&M AUTOMOTIVE OFFICE - DAY

ANGLE - CLOSE ON THE SOFT-CORE CALENDAR GIRLS AND VACATION
 PHOTOS

on Ronnie's office wall.

74 CONTD

LITTLE JUNIOR (OS)
 (yelling over the music)
 You got something to say? Huh?

Suddenly the photos and pinups are spritzed with blood.

CLOSE ON PLUTO

PLUTO
 (face shriveled in
 disgust)
 Shit ...

CLOSE ON THE BOOM BOX

spattered with blood. WE SEE Junior's hand stop the music, withdraw, then come back INTO THE CLOSEUP with a handkerchief draped on a finger as he tries to wipe off some of the blood.

LITTLE JUNIOR (OS)
 Aw man, look at this ... I just bought
 this thing ...

CLOSE ON NEPTUNE

having a brief bout of retching.

NEPTUNE
 Sorry ...

ANGLE

The killers quietly, swiftly laying the body in the plastic drop cloth, followed by the three bloody slickers; the entire mess then rolled into a plastic cocoon secured by gaffers tape and carried out by a rear door so that the chopping crew wouldn't see them leave.

75 INT: L&M AUTOMOTIVE - 1 MINUTE LATER - DAY

Little Junior, spotless save for one small dab of Ronnie's blood under his left eye, saunters out carrying his boom box, to join Omar in watching the remains of the Rolls being dismantled to nothing.

At this point, there's only the frame of the undercarriage and the tires.

OMAR
 How much a Rolls go for?

75 CONTD

LITTLE JUNIOR

To drive? ... One fifty? One seventy-five?

OMAR

What's it worth chopped?

LITTLE JUNIOR

Triple. Chopped anything is worth triple. The parts are always greater than the whole.

OMAR

Dag ... See, we ain't got but one chop connection down in Philly. The white boys got all that action.

LITTLE JUNIOR

You got stuff you want chopped? Drive it up here. We'll do it for you ...

OMAR

Can you get any more Rolls? I got some boys down there love to have them a Rolls ...

LITTLE JUNIOR

I told you, I can get you anything you want ...

J.J.

(to Little Junior)

Where's Ronnie?

LITTLE JUNIOR

(taking a hit of his spray)

Ronnie? Ronnie went out.

OMIT SCENE 76

77 INT: RIKERS PRISON - NICK'S CELL

TWO CONS are noisily playing cards on the bottom bunk.

CLOSE ON NICK

on upper bunk, hands behind head, laying there, lost from all the shit around him.

There's an alarm clock propped on his stomach and he absently stares at it as if contemplating the nature of time.

* * *

78 ESTABLISHING SHOT
EXT: ELMIRA PENITENTIARY - ELMIRA, N.Y. - 1 YEAR LATER - DAY

79 INT: ELMIRA VISITATION

A sea of small tables, like a cafeteria.

Nick sits with Corinna on his lap. She's now beyond the toddler stage. Rosie faces them both. Rosie seems older now; she's in her last year of college.

CORINNA

Daddy ... it stinks in here ... it smells like soup ...

NICK

Three more weeks ...

ROSIE

Hang in there, kiddo ...

NICK

And what am I coming out with.
Nothin'. No money, no job, no ...
(to Corinna)
Well, at least I got you, Juicy ...

CLOSE ON ROSIE

Big-eyed, pounding heart, as we hear Nick OS.

NICK (OS)

Listen, I want to get your mother something for keeping the apartment ...

ROSIE

(big plunge, cutting him off)

And you got me ...

NICK

I mean I owe her how much rent?
What ...

Rosie's last words abruptly sink in, and Nick responds with a hungry tremulous focus.

NICK (contd)

What do you mean I got you ...

Rosie can't speak. They stare at each other.

NICK (contd)

(hoarse with hope)
What do you mean I got you ...

79 CONTD

They continue to stare, silently confessing their suppressed desire for each other.

80 EXT: RECREATION YARD - ELMIRA PENITENTIARY - 10 DAYS LATER - DAY

A basketball game -- Nick playing, trying a jump shot, getting knocked on his ass.

GUARD (OS)

Bianco.

Nick looks up from the asphalt, the guard beckoning.

81 INT: ELMIRA PRISON - CORRIDOR - 10 MINUTES LATER - DAY

The guard leading Nick.

WE FOLLOW them to a door, "Chaplain's Office" on the plaque.

Nick freezes, remembering the last time he walked through a door like this.

82 INT: ELMIRA PENITENTIARY - CHAPLAIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Nick entering. There's no chaplain. Instead, there's Frank Zioli, the D.A., Cleary, and Calvin Hart.

NICK

(tense)

What ...

ZIOLI

Nothin' ... I hear you're coming up for parole review next week. I also hear you've been a good guy in here, and I think that's great.

Nick doesn't even smile.

ZIOLI (contd)

Let me ask you, what, what do you see yourself doing when you get out?

NICK

(wary)

Getting back with my daughter ...

ZIOLI

Good man ... How about work?

82 CONTD

NICK

(cautious)

Well ... I can do anything with cars
and ah ... I know a guy, I met him the
first time I was in? He's got a body
shop up near Albany? And, I'd really
like to make a clean break from the
city, you know? I'd really ...

(Nick slows down, knowing
that shit's about to
happen again)

really ...

(to Zioli -- direct)

What ...

ZIOLI

(flipping a mugshot
to Nick)

You ever hear of an asshole named
Little Junior Brown?

Nick just stares at Zioli. Won't even look down at the
photo.

ZIOLI (contd)

Think ...

NICK

Yeah ... he's a fuckin' A-1 nutboy ...
What about him?

ZIOLI

It's a small world, you know? Little
Junior controls your late cousin
Ronnie's crew out in Queens for his
father. In fact, his old man was the
guy behind those hot cars out of Port
Newark back then.

(beat)

So, if you think about it, he's the guy
that got you in here to begin with.

(beat)

Don't that make your blood boil?

Nick says nothing.

ZIOLI (contd)

Anyways, the father? Big Junior? He's
in the hospital and he ain't comin'
out, so it looks like Little Junior
here's gonna move up in the world.

(MORE)

82 CONTD

ZIOLI (contd)

(beat)

Big Junior ... that's one of those expressions like, "jumbo shrimp," huh?

NICK

No way. I'm not going back to that. And I'm not ratting anybody out anymore. What's done is done, and you can't make me do shit.

Zioli just shrugs unperturbed by the outburst.

NICK (contd)

(after a cold beat of realization)

What ... you're gonna get my parole denied, huh? Well, fuck you. I'll do the full five years, I'm not ...

ZIOLI

Oh, it's worse than that, my man ... We never swung the hammer on you for the Astro job ...

CLOSE ON CALVIN HART

behind his shades, unreadable.

NICK

(red-faced)

Hey! ... I did the line-up on that. The guy couldn't identify me.

ZIOLI

We know ... you were just the driver ... you told us ...

NICK

Oh yeah? You just try to indict me on that ... All's I got to say ...

ZIOLI

... is how you already cooperated with us ratting out the others, and here we are dropping it on you anyhow because you won't do any more ratting. You know something? You're right. We probably won't get the indictment.

(sinister)

And you'll be a free man ...

82 - CONTD

CLOSE ON NICK

He's fucked.

ZIOLI

You know what my grandma used to say?
"If you want to make God laugh, tell
him your plans."

All three stare at Nick, waiting ...

NICK

Are you a man of honor?

ZIOLI

(amused by Nick's probing
tone)

Sure ...

NICK

See, I know guys, heard of guys, get
in a jam like this, and I know what you
do to them ... they're like chew-toys
to you ... you just work 'em to death
and spit 'em out ... and you're not
gonna do that to me ... but all I got
on you is your word ... So I'm asking
you ... if I deliver this Little Junior
guy, serve him up, will you say to me
now, as a man of honor, that you're
gonna cut me loose, once and for all
time ...

ZIOLI

Absolutely ... you want my hand on it
or something?

83 EXT: ELMIRA PENITENTIARY - A FEW WEEKS LATER - DAY

A beat-up car service sedan parked in front of the prison's
main entrance, waiting for Nick, who's coming out of the
prison gate carrying a gym bag.

OMIT SCENE 84

85 INT: LENOX HILL HOSPITAL - SAME TIME - DAY

CLOSE ON BIG JUNIOR

A HEAD SHOT: gaping mouth and unseeing eyes framed by a damp
pillow.

85 CONTD

LITTLE JUNIOR (OS)

Pop ... Pop ...

WE SEE Little Junior hovering over his dead father's bed, his eyes shiny with unspilled tears.

LITTLE JUNIOR (contd)

(clenching his teeth)

Pop ...

(then to nurse)

He's out of the picture, right? He's out of the picture?

NURSE

I'm sorry.

Little Junior walks to the foot of the bed, his back to his father. He talks to himself for a beat, arms akimbo, then suddenly wheels around, grabs the footboard and violently lifts the heavy bed off the floor and bangs it down, lifts and bangs, lifts and bangs, as if trying to wake up his dead father. He looks and acts like a deranged ape.

The nurse runs out of the room, as Little Junior howls out his despair.

86 EXT: OUR LADY OF SORROWS CEMETERY - DUSK

Nick squats on his haunches in front of Bev's grave. He rises, takes two steps and kisses the headstone.

87 EXT: NICK'S HOUSE - 2 HOURS LATER - NIGHT

Nick stands on the sidewalk staring at Rosie who sits waiting halfway up the steps between her mother's apartment and Nick's.

Nick drops his gym bag on the sidewalk, slowly moves to the foot of the steps, and almost crawls up to her on all fours.

She reaches out to put her fingers through his hair and he lowers his face into her lap.

ROSIE

(ardent, husky)

You don't know how much I always wanted to be with you ...

88 INT: NICK'S HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

The door blows in and they stumble inside, entangled in each other's arms. Kissing, fumbling, moving with all their long-suppressed passion.

89 INT: NICK'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

They come to the threshold, move to the bed, then hesitate, each seized by a memory of Bev. This is Nick and Bev's bed.

NICK
(after a beat, not too
convincing)
It's OK.

ANGLE

Both of them descending, embracing.

NICK
(in her ear)
It's OK.

CLOSE ON ROSIE

under him; it's not OK ... not yet.

90 INT: BABYCAKES LOUNGE - SAME TIME - NIGHT

Full tilt action. Crowded dance floor in the middle of which dances Junior filled with the craziness of grief, bouncing like a madman to some hard charging hip hop war chant. Junior is oblivious to his dance partner, just jerking and twisting blank eyed. Someone bumps him and in an instant Junior is on the guy like some skin-head romper-stomper.

91 INT: NICK'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rosie and Nick, post-coital seventh inning stretch.

NICK
My old man, my teachers, nobody had what you could call high hopes for me, you know? But this one teacher, Mister Garafolo, he was the worst. He used to say to the class that I was destined for a career in show business. I was gonna be the guy who followed the elephants around the circus with a shovel and a dust pan. Big laugh ... So ... and when I left school, I got a hack license, drove a cab. Everybody's jerking my chain about that ... I'm driving like six months who do I pick up one day? Mister Garafolo. And I see him in the rear view, he's looking back at me with this smirk, like, Bianco's driving a cab, that figures,
(MORE)

91

CONTD

NICK (contd)

but he won't say nothing. He's acting like he don't know who I am except every time I look in the rear view, there's that smirk ... well, it took the heart out of me and I quit. And I started running with Ronnie and them. It's like, I surrendered ... But the funny thing was, I liked boosting cars. There wasn't a make or model out there I couldn't pop the lock, kill the alarm and have on the road in more than ninety seconds. And at first, it felt good to be good at something. It felt good to have nice clothes, a flash ride, take Bev to anywhere she wanted, buy her things.

(beat)

But ... the whole thing was bullshit. I knew it all along ... and when I finally got caught? Going to jail It was like an excuse to start over again. And .. so ... here I am.

ROSIE

Mister Garafolo? What did he teach?

NICK

Wood shop ...

They stare at each other for a beat, then simultaneously break into choked laughter.

92

INT: MUNICIPAL BUILDING - LOWER MANHATTAN - 2 DAYS LATER - DAY

The waiting room of the marriage bureau.

SLOW PAN of all the dolled-up multi-ethnic COUPLES waiting to be married by civil authority.

CLOSE ON NICK AND ROSIE

holding hands, silent in their anxiousness.

ANGLE - NICK'S DAUGHTER CORINNA

Four years old now, wearing a party dress.

WE WATCH her run around the room joining at least a dozen other CHILDREN. There's an amazing number of children present for a roomful of unmarried people.

92 CONTD

A door opens and a CLERK pops his head in.

CLERK
(reading out loud)
Nicolas Bianco ... Rose D'Amico ...

93 INT: HALLWAY OUTSIDE THE BUREAU - 20 MINUTES LATER - DAY

Nick (holding Corinna) and Rosie exit the office and walk into a blinding flash that makes them jerk back.

Another COUPLE, Latino, have just had their picture taken in the hallway.

In fact, a half-dozen just-married COUPLES are having their pictures taken, littering the hallway with flashes.

OMIT SCENES 94 & 95

95A EXT: STREET IN FRONT OF MUNICIPAL BUILDING - 1 HOUR LATER

The three of them exit the building. Corinna, excited, begins to run into the street. A car is coming; a nightmare is coming. Nick grabs her as the car slams on its brakes.

NICK
(shaken; to the driver)
The fuck is wrong with you!

NICK'S POV

Behind the speedy driver, he spots Calvin, in a parked car, waiting ...

OMIT SCENES 96, 97, 98, 99

99A INT: LUNCHEONETTE - NEXT DAY - 3:00 P.M.

It's a place near Rosie's school, most of the patrons obviously college kids. Rosie, Nick and Corinna share a big table with four of Rosie's friends/classmates.

KID (20)
Explain this to me. I write a 54 page term paper for child development, twenty pages of which would make a perfect paper for psych 203. I wind up getting an A minus in child, a D in psych.

ROSIE
Why?

99A CONTD

WE SEE Nick during this conversation -- he looks awkward, out of place, fussing over Corinna to hide it.

KID (20)

Psych found out about the double submission. He said that's plagiarism.

KID #2

Bullshit. How can you plagiarize yourself?

Nick rises, taking Corinna. Rosie follows. They talk a little ways off from the table.

ROSIE

I'll be home by six. Ethan's got some passes tonight for Buster Poindexter at the Bottom Line, you want to go?

NICK

Ah ... I don't think so. You should ... I don't, you know ... I don't feel ...

ROSIE

Everybody likes you, you know.

NICK

(doing two voices)
Hey, I heard you went to Penn State. No, it was State Pen.

ROSIE

(gently)
Cut the shit. Nobody cares.

NICK

I can't go anyhow ... I got to see about a job.

ROSIE

At night? What kind of job?

NICK

(not looking at her)
Cars, you know ... body work.

ROSIE

Night-time body work?

99A CONTD

NICK
 (stressed)
 Look, Bev ...
 (Nick freezes, he
 called her Bev)
 I'm sorry. Rosie ... Rosie ... why did
 I ...

ROSIE
 (freaked)
 I'm not Bev.

NICK
 (freaked)
 I'm sorry.

ROSIE
 (walking backwards,
 to the table)
 I'm not Bev ...

100 EXT: QUEENS DINER - 8:00 P.M.

101 INT: QUEENS DINER - JEWISH RENAISSANCE/LIBERACE DECOR -
 NIGHT

Nick enters, heads to carpeted stairs, steps over a "Closed" sign on a low-slung chain and trots up to the mezzanine level.

102 INT: QUEENS DINER MEZZANINE - NIGHT

Empty dining area with chairs upturned on the tables except for those upon which sit Calvin and Cleary.

ANGLE

Nick shirtless on a third chair as Cleary tapes a microphone to his chest, the recorder to the small of his back.

CALVIN
 (showing Nick a surveillance
 photo of Omar with Little Junior)
 See the brother here with Junior? His
 name is Omar. He's down with some
 posse in Philadelphia must got cash
 longer than train smoke, becfause he's
 Junior's biggest customer -- cars,
 drugs, guns, he's buying everything he
 can get his hands on. So when you hook
 up with your scumbag pals? I want you
 to try to get them talking about Omar.

(MORE)

102 CONTD

CALVIN (contd)

He must be kind of new in the game becuse the Philadelphia P.D. don't have a jacket on him yet, but ...

NICK

I can't do this.

CALVIN

(wearing shades, even
in the gloom)

Can't do what ... This ain't nothin' ... just, like, if you get in some conversations? Relax. Don't push for nothing, awright? A guy starts talking, ask for more details but nice and natural, two assholes talking shop. But don't push, awright? Don't initiate nothing, awright?

CLOSE ON NICK'S TAUT FACE

CALVIN (VO)

You're gonna be fine, awright? Just fine ...

103 INT/EXT: QUEENS STREETS - 10:30 P.M.

Nick, J.J. and two Hispanic TEENAGERS are trolling attractive middle-class streets in Bobby B.'s Pathfinder.

CLOSE ON THE SHOPPING LIST OF CARS:

license plate numbers and home addresses of the owners.

NICK

(holding this list)

Slow down, slow down.

(pointing)

There, the Lexus ...

They roll to a stop a quarter block past the car and J.J. rifles through a sheaf of titles and registrations picking out the appropriate papers and handing them to one of the Hispanic kids who pops out of the car and saunters back to the Lexus.

Through J.J.'s rearview mirror WE WATCH as the kid trigger-guns the car door lock, plunges in to cut the briefly squawking alarm and in a matter of seconds has the Lexus purring.

The Lexus pulls out and passes the Pathfinder.

104 EXT: QUEENS RESIDENTIAL STREET #2 - NIGHT

ANGLE

Another quiet street.

CLOSE ON THE OTHER HISPANIC KID

slim jimming the door on a BMW. There's no alarm.

WE SEE the Pathfinder double-parked down-aways.

The kid waves them on.

105 EXT: QUEENS RESIDENTIAL STREET #3 - NIGHT

Another quiet street.

ANGLE

Nick approaches a Jeep Cherokee with a trigger gun. He eases the head of the gun in the door lock and suddenly a rabid Rotweiler leaps at him from inside the car, flinging its body against the glass.

Nick yelps, levitating in fear as the animal repeatedly tries to get at him through the driver side window, juicing up the glass with his saliva.

ANGLE - THE PATHFINDER

Nick running back in a sweat, jumping in.

NICK

I hate fuckin' dogs! Big dogs! Little dogs! Hate 'em!

106 EXT: TERMINATOR BODY PARTS - 45 MINUTES LATER

A riot-gated shut down auto shop, its name spray painted graffiti-style, on a desolate street. Outside are parked all the cars we have seen stolen. The thieves sit on a car hood waiting for ...

Nick, who drives up in a Range Rover which he parks in the row, then exits.

J.J.

Leave the visor on the driver side down.

106 CONTD

Nick stops in mid-stride.

J.J. (contd)
... so the guy knows which cars to
retag tomorrow.

WE CAN SEE all the stolen cars bear this sign.

106A EXT/INT:

J.J. driving all the thieves in his Pathfinder.

J.J.
Nick, a little R n' R?

NICK
Nah, I gotta get home. I'm on thin ice
tonight.

J.J.
C'mon, man. A quick toast, one toast.

NICK
To what?

J.J.
To your marriage, stupid.

NICK
I don't think so, J.J.

J.J.
(to the Hispanics
in the rear)
First he don't even invite me to his
wedding, now he refuses my toast? ...

107 EXT: BABYCAKES LOUNGE (BIG JUNIOR'S [NOW LITTLE JUNIOR'S]
TOPLESS BAR - 20 MINUTES LATER - NIGHT

The parking lot is full. As they exit the car, Nick is the
last one out.

CLOSE ON NICK

pocketing the shopping list of stolen cars.

108 INT: BABYCAKES LOUNGE - NIGHT

The place is rockin' -- the runways have DANCERS, the bar and
banquettes full, music blasting.

108 CONTD

ANGLE

A red banquette, the car thieves around the table.

J.J.
 (leaning across
 to Nick)
 See that guy in the turtleneck?

NICK
 Where?

WE SEE a middle-aged MAN wearing glasses and sporting a goatee. He's sitting at one of the topless bars. He looks like a pipe and chessboard type.

J.J.
 You know all the paper we had tonight?
 He's our connect inside the M.V.B.
 All's we got to do is throw him a
 license number, he throws us back
 duplicates of anything we need. I
 swear, man, sometimes we got more
 shit than the real owners. It's
 beautiful.

NICK
 (alert)
 No kiddin'.

J.J.
 No kiddin' ... Now, you see her? The
 Indian?

REVERSE ANGLE

One of the dancing strippers, a blonde in a feather war
 bonnet and very little else.

NICK (VO)
 What's she do?

J.J.
 Nothin'. I just love her.

NICK
 She's nice.

J.J.
 No ... I love her ... we're engaged.

108 CONTD

NICK
 (amused but benign)
 Oh yeah?

J.J.
 What the fuck is that supposed to mean?

NICK
 What the fuck is what supposed to mean?

Suddenly a shadow is cast across the table. Nick looks up. Little Junior, dressed completely in white (T-shirt, painters pants) towers over them. He gestures for J.J. and the Hispanic kids to get up so he can slide in around the table. They hop to it.

ANGLE

Junior, sitting with Nick. He stares at his own hands.

JUNIOR
 You know who I am?

NICK
 (swallowing his fear of
 the wire)
 Shit, yeah ...

JUNIOR
 I heard you lost your wife.

Nick doesn't answer.

JUNIOR (contd)
 (pained)
 I lost my father last week.
 (beat)
 Let me ask you ... what do you think is
 worse, losing a father or losing a
 wife?

NICK
 (strained)
 I guess it depends on the individual,
 the relationship and whatnot ...

Junior regards that for a beat, absently wipes some moisture from under his eye.

JUNIOR
 Do you know what an asthma attack feels
 like? It feels like you're trying to
 (MORE)

108 CONTD

JUNIOR (contd)
breathe air through a flattened straw.
But if I take a hit of this?
 (holding up his asthma spray)
Most times I'm OK like that.
 (snaps fingers; beat)
But my old man? At the end? He had
less than five percent of his lung
capacity ... he went out hard ...

NICK
I'm sorry to hear it.

JUNIOR
That starts happening to me? With
genetics and shit? It's silver bullet
time. I'll do it myself.
 (Junior holds a finger to
 his own temple)
At least your wife, she went out fast,
right?

Nick says nothing.

JUNIOR (contd)
I'm telling you, be grateful for
that ...

Nick looks away swallowing his anger.

Junior reaches into his front pants pocket, comes out with a
thick roll of hundred dollar bills. He peels off a thousand
dollars and slides it in front of Nick.

JUNIOR (contd)
I hear you never got the rest of the
fifteen hundred that night from your
scumbag cousin.

NICK
 (taking the money, cold)
No, I didn't ...

JUNIOR
So Elmira, you got through that?

NICK
 (using Bev's motto)
Hey, whatever don't kill you just makes
you stronger.

108 CONTD

JUNIOR

Whatever don't ... I like that ...
 whatever don't kill you ...
 (smiling)
 You're OK ... you're OK ...

Suddenly, there's a flurry of violence by one of the runways.

WE SEE a FAT GUY struggling with TWO BOUNCERS, the almost nude DANCER, from her elevated stage, trying to kick him in the face, cursing him out.

The bouncers bum-rush this guy towards the door but as they go past Nick's table Junior signals them to bring the guy to him. Facing the seated Junior, the fat guy instantly sobers up.

BOUNCER

He tried to grab her snatch.

FAT GUY

Junior, I'm drunk ... I was drunk.
 I'm sorry.

JUNIOR

(mildly)
 Which hand did you grab her with?

FAT GUY

Junior ...

JUNIOR

Put it on the table and I'm only gonna say that once.

The guy splays his trembling hand. Junior lights up one of J.J.'s Marlboros, and lets it rest between his fingers.

FAT GUY

(staring at the glowing
 Marlboro)

Junior ...

JUNIOR

Ssh ... you think that's an easy job dancing up there?

FAT GUY

No ... I ... no ...

108 CONTD

JUNIOR

That's hard what they do. Are you kidding me? Taking off your clothes in front of a bunch of drunk animals? Like yourself?

(Junior draws fiercely on the Marlboro, the glowing tip growing larger)

Don't you think that's hard work?

FAT GUY

Junior, I ... yes, yes, I do ...

JUNIOR

And when someone steps over the line ...

(suddenly sharp)

Don't move that fuckin' hand ...

(then calm again)

When someone steps over the line, trips the wire of decorum, the difficult becomes the repulsively impossible.

(taking another fierce drag)

I think you should have more respect for them ... for what they put up with ...

FAT GUY

I do.

JUNIOR

(contemplating the cigarette)

No you don't ... So what can I do to make you remember and appreciate what's that like, being up there. What kind of memento can I give you?

FAT GUY

(weeping)

Please

109 INT: BABYCAKES - NIGHT

The runway -- no dancer.

Then emerging from behind a curtain is the fat guy, freaked, awkwardly moving to the beat as the drinkers cheer his entrance.

He starts to strip to the music.

109 CONTD

CLOSE ON THE MOLESTED DANCER

watching from the sidelines, smirking with satisfaction.
She turns and throws a curt nod to ...

Junior (unsmiling), at the banquette watching the fat man
strip. J.J. is laughing as are the Hispanic kids.

CLOSE ON NICK

NICK

(working for his recorder)
Tonight? I tell you, you got this
thing down to a science ...

JUNIOR

(staring at the fat guy)
Yeah? What thing?

NICK

The thing ... you know.
(nodding to the bookish
MVB guy at the bar)
Look at him ... who would know, right?

JUNIOR

(turning to Nick,
instantly suspicious)
Who would know what?

NICK

(knowing he just
overplayed his hand)
Whatever ... I'm just saying ... like,
admiring.

JUNIOR

Admiring?

Both Nick and Junior fall into a tense silence, Junior
frowning at his nails.

ANGLE

The fat guy dancing.

He's into it now, down to his jockey shorts bumping and
grinding; there's dollar bills sprouting out of the tight
elastic girdling his gut.

109 CONTD

ANGLE

Junior at the banquette, scowling, his mood dark after Nick's awkward probe, gesturing to one of his bouncers.

JUNIOR

(re: the fat guy)

Get him the fuck off there.

Nick abruptly stands, slides around the table, making his way across the club.

110 INT: BABYCAKES BATHROOM - NIGHT

Nick shirtless, in a panic, ripping off the microphone and the tape recorder, looking around his tight surroundings for a place to ditch the equipment.

111 EXT: BABYCAKES - GARBAGE AREA - NIGHT

WE SEE the window opening, the recorder being flipped blindly into the trash, the window closing.

112 INT: BABYCAKES BATHROOM - NIGHT

Nick buttoning his shirt, muttering to himself. As he tucks in the tails, the stall door flies open knocking him back against the toilet and Junior, backed up by Pluto and Neptune, is all over him.

NICK

(startled, scared)

What you doing!

JUNIOR

(cold)

What you want to know about the guy for, huh?

Junior rips open Nick's shirt, buttons go flying.

NICK

What guy!

JUNIOR

(searching the toilet, the toilet tank, up-ending a small waste basket)

Huh? What you wanna know for?

NICK

The guy?

112 CONTD

Junior pats Nick down, feels around his crotch.

NICK (contd)

Hey!

Nick abruptly steps back, drops his pants.

NICK (contd)

(mustering outrage)

I just did three years for you, you paranoid motherfucker! Full time, not a day less.

JUNIOR

What do you want to know about the guy for ...

NICK

(getting into it)

J.J. just pointed him out to me like two minutes before you sat down. If J.J.'s a fuckin' bigmouth take it up with him. I'm just making conversation, awright? Can I pull up my pants now, or you want me to turn my head and cough first ... three years, OK?

Junior stares at him for a beat then draws him close for a hug and a back slap.

JUNIOR

(in his ear)

It's been a hard week ...

NICK

(in Junior's bear hug, walleied with relief and residual fear)

No problem.

113 INT/EXT: JUNIOR'S CAR - TERMINATOR BODY PARTS - NIGHT

A candy-apple orange late 1960s GTO Judge, the prototypical muscle car, in mint condition.

Junior driving, Nick in the passenger seat.

JUNIOR

You know what an acronym is? It's like letters that stand for things, like F.B.I., or T.G.I.F., you understand?

113 CONTD

NICK

Yeah ...

JUNIOR

I have an acronym for myself. You know what it is? B.A.D.

114 EXT: TERMINATOR BODY PARTS - NIGHT

NICK'S POV

The stolen cars in front of Terminator Body Parts.

JUNIOR (contd)

B.A.D. Balls, Attitude, Direction.
You should give yourself an acronym.
It helps you visualize your goals.

NICK

How bout ... F.A.B. ... Fucked At Birth ...

JUNIOR

(no sense of irony)
No good ... too negative.

ANGLE

Nick and Junior getting out of the car. The street is dark.

Suddenly out of the shadows Omar materializes, thrusting a .357 stiffarmed into Nick's face. There's two other men behind Omar, one black, one light-skinned Hispanic; FRIC and FRAC, wiry, short, athletic and armed. They look like twins save for their skin color.

JUNIOR

(mildly)

Whoa, Omar ...

OMAR

(tense)

Don't you be fuckin' sneakin' up on me, like that.

JUNIOR

(laughing)

Sneakin' up?

(tapping his own nose)

Maybe you should lighten up on the yey-yo some ...

(MORE)

114 CONTD

JUNIOR (contd)
 (to Nick)
 And you think I'm paranoid?

OMAR
 (re: Nick)
 And who the fuck is this?

JUNIOR
 He's my people.

OMAR
 (roughly flipping Nick
 around for yet another
 pat down)
 Your people, huh?

Nick has had it with this shit and shoves Omar off. Both Eric and Frac, and Junior step in between them to stop a fight.

JUNIOR
 Omar ... Omar ... the cars ...

OMAR
 (glaring at Nick)
 You got the titles and shit?

JUNIOR
 Always do ...

OMAR
 I'll take 'em all 'cept the Range
 Rover.

JUNIOR
 What's wrong with the Range Rover?

OMAR
 It's red.

JUNIOR
 So I'll have 'em paint it.

OMAR
 Naw, it'll still be red under the
 paint. Red's my bad luck color. I got
 nothing to do with nothin' red.

JUNIOR
 (laughing)
 You're some funny people, my man ...

114 CONTD

OMAR

You got them nines for me?

JUNIOR

Not yet ... I fell into some Glocks though ... you want Glocks? I can get you a dozen by the weekend.

OMAR

Yeah, OK. But I want them nines, still.

JUNIOR

No problem.

OMAR

(re: Nick)

And Junior, man, this motherfucker smells scared.

NICK

(scared, but stepping up)

Yeah? You wanna fuckin' dance with me?

OMAR

(ignoring the challenge)

I don't like that, you hear what I'm sayin'? No more new faces, awright?

NICK

'Cause I love to dance, Yo ...

JUNIOR

(taking a hit of
asthma spray)

Whatever ...

Omar and the two others fade into the shadows, Nick and Junior staring after them.

JUNIOR (contd)

How 'bout you? You afraid of red?

NICK

Me?

JUNIOR

(casually, kicks the tires
of the Range Rover)

It's yours.

OMIT SCENE 115

116 INT: CALVIN'S CAR - NIGHT

Nick in the shotgun seat.

NICK
(handing over the shopping
list)
... these are the cars we took.

CALVIN
Where'd they go? Terminator Body
Parts? What else ...

NICK
There's this guy at the MVB I couldn't
get his name but ...

CALVIN
(not interested in that)
Yeah, we're on to him. You hook up
with Junior?

NICK
Oh yeah.

CALVIN
How 'bout Omar, you see Omar?

NICK
Him too.

Calvin waits.

NICK (contd)
He bought all the cars on the sheet and
Junior's selling him some Glocks, I
think this weekend.

CALVIN
Good ... let me get the wire off you.

NICK
I threw it away.

CALVIN
You what?

NICK
I got patted down ... twice ...

CALVIN
Well, now you're OK with them. It'll
make it easier.

116 CONTD

NICK
Easier to what ...

CALVIN
To wear a fuckin' wire.

NICK
Why you ... What they do, put you on me
for revenge?

CALVIN
(lifting his sunglasses)
See this eye here?
(the eye above the scar)
It tears all the time. I can't make it
stop.

(beat)
I got a third of my hearing in this
ear. And sometimes, like on the beach?
Like when I want to take my kids to the
beach? Play with them and shit?
Strong direct sun gives me a migraine
so bad it makes me cry like a baby.
They don't know why, it just does.

(beat)
So ... I asked for you ... and if you
take off that wire one more time? I'm
personally gonna beat you to death.

NICK
Yeah, well, maybe next time you lay a
hand on me it's not gonna be such a
one-way beating.

Nick exits the car.

117 INT: NICK'S BEDROOM - 3:15 A.M. - NIGHT

Nick sliding into bed. Nick lays with his back to Rosie.

ROSIE
Did you get the job?

NICK
Yeah.

ROSIE
Cars?

NICK
Cars.

117 CONTD

ROSIE

Are you going to get locked up again?

NICK

No.

ROSIE

(sitting up)

You would never do that to me ...

NICK

No.

ROSIE

'Cause I'm not Bev. I can't live with that.

NICK

Bev couldn't live with that either.

Rosie notices a gummy rectangular patch on the small of Nick's back. The tape recorder adhesive. She touches it.

ROSIE

(scared)

You got something you need to tell me?

NICK

(desperate, opening up)

I'm under the rock ... they got me wearing a wire ...

Rosie lets loose with a breathy frightened laugh.

NICK

Look ... this is a one shot thing ...

ROSIE

(scared, angry)

Oh yeah? Is that what they told you?

NICK

I deliver my end, we're gone, upstate, out west, down south, out of here ...

ROSIE

(almost to herself)

I wasn't waiting two years for this ...

NICK

Rosie .. they didn't give me a choice.

118 INT: QUEENS DINER - 8:00 P.M. - NIGHT

Nick is getting wired up in the deserted second floor dining room.

119 EXT: L&M AUTOMOTIVE - 9:00 P.M. - NIGHT

Nick, J.J. and the others are retagging some stolen cars in the rear of the yard.

WE SEE Nick removing the vehicle identification number (the V.I.N.) embossed into a narrow trough on the top of the dashboard of a new BMW. He replaces it with the V.I.N. of another car, severing any possibility of the BMW being traced.

Taking the new BMW's original V.I.N. he sticks it in the V.I.N. slot of a beat up BMW, a salvage yard purchase.

The others are performing similar operations on other new cars and their junkyard equivalents.

120 EXT: DESOLATE STREETS - AN HOUR LATER

A caravan. J.J. driving his Pathfinder, followed by Nick driving the beat up BMW with the V.I.N. of the new BMW, and one of the silent kids driving a semi-totalled Benz.

121 EXT: LOT - NIGHT

Nick pulls the car into a vast junked up lot, a square block of desolation. The other cars wait for him.

ANGLE

Nick standing in the lot, lighting a Coke bottle Molotov.

ANGLE

WE SEE Nick running, the BMW burning behind him in the lot.

NICK
(jumping into the
Pathfinder)
Let's go.

J.J.
Wait ...

There's an explosion as the flames reach the gas tank.

J.J. (contd)
(finally driving off)
I always get a kick out of that ...
it's the kid in me ...

122 INT: BABYCAKES LOUNGE - 1 HOUR LATER - NIGHT

The thieves banquette; J.J., J.J.'s girl Tosha (the topless Indian), the Hispanic kids and Nick. Tosha wears a sweater and a G-string -- she's between sets.

TOSHA
(to Nick)
You smell like gasoline.

J.J.
He's a working man, give him a break.

NICK
(rising)
I got to go.

Nick backs into Junior who claps a hand on his shoulder. Junior looks black with anger.

123 EXT: BABYCAKES - REAR - NIGHT

Junior and Nick exit, Junior's hand still on Nick's shoulder.

NICK
(scared)
What's up?

JUNIOR
You don't know who to fuckin' trust these days, you know what I mean?

124 EXT: DESERTED STREET CORNER - 15 MINUTES LATER - NIGHT

Nick pacing outside Junior's GTO, the engine humming. It looks like he's trying to decide to make a run for it or not. Trying to keep his composure. Junior is ten feet away on a pay phone.

JUNIOR
I got to see you right away ... like, right now.
(beat)
I'll tell you when I see you.
(beat)
I'll tell you when I see you.
(beat)
You know the Kansas Fried Chicken on Linden Boulevard? Fifteen minutes.
(beat)
Fifteen. Twenty, I'm gone ... and just you, awright?

125 EXT: PARKING LOT OF A CLOSED FAST FOOD JOINT -
15 MINUTES LATER

Junior rolls into the lot, deserted except for Omar's jeep.
Junior pulls up alongside the jeep.

OMAR
Man, you pulled me off some serious
pussy.

JUNIOR
Sorry ... you want to follow me?

OMAR
Follow you where ...

126 EXT: FLATLANDS AREA - A DESOLATE NEIGHBORHOOD -
20 MINUTES LATER

ANGLE

WE SEE both Omar's jeep and Junior's eyes in Junior's rear
view mirror as Junior pulls alongside a garbage dump.

Junior gestures for Omar to park behind him.

JUNIOR
Walk back there and ask him if he wants
a Rolls. Tell him I got a Rolls for
him but it's red.

NICK
If he gives me shit again I'll take his
fuckin' head off.

JUNIOR
And come up on the passenger side.

ANGLE

Nick approaches Omar's car. Nick looks sour and tense.

ANGLE

Omar rolling down the window of the passenger seat.

NICK
Yo, Super Fly ...

OMAR
What the fuck do you want ...

126 CONTD

Nick leans in the window, but before he can say anymore, Omar abruptly lurches towards him, his face spewing blood and his hair backlit by a flash of light.

QUICK REVERSE ANGLE

Nick paralyzed, still leaning into the window. Nick is spattered with Omar's blood.

NICK

Oh! Jesus! ... Jesus!

ANGLE

Junior standing outside Omar's driver side window. He's holding a .45. Nick is still hanging in the passenger window, frozen with shock. Junior tosses a vial of cocaine by Omar's feet, then calmly walks around the front of the car and hauls Nick out of the window by his shirt; marches him back to the GTO, the .45 still in his hand.

127 INT/EXT: JUNIOR'S GTO - EXPRESSWAY - NIGHT

Nick, blood-spattered, staring straight ahead.

JUNIOR

(hyper)

You come up with a more positive acronym for yourself yet?

NICK

(out of it)

A what?

JUNIOR

(adrenalized babble)

You know what I hate more than anything? The taste of metal in my mouth. Silverware makes me gag. I got to use plastic forks and spoons all the time. Pass me my spray thing? It's in the glove compartment.

128 EXT: STREET - 20 MINUTES LATER - NIGHT

Junior depositing Nick by his new red Range Rover.

JUNIOR

(through his window, to
Nick in the street)

I never told anybody about me and the metal-taste thing before.

128 CONTD

NICK

The what?

JUNIOR

Tomorrow? Fuck the cars. Just come by the bar. I want you ... we should have a conversation about life 'n shit ...

Junior drives off, Nick staring after him.

129 EXT: STREET - NIGHT

Nick in phone booth, dialing with trembling fingers.

NICK

Get Calvin Hart ...

Suddenly the door of the booth explodes inward. Someone throws an elbow that clips Nick on the chin. The phone is ripped out of his hand and he's dragged out of the booth by Fric and Frac, the gunmen from Omar's crew.

Before he can open his mouth Fric punches him in the gut doubling him over. Frac yanks up his shirt and tears off the hidden tape recorder. They're like twin terriers.

NICK

I dint do nothing!

FRIC

(gun in Nick's face)

I like to blow your fuckin' head off ...

A car rolls up screeching on the dime. Young black driver. The two men toss Nick in the back seat and pile in after him.

130 INT: CAR - NIGHT

ANGLE - REAR SEAT

Nick is on his knees, his face on the mat. Fric has his foot on Nick's neck.

Both thugs sit seething with rage, staring straight ahead.

NICK

(from the floor)

I didn't do it!

Frac responds to this by punching Nick in the kidneys.

131 EXT: SHUT DOWN STORAGE BUILDING - MIDNIGHT

Nick is hauled out of the car and dragged inside.

132 INT: STORAGE BUILDING - NIGHT

Grimy, ancient narrow space.

Nick is held by his tormentors. The ancient loft-style elevator is opened by Frac pulling back a rusted lever.

Nick takes a desperate swing at Fric and gets double the pain in return.

Nick is shoved inside.

REVERSE ANGLE

Just as the elevator door is being slid shut, a hand catches it from the vestibule -- a last rider who pulls the door open again -- it's Frank Zioli.

ZIOLI

(glaring at Nick and the others, to Nick)

Just keep your fuckin' mouth shut ...

Zioli enters the elevator, wheels and glares out at the lobby as the door slams shut.

133 INT: STORAGE BUILDING ROOM

There are a DOZEN MEN in the room, all shouting at each other, all armed with holstered guns. It looks like any second there's going to be a shootout.

Fric and Frac, holding up Nick between them, stand in the doorway.

Silence falls on the combatants. They seem to be mesmerized or shaken with the sight of Omar's blood stamped on Nick.

ZIOLI

(breaking the silence -- screaming)

I want to know why the fuck you didn't tell us Omar was a federal agent ...

NICK

He was what!

HANRATTY

(head Fed; officious)

We couldn't compromise our investigation.

133 CONTD

ZIOLI

Your investigation? ... It's called
common courtesy ... it's called
professionalism, you arrogant prick.

CLOSE ON NICK

Almost forgotten in the heat of the moment.

ZIOLI (contd)

What a fuckin' waste of time!

2ND FEDERAL AGENT

Hey fuck you! Our man was killed and
your CI [confidential informant] is a
witness.

CALVIN HART

Yeah well, maybe your man would still
be alive if you bothered to let us in
on it.

This is too much for everybody and the Prosecutor's
Investigators and the Feds start getting physical, shoving
each other, a punch thrown.

Nick gets knocked sideways into a wall.

The scuffling is quickly stopped by cooler heads.

HANRATTY

Your CI is ours.

ZIOLI

The fuck he is.

HANRATTY

Oh yeah? Then I'm charging him with
homicide.

NICK

(exploding)

Fuck you!

They don't even hear him and the following diatribe is
INTERCUT WITH REACTION SHOTS of the bewildered and furious
Nick.

ZIOLI

You ain't doin' shit, Hanratty, 'cause
I'll go to the U.S. Attorney's office,
(MORE)

133 CONTD

ZIOLI (contd)
and believe me, once they hear that
the guy you're trying to indict is a
state-run CI that you knew about from
day one? Ho-ly shit, what happens to
you ...

(beat)
Did you ever read about yourself in the
papers? Your balls shrivel to the size
of chick peas.

HANRATTY
(fuming, over a barrel)
So what do you want ...

ZIOLI
I want in. I want a joint prosecution,
State and Federal. And I want this
pursued in state court.

NICK
Talk to me!

HANRATTY
(ignoring Nick's outburst)
Federal ...

OMIT SCENE 134

135 INT: STORAGE BUILDING ROOM - NIGHT

All the State and Federal agents standing silent. Nick in
the corner.

CLOSE ON TAPE RECORDER

playing on the table.

TAPE (OF THE MURDER)
"Yo Super Fly ...
(beat)
What the fuck do you want ...
(then the sound of
Junior's gun)
Oh! Jesus! Jesus!"

The agents, all shaken, some livid, some near tears,
stare/glare at Nick covered with Omar's blood.

NICK
(to Zioli, the room)
Did I deliver or what ...

135 CONTD

The room stares back at him; no mercy for the chew-toy.

NICK (contd)
 (cold, furious)
 You gave me your word.

136 EXT: BABYCAKES - 1 A.M.

Four agents; Cleary and Calvin (State) and Fric and Frac (Federal) approach the club.

137 INT: BABYCAKES

CLOSE ON A DANCER

down to a G-string.

Junior, with a few friends, stands at the end of the bar.

JUNIOR'S POV

He sees the four agents enter, fanning out; four more agents entering from the rear of the club.

CLOSE ON JUNIOR

surrounded by his pals Pluto, Saturn and Neptune, and all the agents. He seems almost arrogantly calm.

Fric throws him up against his own bar for a pat-down as the other agents cover Pluto and Neptune.

FRIC
 (voice trembling)
 You're under arrest, motherfucker.

JUNIOR
 (cool, almost amused)
 State or Federal?

Frac backhand pistol whips the smugness off Junior's face, breaking his nose.

FRAC
 Both ...

ANGLE

Junior, his face streaming blood, but still somehow smirking, is semi-dragged out of his own club through a gauntlet of open-mouthed patrons.

137 CONTD

JUNIOR
 (bubbling the words
 through his own blood)
 You got nothin' ...

CLOSE ON THE DANCER

still dancing; a regular Eveready Bunny.

138 INT: BUREAU OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION - 4 A.M.

Junior posing for his mug shot. His nose still drips blood.

JUNIOR
 (to the camera)
 You ain't got shit, Yo ...

139 EXT: ATLANTIC CITY BOARDWALK - NEXT MORNING

Foggy, filthy, serene.

140 EXT: ATLANTIC CITY MOTEL

A FEMALE AGENT with an automatic on her hip is carefully carrying a full breakfast tray (juices, little boxes of cereal, coffee canister) towards ANOTHER AGENT who loiters in front of one of the motel doors.

141 INT: MOTEL ROOM

Standard furniture. Two double beds. Rosie, Nick, Corinna, Calvin, Fric, Cleary, Frac and Hanratty. A mad house.

The agent bearing the breakfast tray enters.

Rosie sits on the edge of one bed, red-eyed, sleep-deprived. Nick sits on the other bed holding a fretful anxious Corinna.

A wild cross-fire of conversations.

CORINNA
 (to Nick)
 I forgot Barbie! I need her ...

NICK
 (to Corinna)
 Shh ... We'll get her ...

ROSIE
 (strained voice -- to the
 room in general)
 Can I take her on the beach at least?

141 CONTD

HANRATTY

Nick ... I'm telling you, there ain't gonna be no trial, believe me, he'll cop a plea.

CALVIN

(to Rosie)

I don't think that's such a good idea.

NICK

(to Hanratty)

What plea, he killed a Fed.

CORINNA

(to Nick)

I don't like this cereal.

ROSIE

(staring at the carpet)

My mother's old ... she's sick ...

HANRATTY

But he didn't know John was a Fed. Look, he can't chance a trial ... and let me tell you here and now, if by some legal freak, it does go all the way? We're gonna do everything in our power to keep you off the stand ...

FEMALE AGENT

(to Rosie)

We'll take care of her.

NICK

(to Hanratty)

Do I really look that stupid?

ROSIE

(to Calvin, borderline distraught)

Can I call her?

HANRATTY

(to Fric and Frac)

Fellas, am I telling him the way it is here, or what ...

CALVIN

(to Rosie)

I don't think that's such a good idea.

Corinna starts to cry, a penetrating plaintive wail.

141 CONTD

ROSIE
 (loud enough to stop all
 other conversation --
 teary but strong)
 Can I please take her on the beach!

CALVIN
 (to Rosie; breaking
 the silence)
 I don't think that's such a good
 idea ...

ANGLE

THE ROOM - 1 HOUR LATER - SILENT

CLOSE ON CORINNA

sleeping on one of the double beds.

Nick and Rosie lay on the other bed spooning each other.
 Both look battered.

ROSIE
 (numbly)
 I have three finals next weeks. What
 am I supposed to do, bring in a note
 from my FBI agent?

NICK
 (low, half to himself)
 You shouldn't have to put up with this.

ROSIE
 Meaning what ...

NICK
 (hesitating)
 Meaning, maybe we should, we should
 like, separate or get a divorce or
 something.

ROSIE
 (dry)
 You're gonna divorce me to save me?
 How about Corinna, you want to divorce
 her too?

NICK
 You let me worry about her. She's not
 your daughter.

-141 CONTD

ROSIE
 (ballistic, shooting upright)
 She's not? You ask her who her mommy is! You ask her who was with her every day when you were in jail, when Bev was ...
 (can't say "in the ground")

NICK
 (pained -- major fuck up)
 Rosie ...

ROSIE
 (swatting away his hand, breaking into freaked angry tears)
 I spent more time with her in the last two years than you and Bev together! You ask her who her mommy is!

NICK
 Rosie ...

Nick tries to hold onto her, to calm her down, to apologize. She fights him off, but collapses on her own, weighed down by the chaos and panic of their circumstances.

ROSIE
 Why is this happening to us?
 (haunted)
 We did something, didn't we ...

NICK
 (ice-cold, to himself)
 I should have taken care of Ronnie myself ...

ROSIE
 (to herself)
 It's Bev ...

OMIT SCENES 142, 143, 144

145 INT: TOMBS METROPOLITAN CORRECTIONAL CENTER - DAY

Interview room. JACK GOLD is speaking with his client Junior Brown.

Junior's broken nose is taped and there are wide swaths of purple under his eyes.

145 CONTD

JACK GOLD

When you walked up to the car what did you intend to do?

JUNIOR

(shrugging)

Sell him some cars.

JACK GOLD

And when you came along the driver side window what happened?

JUNIOR

What happened?

(after a beat)

I saw him going for a gun.

JACK GOLD

Crime Scenes says the gun was still holstered.

JUNIOR

He made a move for it. Inside his jacket, under his arm.

JACK GOLD

Why?

JUNIOR

Why?

JACK GOLD

Did you ever give him reason to fear for his life, threaten him or do anything to ...

JUNIOR

Hell, no ... I thought we were business partners. He was bughouse. Nuts. Ask if they found any drugs in the car.

JACK GOLD

So ... you came up the driver's side, saw him reaching for his gun ... and then what happened?

JUNIOR

I got scared he was gonna kill me.

JACK GOLD

So you ...

145 CONTD

JUNIOR

Fired first. To defend myself. I was fuckin' scared to death.

(beat)

So Nick Bianco was wearing a wire, huh?

(face puckered with rage)

Where they hiding him, Atlantic City?

146 EXT: NICK'S HOUSE - DAY

CLOSE ON A CARDBOARD BOX

filled with Barbies, medicine chest stuff and other small essentials.

The box is being carried out by Frac.

ANGLE

NICK

(in the waiting car)

Did you get her "Barney" pillow?

Frac stops mid-way to the car.

FRIC

(in the driver's seat)

Keep your head down.

NICK

She gotta have that "Barney" pillow.

147 EXT/INT: THE SEDAN - 1 HOUR LATER - DAY

The car by-passes the George Washington Bridge heading upstate.

NICK

Hey, A.C.'s that way.

CALVIN

We can't stay in one place too long.
It's not smart.

148 EXT: N.Y. STATE THRUWAY - DAY

Entering the Catskills. The car passing the Jerry Lewis billboard for Brown's Hotel.

149 EXT: BUNGALOW COLONY - DAY

The car pulling into a beat-up abandoned bungalow colony in Kerhonksen, N.Y. The place looks deserted.

149 CONTD |

Nick gets out of the car, dazed, looking around the barren still life of cabins and mountains. There's Feds and cops everywhere -- an armed camp.

Nick sees Corinna in a makeshift playground area. She's sitting on one end of a see-saw, lost in some fantasy, chattering away to herself.

An agent stands twenty feet away; a baby sitter/bodyguard.

ANGLE

Nick walks over to her, squats down to her eye level.

NICK
Hey Juicy ... what you doin'?

Corinne doesn't answer, she's off somewheres in her head.

NICK (contd)
(rising -- anxious;
to Calvin)
Where's my wife?

150 INT: BUNGALOW - DAY

Nick enters.

Rosie, fully dressed, is lying on top of the bed, her face to the wall.

Nick sits on the bed, gently turns her around.

Rosie's face is shiny, almost beatific. Her eyes are gleaming with inner vision.

ROSIE
Nick ... I just had the best dream. I saw Bev, and she forgave us. She said we suffered enough ... and now everything's gonna be OK. We're gonna get through this. She promised.

NICK
(worried about her going crazy, gently)
Rosie ... that's great ... Listen, why don't you get up. It's like a beautiful day outside.

150 CONTD

 ROSIE
 (still beaming)
 I just want to lay here for a while ...
 I'm kind of sick ... I'll be out soon.

 NICK
 Rosie ...
 (beat)
 You got to hang in there, Mommy ... I
 can't do this without you ... Please
 hang in ...

 ROSIE
 (smiling)
 I'm OK ... I just want to rest.

151 EXT: BUNGALOW COLONY - DAY

Nick comes back out. Corinna is still sitting on the
 grounded side of the see-saw, the agent watching her,
 scanning the tree-line.

 NICK
 (enraged)
 Can you at least play with her a
 little?

The agent just stares at him.

Nick grips the high end of the see-saw.

 NICK (contd)
 Hold on, sweetie.

Nick primes the see-saw up and down, up and down. His
 daughter stares at him expressionlessly. Nick keeps at it,
 both furious and tender.

 CALVIN
 (with a manila folder)
 Lookie here, your wife's final exams.
 You think we need to monitor her for
 cheating?

 NICK
 (still pumping the see-
 saw)
 She can't take this. She's losing it.

 CALVIN
 I hear Junior's lawyer already asked
 for a sit-down. This might be over
 faster than you think.

151 CONTD

NICK

(edgy and angry)
Yeah?

CALVIN

Listen ... I got to go in to the city tonight.

(awkward beat)

My youngest daughter, Coral? When I come back out tomorrow, maybe I'll bring her with me ... you know, they're about the same age and all .. Corinna and her.

NICK

(moved, choking back
tears, husky-voiced)
That would really be good of you ...

152 INT: FEDERAL COURT - HEARING ROOM - DAY

Jack Gold, Federal Agent Hanratty, a PROSECUTOR from the U.S. Attorney's office and the JUDGE.

This hearing is in private, at a conference table.

JACK GOLD

My guy was in fear of his life and he fired in self defense.

U.S. ATTORNEY

Dover's gun was still holstered when they pulled him out of the car.

JACK GOLD

My guy claims that "Omar," agent Dover, made a move for it without provocation. I can produce witnesses to testify that agent Dover had pulled that gun on my client at least three times in the past, who can testify that they had seen agent Dover taking cocaine on numerous occasions and that his behavior over the last few months was increasingly bizarre and paranoid.

HANRATTY

(disgusted)
Mafia shrinks? The autopsy came up negative on drugs.

JACK GOLD

You find any in the car?

152 CONTD

HANRATTY

(lying)

No.

JACK GOLD

No, huh?

(abruptly shifting gears)

I want to know whether Dover had
assassination clearance.

U.S. ATTORNEY

Had what?

JACK GOLD

Let me rephrase that ... Had clearance
to shoot first if he perceived that
his cover was blown even if there was
no immediate physical danger to his
person.

HANRATTY

We can't ...

JUDGE

We goin' fishin' here, Jack?

JACK GOLD

Not at all. I just want to find out if
we got a drug taking Federal agent
strung out, walking around with shoot
first clearance because in all due
respect if that's what we got here ...

HANRATTY

What a bunch of slanderous horseshit.

JACK GOLD

(plowing on)

If that's what we got here ...

152A EXT: BUNGALOW COMPOUND - PLAYGROUND - SAME TIME

The playground, empty.

NICK (VO)

(calling)

Corinna!

152B EXT: THE WOODS SURROUNDING THE COMPOUND

Nick, Rosie and various agents fanning the woods, Nick and
Rosie freaked, the agents freaked.

152B CONTD

ROSIE

Corinna!

A shot is heard, which puts everyone in hyper drive, running towards the report.

152C INT: HEARING ROOM - SAME TIME, SAME PEOPLE

JACK GOLD

... I want a complete inventory of all the guns, drugs and cars acquired in New York. I want to know how they were disposed of down in Philadelphia. Was this stuff being put back into the community to establish Dover's street credibility? Was he doing drugs to establish street credibility? I want his case handler brought in. I want to know how many other agents were involved. I want to know who were the other targets.

U.S. ATTORNEY

(to the judge)

This is an on-going operation. He's asking us to jeopardize agents still in the field.

JACK GOLD

Well, I don't see how I can demonstrate self defense if I can't show the pressures on the guy, and I can't find out whether the guy had authorization to shoot first if he perceived himself in a jam.

JUDGE

OK, why don't you bring me all the files. I'll read 'em in chambers, try to sort out what's privileged, what's appropriate for Discovery.

Hanratty and the U.S. attorney exchange a tense glance.

U.S. ATTORNEY

I can't do that, Judge.

JUDGE

What do you mean you can't do that ... I'm ordering it produced.

U.S. attorney and Hanratty remain stoney.

152C CONTD

Jack Gold bites his lip, his eyes dancing with glee.

JUDGE (contd)

Either you produce the files or I'm
declaring a mistrial.

The Feds are statues.

152D EXT: THE WOODS - SAME TIME

TWO HUNTERS, their licenses pinned to the backs of their jackets, are face-down on the forest floor, surrounded by high-strung armed agents.

HUNTER

What we do! What we do!

ANGLE

A clearing in the woods.

Corinna is sitting there, expressionless, talking to an imaginary playmate.

Nick breaks through to the clearing. Upon seeing her he's so overcome with relief he just drops to his knees, staring at her.

CORINNA

(inappropriately calm,
unemotional)

I want to be with my mommy ...

153 INT: FEDERAL COURT - HALLWAY - DAY

Hanratty, the U.S. attorney and Jack Gold waiting for the elevator.

JACK GOLD

(taunting)

You guys really weren't putting guns and dope back on the street just for credibility, were you? I mean, that was just an educated guess on my part.

The elevator comes. Hanratty and the U.S. attorney enter. When Gold tries to follow, Hanratty throws an arm across the door, blocking his way.

JACK GOLD (contd)

And if you try to indict him on anything else? I'm still gonna want

(MORE)

153 CONTD

JACK GOLD (contd)
to know where the goodies went. And
you can tell the State Prosecutor the
same thing.

The elevator closes in Jack Gold's face.

154 EXT: COFFEE TRUCK - MUNICIPAL BUILDING - NEXT DAY

Hanratty and the U.S. attorney watch uncomfortably as Frank
Zioli devours a hot dog.

ZIOLI
(barking out a laugh,
spewing sauerkraut)
You're dropping it? I don't believe
this shit! Well, hell,
(taking a bite)
I guess it's up to me, huh?

U.S. ATTORNEY
You can't ...

ZIOLI
Why, 'cause you don't want to
jeopardize
national security?
(chewing away)
Whose chain do you think you're yankin'
here? If you were doing shit you
shouldn't've been doing, hey, that's
your problem.

HANRATTY
We're not giving up any files on the
task force.

ZIOLI
Yeah? We'll see about that ...

The U.S. attorney silently signals to Hanratty to take a hike
out of earshot. Then after a beat ...

U.S. ATTORNEY
(looking off, low)
What do you want?

ZIOLI
(still eating with gusto)
What do I want? A judgeship. Federal.

155 EXT: BUNGALOW COLONY UPSTATE - NEXT DAY

The playground area. Corinna has a playmate -- CORAL, Calvin Hart's daughter.

Nick and Calvin watch.

Rosie comes up to them, hands her exams to Calvin.

CALVIN

You sure you didn't cheat?

ROSIE

With what?

Fric and Frac appear. Standing twenty feet away they motion for Calvin to follow them out of Nick's earshot.

Nick and Rosie watch as Fric puts an arm around Calvin's shoulder, talks to him for a beat. Calvin reacts by pushing Frac's arm away and cursing cholericly.

Calvin walks back to Nick, pulls him away from Rosie and talks to him in a heated whisper.

Nick reacts to the words by throwing a punch at Calvin. Calvin just takes it.

NICK

(exploding)

And what happens to us? Huh?

CLOSE ON ROSIE

Scared, reflexively holding her belly.

NICK (contd)

You motherfuckers! What happens to us now, huh?

No one answers.

156 INT: U.S. MARSHAL'S OFFICE - NEXT DAY

Nick and Rosie sit across from Calvin Hart and a REPRESENTATIVE of the marshal's office.

There's a document on a low-table between them.

NICK

How about my daughter, I got to change her name too?

MARSHAL

We'd prefer it.

156 CONTD

NICK

You'd prefer it?

(beat)

No ... I'm not gonna change her name.

(beat)

You know, I been screwed six ways to Sunday by you bastards from the gitty-up. And I'll be goddamned if I'll change my daughter's name for you too.

MARSHAL

(indifferent)

It's on you ...

NICK

(rising)

Go fuck yourself.

CLOSE ON ROSIE'S HAND

seizing his wrist.

ROSIE

No.

NICK

What?

ROSIE

(looking taut)

I want in.

NICK

No. It ends right here.

MARSHAL

(affable, neutral)

You folks want to take it outside? We can wait.

157 INT: HALLWAY OUTSIDE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

Nick and Rosie in anguish.

ROSIE

I want us to be safe ...

NICK

Safe? ... There is no safe ... If Junior Brown wants to get me ... I'm got ... Do you really think they care if we live or die? We've been in

(MORE)

157 CONTD

NICK (contd)
 their custody since the day I got out.
 That's why we're here right now ...
 no more ... no more.

ROSIE
 I'm thinking of the baby.

NICK
 You let me worry about Corinna.

Rosie just stares at him until he gets hit with who she was referring to.

NICK (contd)
What baby ...

Overwhelmed by the news of her pregnancy in the midst of this nightmare they're having, Nick drops to his knees, holds both her hands as if in supplication.

NICK (contd)
 Rosie ... this baby? If it's born with
 us in witness protection? When we
 christen it, do we christen it with its
real name or its hiding-out name?
 (grim promise)
 I'm finished with these bastards. I'm
 gonna end this myself.

ANGLE

Calvin coming out into the corridor to talk to Nick.

Rosie and Nick are gone.

158 EXT: TOMBS METROPOLITAN CORRECTIONAL CENTER - 2 DAYS LATER

WE SEE Junior exiting from jail, all charges dropped.
 He stands there on the steps scowling at the city. His face
 is mottled with bruises from his broken nose.

His goons are waiting for him and he wades into their midst,
 hand up for a cluster of high fives as if he just whacked a
 homer.

JUNIOR
 So where they got Bianco, witness
 protection?

PLUTO
 I heard he's still on the street.

158 CONTD

JUNIOR
 (murderous)
 No shit. Live free or die, huh?

159 EXT: BEV'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - 1 HOUR LATER - DAY

Bev's mother takes Corinna in her arms. Nick hands Rosie her suitcase. He kisses his daughter for a long beat.

ROSIE
 Call Calvin at least ...

NICK
 Don't worry about it ... Bev said we're gonna get through this, remember?

ROSIE
 It was just a dream, Nick.

Nick hesitates, taking a last picture of them both.

As soon as he gives them his back, Corinna flips, letting loose with heart-rending shrieks of terror, calling out his name, reaching for him as if the dam of her zoned-out protest has broken, as if she can suddenly see the future.

Nick returns, embraces her one last time. He is fucking scared.

160 EXT: LOWER EAST SIDE - 2 HOURS LATER - DAY

Nick, driving up to a street corner.

He nods to a KID who sits on a stoop. The kid nods to ANOTHER KID who comes up to the car. Nick hands him some cash. The kid drops a gun on the empty seat next to Nick, walks away. Nick drives away.

161 EXT: NICK'S HOUSE - 9:30 P.M. - NIGHT

Nick moving to the door, hunched and alert. He sees something in the darkened doorway that makes him stop, take out his gun.

NICK'S POV - THE DOOR

Someone has scrawled "B.A.D." in red paint; a frighteningly bloody graphic.

Nick backs away from his own house, walks briskly down the street.

161 CONTD

Behind him a car engine starts, slowly pulls out of its space minus headlights. Nick, gripping the pistol in his jacket, walks faster, his head turned back to eye the car.

Suddenly Nick is grabbed by someone he almost walks into.

CLOSE ON HIS PISTOL

being seized. Nick disarmed.

The car drives on.

Nick looks into the face of his assailant. It's Calvin.

162 INT: NICK'S DARKENED LIVING ROOM

Nick and Calvin sit hunched over in facing chairs. Although they're alone they speak in conspiratorial whispers. Nick's gun rests on a table.

NICK

Politics ... what the hell does that mean?

Calvin doesn't answer.

NICK (contd)

What does "politics" mean ...

CALVIN

Look, Nick ...

NICK

(cutting him off)

The shit's over with. Why did you come to my house?

Calvin maintains his uncomfortable silence.

NICK (contd)

(insistent)

Why did you come to my house, to tell me I got fucked?

(gesturing to the table)

To take away my gun?

Calvin hisses in his discomfort.

NICK (contd)

You know my wife, you know my daughter, you know me. Calvin man, we're hanging by a thread ... You got something for me or not ...

162 CONTD

CLOSE ON CALVIN

reluctantly getting ready to give up some information.

NICK (VO)

Give me something ... Please ...

163 EXT: MUNICIPAL COURT - NEXT DAY

Frank Zioli exits the building with Calvin at his side.

CALVIN

You want a dog?

ZIOLI

Sure.

Zioli walks down the wide stairs heading for a hot dog stand.

CALVIN'S POV

WE SEE Nick, heading over to "accidentally" bump into them.

ANGLE

Calvin and Zioli eating hot dogs.

NICK (OS)

I thought you said you were a man of honor.

ZIOLI

(slightly surprised)

Shouldn't you be in witness protection?

NICK

What's Junior Brown doin' out on the street? He killed a Federal Agent.

ZIOLI

(eating)

Shit happens.

NICK

I don't understand. You had the murder tape. You had me.

Nick shoots a quick eye lock with Calvin.

ZIOLI

What tape. And who the fuck are you?

(MORE)

| 163 CONTD

ZIOLI (contd)

(beat)

Let me tell you something ... You know what the worst part of this job is? Every day, I got to deal with one low life CI after another. It's enough to make you sick.

NICK

Well I guess you won't have to do that much longer, huh, Judge?

ZIOLI

(stiffening)

Where'd you hear that ...

NICK

Well at least you don't come cheap. Federal Judgeship.

Zioli continues to eat, eyeing Nick, assessing his threat potential, deciding he's no threat at all.

ZIOLI

Yeah well, that ain't gonna happen for a while.

NICK

It ain't gonna happen ever once I go to the papers.

ZIOLI

With what? There was no evidence that Junior Brown did shit.

NICK

I thought that was one hell of a tape myself.

ZIOLI

I didn't hear Junior Brown say nothing about killing nobody on that tape, did you? Besides last I hear the tape got et by the garbage monster.

Zioli wipes his mouth with his napkin, casually flicks it at Nick.

ZIOLI (contd)

G'head, go to the papers. You're an informer. You'd rat out your mother. Who the hell would believe you ...

163 CONTD

Zioli turns on his heel. Nick makes another eye-hit with Calvin before Calvin turns to join his boss heading back up the courthouse stairs.

164 INT: QUEENS DINER MEZZANINE - NIGHT

Calvin sits alone in the room of upturned chairs. He looks tense, checks his watch. He hears the heavy tread of someone coming up the stairs and rises anxiously.

CALVIN

Nick ...

WE SEE it's not Nick but one of the deli-men from the main floor.

DELI-MAN

You got a phone call ...

165 EXT: BABYCAKES - NIGHT

Nick is on the phone overlooking the parking lot.

(The following conversation is INTERCUT with Calvin in the deli.)

NICK

How long does it take for you to get from the deli to Babycakes ...

CALVIN

The fuck you doin' there? You're supposed ...

NICK

I got to get something. How long?

CALVIN

You listen to me ...

NICK

(snapping, yelling)
How long!

CALVIN

(reluctantly)
I don't know ... twenty minutes.

NICK

Twenty minutes ... don't be late.

CALVIN

For what ...

165 CONTD

NICK
Don't be late.

166 INT: QUEENS DINER - NIGHT

Calvin in the deli -- furious -- slamming down the phone, startling the counter man and his customers.

167 EXT: BABYCAKES

Nick standing in the phone booth staring at the main door to Babycakes.

He puts his fists to his forehead, closes his eyes as if in prayer, as if fortifying himself, breathes deep trying to purge his fear, then it's go ... into the Lion's Den.

168 EXT: QUEENS DELI

Calvin piling into his car still cursing.

169 INT: BABYCAKES

PAN of the place -- full tilt, jumping.

At a banquette, Junior Brown is hanging with his goons. Junior's dressed all in white (Nikes, painters pants, T-shirt) just like the first time Nick saw him.

NICK (OS)
Junior ... what's shakin'?

Junior's reaction is one of wary restraint -- Nick walking in like this is too good to be true.

JUNIOR
(narrow-eyed)
What are you doin' here?

Nick stands directly across the table from Junior, who is slouched, arms outstretched over the shoulders of his flanking goons.

NICK
I was just gonna ask you the same question, yo ... You killed a Fed. How the hell did you walk on that.

JUNIOR
(suspicious, restrained,
echoing Zioli)
Shit happens.

169 CONTD

NICK

You blew the back of that guy's head all over me. His people saw that? How did they even let you live? Shit happens?

(barking out a tense laugh)

I guess so!

JUNIOR

(having trouble holding in his anger -- showing clenched teeth)

Did you tell the cops about how metal in my mouth makes me gag? Because it was a funny thing, I couldn't get plastic forks in jail. I had to eat everything with my fingers. Did you tell them that?

NICK'S POV

Luminous diner-style pink-neon wall clock. Time marching on.

NICK

How did you swing it, Junior? You gotta tell me. It's driving me crazy.

JUNIOR

(boiling, with great effort)

It's not the time, my man. But I'm gonna see you real soon.

Junior nods for one of his goons to toss Nick's ass out of the club. The guy rises but before he can lay a hand on him, Nick whips out the gun from the back of his belt and the guy eases into his seat.

Junior unafraid, just slowly shakes his head contemplating Nick's death.

Nick holds the gun under his jacket so as not to create a panic in the club.

NICK

I'm not leaving till you tell me.

JUNIOR

Nick, answer me this, who do I visit first ...

169 CONTD

QUICK ANGLE

The clock -- moving to 20 minutes.

NICK
(cutting him off,
thrusting the gun in
Junior's face)

Tell me!

JUNIOR
(ice cold, fearless)
Who do I visit first, you at your
house? Or your wife and kid up at
Grandma's?

Nick goes white, then calmly leans across the table, puts the gun to Junior's lips, and grabs a fistful of Junior's hair.

NICK
You don't like the taste of metal, huh?
Open up.

Still grabbing Junior's hair, Nick brushes the muzzle against Junior's lips, as if trying to force castor oil on a child.

Junior, his face a mask of disgust and fury, slightly jerks his head (in the narrow range that his seized hair allows him) to avoid the muzzle. There is no fear in him but the humiliation and the actual revulsion he has to metal is making him sweat, making his skin shine.

Junior's goons are like dogs frozen the second before leaping. The club has finally caught on to the drama at the banquette. People begin to surge, some forward, some away.

NICK (contd)
(low)
C'mon Junior, say ahhh ...

With his head twisted as much away from Nick as he can, Junior speaks to him in a murderous murmur.

JUNIOR
You saw what I did to that cop? Guess
who's next.

NICK
(probing with the muzzle,
something oddly excited
and triumphant in his
voice)
Say that again!

169 CONTD

JUNIOR
 (tight-lipped)
 You heard ...

Junior abruptly cuts himself off, eyes widening with outrage as he finally understands what Nick is doing here.

There's a split second communion between them, Nick in triumph, Junior in rage then ...

Swatting away Nick's gun Junior lunges across the table grabbing Nick's throat, the both of them spilling out into the center of the room, the crowd undulating back and forth, the dancers freaking on the runways.

ANGLE

The clock -- past 20 minutes.

170 EXT: HIGHWAY TRAFFIC ACCIDENT - SAME TIME

A real horror show -- a two car wipe out bathed in revolving ambulance lights.

Calvin's car stuck behind the accident, Calvin flipping out at the delay.

171 INT: BABYCAKES

Junior pummeling Nick, Nick overwhelmed with the suddenness of Junior's violence staggering back into one of Junior's goons who lands a kidney punch.

JUNIOR
 (barking)
 Don't touch him!

The goon shrugs, hands up, backing off.

Junior savoring his next assault starts circling Nick.

NICK'S POV

Bleary woozy tracking of Junior circling him.

JUNIOR
 You think you're real smart, don't
 you ...

Nick struggles to stand, spits blood.

171 CONTD

JUNIOR (contd)
 (taunting)
 This don't end with you, you know that,
 right?
 (circling, vicious sing-
 song)
 We're go-in' up to Gran-ma's ...

This second threat to his family has Nick almost levitating.

NICK
 (bellowing)
No!

They seem to move at the same time propelling themselves forward like two rams, Nick's strength fueled by fear for his family and his own sense of no-exit no-Calvin doom.

They stand there slugging it out surrounded by the goons, the screaming crowd, the two of them trying to kill each other with their bare hands, the goons baying like hounds, Junior's asthmatic lungs hissing and rasping, the fight taking on a life of its own, independent from the will of the fighters, like a force of blind nature.

Junior grabs Nick by the back of his neck bringing Nick's head down and his own knee up, sending Nick staggering backwards, into the bar.

172 INT: BABYCAKES LOUNGE

Junior throws himself at Nick, who catches Junior in the face with an elbow which drops Junior to his knees, his hands covering his just re-broken nose, and before he can recover his momentum Nick is all over him pounding the shit out of him in a bughouse frenzy, Junior not able to catch his asthmatic breath, not able to regain his focus, growing helpless.

ANGLE

The goons screaming for Junior to get it together.

ANGLE

Nick -- standing over him teeth gnashing, swinging away.

ANGLE

The goons growing wilder, frustrated, mindful of Junior's mandate to lay off but they can't bear it.

172 CONTD

ANGLE

The dancers freaking out on the runways.

ANGLE

The crowd, chaotic, a strange group noise emanating.

ANGLE

Nick growing tired, using his feet, his hands. Junior curled into a ball now.

ANGLE

The goons can't take it any more, making a rush for Nick, Nick turning to them like a cornered elk meeting them head on, landing one punch before going down under the wave, struggling to rise, doomed when ...

CALVIN

(gun drawn, badge up like
a crucifix dispelling
vampires)

Ho!

Calvin disperses the goons in an arcing crouch with his gun and crucifix.

JUNIOR

(wheezing, struggling to
rise)

You're fuckin' dead!

NICK

(bloody, taut)

Fuck you!

Calvin has to restrain Nick with his free hand, his eyes on Junior.

CALVIN

(shoving Nick backwards)
Go out to the car.

NICK

(bugged out)

Let me finish this!

JUNIOR

(spitting blood, gasping
for air, livid)

You're dead, you hear me?

172 CONTD

NICK
 (grinning)
 Not me, baby ...

Junior's reaction to this is a fleeting look of panic.

JUNIOR
 (to Calvin, oddly, almost
 as if asking permission
 from a teacher)
 Can I just ...

Junior tries to lunge past Calvin, grabbing at Nick, more like trying to clutch at him than strike him, but Nick backsteps out of his reach.

NICK
 (bloody grin)
 Not me, baby.

173 INT/EXT: CALVIN'S CAR - DAY

CALVIN
 (seethingly silent,
 finally)
 He comes after you, you on your own,
 you suicidal son of a bitch.

NICK
 I ain't suicidal.

He opens his shirt, pulls out a wire and recorder.

NICK (contd)
 I told you, I just had to get
 something ...

174 EXT: MUNICIPAL COURTHOUSE - NEXT DAY

CLOSE ON MINIATURE TAPE RECORDER

held by Nick.

JUNIOR (ON TAPE)
 "You saw what I did to that cop? Guess
 who's next ... "

Nick clicks off the tape. WE SEE Zioli standing there,
 scowling.

174 CONTD

ZIOLI

It's useless. What cop? He could be talking about punching out a meter maid.

NICK

You don't like that tape? How about this one ...

Nick pops in another cassette and we hear ...

NICK (ON TAPE)

"At least you don't come cheap. Federal Judgeship."

ZIOLI (ON TAPE)

"Yeah well, that ain't gonna happen for a while."

NICK

(clicks it off)

You like that one better?

Zioli blanches.

NICK (contd)

What's that you told me one time? "If you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans." Is that the way it goes, Judge?

ZIOLI

(almost begging)

I reindict Junior you got to take the stand, start that whole roller coaster again.

NICK

(pocketing the damning tape of Zioli)

Nah. I think I'm gonna get lost, take this with me.

(indicating the Zioli tape)

Nick puts the Junior Brown tape back in the recorder, gives the recorder to Zioli.

NICK (contd)

Listen to that part where he says "You saw what I did to that cop" again.