

LOWLIFE

by
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LOWLIFE

WHITE.

A FOGGY MORNING.

Dense. As the fog passes, we can just barely make out the top half of the STATUE OF LIBERTY, with the prominent CROWN and TORCH peeking through the whiteness. They seem hauntingly entombed in the clouds.

We ZOOM OUT TO REVEAL:

The entire Statue, shrouded in mist. Passing in front of it, in the foreground: A BOAT. A FERRY, an old ferry. Chugs along...

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY

It's dark. We're not sure where we are--yet. CLOSE SHOT on a pair of DARK EYES, shrouded by the brim of a large HOMBURG HAT. We SEE the EYES when a cigarette, off camera, is lit.

We PULL BACK TO REVEAL the silhouetted figure stands in a doorway that leads to another, and much larger, ROOM. That room is empty and quiet, and just moments after we have seen our man, large numbers of people begin to enter that very space. It goes from SILENT to NOISY in a HEARTBEAT.

The CAMERA DOLLIES PAST THE SILHOUETTE to ENTER/REVEAL:

INT. ELLIS ISLAND - THE GREAT HALL - MORNING

We ARE ON the THIRD FLOOR, OVERLOOKING: the great hall of Ellis Island, known as the "REGISTRY ROOM". Large windows illuminate the space, which is filled with benches, which are all occupied by people. In the front, over a staircase, hangs an ENORMOUS 48-STAR AMERICAN FLAG.

At the other end of the room, a stunningly long series of desks stretches along virtually the entire width of the hall. Behind these desks, seated on tall stools, are tens of exclusively white male CUSTOMS OFFICIALS. Poised with their ledgers and pens.

The vast crowd before them is made up of IMMIGRANTS. They have come from around the world.

They are dirty and pale and weak and in rags. They wait patiently to be processed, and each and every one of them has a large TAG pinned to his lapel, a card with information on it that would look to us today almost like a marathon runner's number.

The immigrants are a noisy bunch, and the space echoes with the sound of all the world's languages barked simultaneously.

SUPERIMPOSE THE LEGEND: "ELLIS ISLAND, NEW YORK. 1915."

The CAMERA DOLLIES THROUGH THE AISLES and FINDS, STANDING IN A LINE:

SONYA CYBULSKI, late twenties, and her sister, ELENA, early twenties.

Sonya is pale, thin. She is undoubtedly a presence, and she seems lit from within, ethereal. She is beautiful despite layers of dirt and obvious malnourishment. Her clothes are rags, and her frame is slight and even a bit bruised. Her deep-set light blue eyes reveal both tragedy and implacable resolve.

Elena possesses many of the same qualities and features, but somehow without the beauty. She is more frail. Less alive. Sick. She COUGHS.

Sonya looks around to SEE many MEN, OTHER IMMIGRANTS, who are SMILING at her. ABOUT TO LAUGH, talking amongst each other.

Elena SEES the MEN staring at her sister. Leaning forward, in Polish, whispered:

ELENA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE)
Animals.

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE)
(stopping her sister from
more conversation)
Elena--don't. Don't say anything
about the boat.
(brightens)
We're here, we made it. That's all
that matters.

Sonya lets loose a big smile; her sister does, too. They move forward on the line.

DOCTOR HOWARD KNOX, forties, examines first: SONYA. The Doctor FLIPS HER EYELID, looks into her eyes. Listens to her chest. She PASSES THE TEST.

ELENA CYBULSKI
 (cheerful; broken English)
 My sister is not sick. She is like
 a bull.

SONYA CYBULSKI
 Shh!

Then Elena. He CHECKS Elena up and down, looks in Elena's EYES for disease, flipping her lids with cold precision. She COUGHS. He then LISTENS to her CHEST. Turns to a Guard, gestures. He writes the letter "P" on her coat in CHALK.

Trouble is afoot. Sonya leans over her sister's shoulder:

SONYA CYBULSKI (CONT'D)
 Something is wrong?

DR. KNOX
 (surprised)
 You speak English?

SONYA CYBULSKI
 Yes. A little.

DR. KNOX
 I'm sorry, but she may have
 tuberculosis.

Elena's head whips around to Sonya. Dr. Knox motions again to more GUARDS. They approach QUICKLY.

DR. KNOX (CONT'D)
 She has to be detained. She could
 be extremely contagious.

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE)
 I go with her.

DR. KNOX
 Ma'am--I'm sorry. You can't. You
 have no evidence of disease.

Sonya looks to Elena as they realize the coming separation:

SONYA CYBULSKI
 But where? Where do you take her?

DR. KNOX
 She'll be held in our hospital here
 for six months--if she doesn't
 improve in that time, she'll have
 to be deported.

TWO GUARDS are coming toward her. They grab onto ELENA, and PULL HER AWAY. Dr. Knox steps in between the two sisters. In POLISH, SUBTITLED, ELENA begins to FREAK OUT. SONYA stays FOCUSED, filled with stress and yet trying to calm Elena.

Elena SCREAMS, her EYES FILLING WITH TEARS, as she is DRAGGED OFF.

ELENA CYBULSKI
Sonya! SONYA!

Sonya, her EYES WELLING UP, then pushes toward her sister. She GRABS her ARM. In Polish:

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE)
I'll come back--Elena! Elena,
listen to me--I promise, I won't
ever leave you here!

THE GUARDS TAKE ELENA AWAY. SONYA seems about to burst into tears as the two are SEPARATED FORCIBLY, but she restrains herself. Elena disappears into the crowd.

Sonya turns to the Doctor:

SONYA CYBULSKI (CONT'D)
You don't keep her!

DR. KNOX
Ma'am, it's not up to me! Now
please--

The Doctor GESTURES to SONYA to move toward the desks with the CUSTOMS OFFICERS BEHIND THEM. Dr. Knox turns to a Guard.
Re: Sonya:

DR. KNOX (CONT'D)
She's got some cuts and bruises,
but she's arrright.

CUT TO:

A CLOSE SHOT ON A PAIR OF SHOES.

They are FANCY shoes, SHINED to perfection. They STEP DOWN a FLIGHT OF STAIRS.

When the feet reach the landing, we TILT UP to REVEAL: BRUNO WEISS. The MAN in the HOMBURG HAT, cigarette in his mouth.

He ENTERS THE GREAT HALL...

INT. CUSTOMS OFFICERS STATION

Sonya approaches the desk of a CUSTOMS OFFICER. Another customs officer, THOMAS MCNALLY, approaches the desk:

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
Thanks, Ed--I'll take this one.

McNally grabs a stack of her papers, leads Sonya to his desk a few feet away for her interview:

INT. MCNALLY'S STATION

McNally is a late middle-aged man, stocky and ruddy. He looks over her papers for a moment, then:

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
Your name?

SONYA CYBULSKI
Sonya Cybulski--

Sonya turns back, to look where her sister was taken. He finds her name on the LEDGER, asks her a question, making her snap back to attention.

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
From Poland?

SONYA CYBULSKI
Yes.

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
Destination?

SONYA CYBULSKI
New York.

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
You married or single?

SONYA CYBULSKI
I am not married. They take my sister--how I bring her--

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
We're not dealing with your sister right now, Ma'am. What was your occupation in Poland? Your job?

SONYA CYBULSKI
I was nurse. I need to get to
hospital for her--

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
(again interrupting;
ignoring)
Have you ever committed a crime of
any kind?

SONYA CYBULSKI
No--please, where is the hospital?

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
Ma'am, do I have to send you to
mental testing?

SONYA CYBULSKI
No.

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
How do you wash stairs--from top to
bottom? Can you tell me that?

SONYA CYBULSKI
(beat)
I don't come to America to wash
stairs.

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
Well, then maybe you should just
answer the questions I ask. Now--
you were on the S.S. Buford... I
see here in the manifest, says you
had a problem on the ship?

Sonya is shocked by the question, embarrassed, frozen.

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
(CONT'D)
It says you may be a woman of low
morals?

This is becoming NIGHTMARISH. Utters softly, for, and to,
herself:

SONYA CYBULSKI
The men, they, they force me...

McNally grows unexpectedly sympathetic, though the words
remain official:

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
 You do realize this means your
 reputation is in question? The
 paperwork is gonna have to reflect
 that, you understand?

SONYA CYBULSKI
 People, they don't have to know
 this problem--

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
 (interrupting)
 Ma'am, if you're looking to obtain
 a husband--the man is gonna have to
 know. Now do you have money?

SONYA CYBULSKI
 No--but my Uncle live here, he come
 for me.

She shows him a piece of paper. He looks down at his own
 things. An OFFICIAL comes over, WHISPERS in McNally's ear:

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
 Well, apparently he didn't show--we
 have no record of him. And we do
 not allow unescorted women into the
 country.

McNally looks up and EYES: BRUNO WEISS. They exchange a look
 and then McNally returns to Sonya's uncomprehending gaze.

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
 (CONT'D)
 I'm sorry. Due to your situation
 I'm gonna have to designate you
 Likely to become a Public Charge--

McNally signs something in his papers. And with that, Sonya
 is led away.

INT. ELLIS ISLAND - HEARING ROOM

A smaller group of IMMIGRANTS sit on benches awaiting a
 hearing. In the front of the room: a long table with THREE
 MEN. THREE JUDGES, whose job it is to determine deportation.
 Sonya is sitting in the back. ENTERING IS: BRUNO WEISS, who
 sits down next to Sonya, who is clearly distraught.

*Bruno is in his early thirties. A thin mustache, and tufts
 of dark hair which have been pomaded into submission. He is
 dressed in a dark suit and a Homburg hat and a long overcoat.*

He appears, at first blush, a man of distinction. But upon slightly greater examination of his over-the-top presentation and demeanor, we can see obvious evidence of empty flash and sleaze. His glassy and lightly colored eyes always seem to dart from one end of a room to another, and his face and body radiate hauteur and insecurity in equal measure. Almost comically, absurdly pompous on the surface; but what is beneath that surface remains an open question...

He speaks quietly, sympathetically, tenderly. She is still in her emotional state, and when Bruno sits next to her, we can SEE that her face says: *who the fuck are you?*

BRUNO WEISS

You all right? You speak English?

SONYA CYBULSKI

(with trepidation)

Yes. I try.

BRUNO WEISS

You're waiting for somebody?

SONYA CYBULSKI

No. My uncle, he was supposed to come, but he doesn't.

BRUNO WEISS

Oh...I'm very sorry. Maybe he moved away, or he didn't hear?

SONYA CYBULSKI

(who is this guy?)

You are working here?

BRUNO WEISS

No no, I'm from the Workman's Circle--it's an aid society.

(shows a paper card)

We help people such as yourself.

(re: the judges)

You know, they might send you back, to wherever it is you're from--

SONYA CYBULSKI

(ferociously)

I never go back. My sister and me, we never go back.

BRUNO WEISS

Your sister?

SONYA CYBULSKI
 Yes--they took her. To the hospital.

BRUNO WEISS
 I see... Well, I don't know about her case. But--I can see you're a nice person. And they respect me here. I could try and have your papers cleared. And then you can help your sister, pay her hospital bills.

SONYA CYBULSKI
 I--don't have money.

BRUNO WEISS
 (pretends to think)
 You don't have money...okay...
 (closer)
 You know what I'll do? I'll tell them I'm your brother.

Bruno stands. She HESITATES, sizing him up.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
 No?
 (she still hesitates)
 It's okay by me. I understand, you just met me, you're a proper young lady.

SONYA CYBULSKI
 You can help get my sister back?

BRUNO WEISS
 Absolutely. First step's getting outta here.

She gets up; he then leads her out of the room.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS FROM THE GREAT HALL - BAGGAGE ROOM

A large foyer, filled with luggage. The IMMIGRANTS are led outside to the ferry. An elderly man plays a honky-tonk piano as entertainment. Crazy, chaotic...

TWO POLICE OFFICERS stand by the DOOR. SONYA'S gait is halted--men in a uniform could not be more frightening--but instead of focusing on her, they zero in on Bruno. ELLIS ISLAND COP #1:

ELLIS ISLAND COP #1
 Look who it is! Our little sheeny
 and his new girlfriend!
 (re: Sonya)
 This one's more of a looker, Bruno.
 You movin' up?

The Cop takes the hat off Bruno's head, tosses it to the other Cop. They laugh.

BRUNO WEISS
 I could report this sort of
 behavior, you know.

ELLIS ISLAND COP #1
 Oh, okay--you do that. My boss'd
 definitely be concerned about a Jew
 such as yourself.

More LAUGHTER. Bruno is humiliated a bit, vulnerable, as Sonya looks on. The Cop gives Bruno back his hat, putting it back on his head TOO HARD. The top of the hat POPS UP.

ELLIS ISLAND COP #1 (CONT'D)
 Arrright, you little kike. Take
 your friend, go have a good time.

And Bruno and Sonya exit.

EXT. DECK OF THE FERRY - DUSK

Sonya looks out across the water, sitting on a bench near the railing. Bruno is next to her. The FERRY CHUGS ITS WAY FORWARD THROUGH THE FOG.

BRUNO WEISS
 (awkward beat)
 Hey--that thing back there, with
 the cops? Sometimes we gotta put
 up with that, swallow our pride a
 little at the Workman's Circle.

SONYA CYBULSKI
 (looking back at Ellis
 Island)
 Is terrible place...

BRUNO WEISS
 Ah, try and put it outta your mind.
 (beat)
 You know, you speak English really
 good?

SONYA CYBULSKI

I learned when I was nurse, in
Poland. I try to come here, long
time. We go to New York now?

Bruno gestures ahead of them. Through the fog, we begin to see civilization. Sonya stands, eyeing the skyline of LOWER MANHATTAN. The buildings are taller than any she's ever seen. She is blown away. Into her ear, attempting seduction, he puts his arm around her. Turns her around. She is uncomfortable, her body language telling him (and us) to get off her.

BRUNO WEISS

That's the center of the world.
You learn English a little better,
you have anything you want.
Anything. That's the American
dream, right there.

Sonya gently pulls herself away from him...

EXT. LOWER EAST SIDE - OUTSIDE THE JEWEL BOX THEATRE - NIGHT

We are in an ALLEY outside the Jewel Box Theatre, a small venue in New York's Lower East Side. It is dark now, and without the benefit of streetlamps, it's virtually impossible to see the hand in front of your face here.

The marquee--bright and beautiful--provides the only illumination. The alley is filled with ne'er-do-wells, drunks, lowlives. But the place is noisy and, even though dark, lively. We can HEAR carousing.

Bruno leads Sonya past all this to the theater's side entrance:

BRUNO WEISS

I just gotta stop off here, for a
little bit.

The LOWLIVES SEE SONYA, start WHISTLING. They ENCIRCLE her. She grows increasingly frightened.

LOWLIFE

Lookin' good, woman!

Bruno intervenes:

BRUNO WEISS

Back off. She's with me.

Like dogs given an order from their master, they do indeed back off...

INT. JEWEL BOX THEATER

There is a show, or a rather pathetic excuse for one, that is playing. Women of all shapes and sizes parade around, dancing. They are dressed, and made up, in absurd costumes, and one of the women is even in BLACKFACE. It's a BURLESQUE show from the time period, and a piano player, off to the side, provides the musical accompaniment.

Bruno SLINKS past Sonya, COUNTS THE NUMBER OF WOMEN on the STAGE. There are SEVEN. He walks up on STAGE, SQUEEZING the REAR ENDS of the WOMEN as he passes them. Whispering in their ears:

BRUNO WEISS
Smile... Smile...

Sonya is beginning to get a sense that this is going really wrong, and we can SEE it in her face...

SONYA (and we) OBSERVE the "SHOW" that is:

ON STAGE

Despite the ramshackle nature of the performance, the place is quite crowded and truly alive. The audience is made up of men, working-class types, who HOOT and HOLLER and CHEER and BOO with every move of every woman.

They also have no problem hurling objects onto the stage to signal dissatisfaction, satisfaction, curiosity, boredom...

BRUNO WEISS
Gentlemen, you have just witnessed
the Seven Wonders of the World,
created by God himself to bring
pleasure to you! Allow me to
introduce each one!

As Bruno announces each WOMAN, SHE PRANCES AROUND the STAGE. Occasionally, Bruno TURNS to SEE SONYA, checking on her.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
Miss Egypt--her charms would make
the Sphinx himself turn his head!
(next woman)
Lady of Japan, who'll make you feel
like an emperor!
(MORE)

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)

(next woman)

Princess India, perhaps you crave a little taste of her curry and spice!

(next woman)

The Cossack of Love, formerly the Tsar's personal favorite!

(next woman)

Here is Queen of Sheeba, from Africa--this savage can't be tamed, but by all means, try!

(next woman)

What about Marie Antoinette--find out why she really lost her head!

(and finally)

And of course, my favorite and yours, Gypsy--the soothsayer--perhaps she is in your future!

APPLAUSE, HOLLERING. Bruno steps off the stage. He takes Sonya, who realizes she's been had:

SONYA CYBULSKI

You are not with aid group--

BRUNO WEISS

I got you outta there, didn't I? I kept my word? Those groups couldn't do nothing for you.

Bruno grabs her. Walks her hurriedly toward:

INT. BACKSTAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Bruno walks Sonya, his hand around her arm, down the hall. They meet MR. HERMAN SHAHN, who is charging in the opposite direction accompanied by his Assistant. Shahn is fifty-five, with an aquiline nose and silver hair, a furrowed brow and wrinkled skin. Old beyond his years. Dark and piercing eyes, tall and bony-thin and no-nonsense.

MR. SHAHN

Hello Bruno...

BRUNO WEISS

You used my ladies. There were seven of them working--and I want my piece.

Shahn looks to Sonya.

MR. SHAHN
Who's this new beauty?

Bruno pats Shahn's pocket.

MR. SHAHN (CONT'D)
All right, I got your money.

Mr. Shahn takes out a wad of cash, peels off some for Bruno.
As he does:

MR. SHAHN (CONT'D)
I'm gonna bring back some of our
more popular acts, I think. Place
is full up all the time now.

BRUNO WEISS
Yeah, just as long as you don't go
get that goddamn Orlando again.

MR. SHAHN
Take care of the girls, Bruno.
Leave the rest to me.
(to his assistant)
C'mon.

Mr. Shahn keeps walking. Sonya tries to yank free of Bruno's grasp but cannot. He leads her up a flight of stairs and through:

INT. HALLWAY

A busy spot where TOPLESS GIRLS bolt back and forth, from room to room. They move into:

INT. APARTMENT

This is Bruno's apartment. Almost like a railroad car. A kitchen with a wood stove; a bed for one in a separate room; wallpaper from ceiling to wood floor; a small and dark wooden table.

INT. BEDROOM

Bruno leads Sonya into the bedroom. He puts down her bag, takes a drink from his WHISKEY FLASK. They stare each other down. After a beat:

BRUNO WEISS
It's not the Ansonia, but it's
comfortable...and there's a
bathroom at the end of the hall.

Sonya looks around, then back at Bruno. A mix of panic and
anger and fear:

SONYA CYBULSKI
You want I dance...like them?

BRUNO WEISS
Maybe... Maybe some other stuff.

SONYA CYBULSKI
I don't stay here tonight. Not
here, with you.

BRUNO WEISS
Yeah, well, it'll have to do.

SONYA CYBULSKI
You lie to me!

Sonya then bolts, moves toward the door. Bruno GRABS her.

BRUNO WEISS
Where you gonna go? Outside?
They'll tear you apart out there.

He takes out a KNIFE. Smiles.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
Here, you're safe. I can protect
you--ask anyone in the
neighborhood. I have their
respect. They know, I'm a killer.

He flips the knife, primed to catch it. Instead, he catches
the KNIFE with his PALM GRASPING THE BLADE. He slices his
PALM, and BLOOD pours from the wound.

SONYA CANNOT HELP BUT GRIN AT THIS PREPOSTEROUS FALSE
BRAVADO. Her face is FILLED WITH CONTEMPT.

BRUNO DARKENS. EXPLODING, he SMACKS HER, HARD, ACROSS THE
FACE.

Without missing a beat, SHE SPITS RIGHT BACK IN HIS FACE.

Stunned, shocked, he raises his hand to hit her again.
Somehow, he stops himself.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
I paid real money to get you here--
I ain't gonna ruin your face.
(beat)
I got big plans. And you're my
ticket up, whether you like it or
not.

Weiss CLOSES THE DOOR--SLAM.

SONYA sits down on a mattress. Relative SILENCE, though we still HEAR the SHOW BELOW, ever so faintly. She GRABS THE MATTRESS.

INT. LIVING ROOM AREA

She OPENS THE DOOR, DRAGGING THE MATTRESS into the corner of the ROOM. Bruno is here, observing this defiance. He LAUGHS.

She starts to unpack.

BRUNO WEISS
Arrright, stay out here. But I got
your papers--you ain't going
nowhere.

He goes into his BEDROOM and CLOSES THE DOOR.

She continues to unpack. She does not have much.

SONYA takes out a SMALL CRUCIFIX from her TRUNK. She takes out a little square silver locket, opens it up, REVEALING TWO PHOTOS: An older woman, most probably her mother, and an older man, most probably her father. On the other side a portrait of ELENA, HER SISTER. She sets it up on the dresser and places her head on the mattress.

FADE OUT.

CUT IN:

INT. APARTMENT - MORNING

The bright sunlight shines right in Sonya's eyes.

Bruno is up, fully dressed in his suit. He takes a drag of his "Turkey Reds" CIGARETTE, at the MIRROR. He USES TWO BRUSHES SIMULTANEOUSLY, to GROOM his OILY, SHINY DARK HAIR. Sonya eyes him with disdain. He sees that she's up. He picks up Sonya's crucifix off his dresser top:

Bruno HOLDS up the CRUCIFIX.

BRUNO WEISS
Better keep this to yourself.
(beat)
Could cause some trouble.

She gets up, takes the cross back from him. He FOLDS a HANDKERCHIEF NEATLY, places it in his suit pocket. PUTS COLOGNE all over himself. Then puts his POCKET WATCH in his front pants pocket.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
(to himself)
My carnation...

NEATLY PUTS a FLOWER in his LAPEL. Turns to Sonya:

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
Wash your things, on the roof--the girls'll be up there.
(beat)
If you wanna eat, you'd better come to the beach with us.

JUST THEN: A BANGING at the DOOR. Bruno moves to open it. It is a YOUNG KID, a RUNNER.

YOUNG KID
I got a telegram, from the Ox Tail--
for...Sonya? Sonya Cyb-il-sky?

Sonya STANDS. Strangely EXCITED.

SONYA CYBULSKI
Yes--is me.

The Young Kid begins to read the telegram:

YOUNG KID
Elena Cyb--

SONYA CYBULSKI
Cybulski, yes--

YOUNG KID
"Tuberculosis confirmed. Patient to be confined to Ellis Island for a maximum period of six months, after which, barring improvement, patient will be deported."

BRUNO WEISS

Here.

Bruno gives the kid some coins, and the kid departs. Sonya STARES at the TELEGRAM for a beat.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)

Look, uh... I know some people.
You can get her out early--whether
she's cured or not. It's gonna
cost, though--maybe coupla hundred.

SONYA CYBULSKI

I sell everything--

BRUNO WEISS

(laughs at the notion;
points)

All that's worth maybe five
dollars.

SONYA's frozen in her tracks. BRUNO goes to the window. Sticks his head out. He makes a loud noise to what seems like the whole neighborhood: HIS CLAPS HIS HANDS REPEATEDLY and SHOUTS: "HEY HEY HEY HEY!". He is signaling his "girls."

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)

Get up get up! Memorial Day, rise
and shine! We're going to the
beach!

He WHISTLES.

EXT. APARTMENT - MORNING

The WOMEN are sleeping out on fire escapes above and below, due to the warm weather. The apartment overlooks the ALLEY called BANDIT'S ROOST. They are to get ready for their day. When they SEE Bruno, they BLOW HIM KISSES. He waves to them affectionately, like he's a benevolent dictator...

EXT. APARTMENT TENEMENT ROOFTOP - MORNING

All the women wash together. There are several WOODEN TUBS on the roof, and they are washing clothes and hanging them. ONE OF THE WOMEN SINGS a BEAUTIFUL and MELANCHOLY SONG with a lovely voice. The song has an Eastern European sound to it. One of the WOMEN, busty and heavy, is BELVA. And another is CLARA.

Sonya takes out her clothes. Clara gives her a CLOTH and WASHBOARD. She soaps up the clothes quickly. Belva is working in a tub next to hers:

BELVA

Now you'll be all nice for Bruno.

SONYA CYBULSKI

(under her breath)

I don't care about him...

CLARA

(to Belva)

I don't know what you see in him anyway. He ain't nothing but ninety pounds!

BELVA

Yeah, but it's all between his legs!

The WOMEN LAUGH. Just then, a young GIRL, skinny and serious, brings a crate of FRUIT to the roof.

SONYA is given a banana by Clara. She EYES the odd fruit for a moment, then tries to eat it whole without peeling it. Appalled, she spits it out.

The others laugh at her. She GRABS the banana again, takes a BITE out of it, WITH THE PEEL, and struggles to chew it. Clara walks over, peels it for her. Breaks off a piece and hands it to Sonya. Sonya softens a bit, grateful for the aid:

SONYA CYBULSKI

Thank you...

CLARA

Eat it all. Get a little meat on your bones.

(beat)

You come over by yourself?

SONYA CYBULSKI

(shakes her head)

With my sister. She is still on the Island.

BELVA

You could get her off, you know. With money. Bruno helped get my brother outta there.

(beat)

(MORE)

BELVA (CONT'D)
You know, Bruno, he's a real good employer.

CLARA
[But] it takes a lotta money to get 'em outta there.

ANOTHER WOMAN pipes up:

ANOTHER WOMAN
It's a lotta fucking, is what it is.

CLARA
Course, you could always try stealing, honey--

They all LAUGH. SONYA'S MIND STARTS WORKING:

CLARA (CONT'D)
Long as you don't mind getting beat to death when they catch you.

CLOSE SHOT ON SONYA as the girls all laugh. We HEAR some GUITAR MUSIC.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONEY ISLAND BEACH - DAY

It is a warm day: Memorial Day, and there are American flags everywhere.

A table, set up on the beach. Seated: a HOST OF WOMEN and and Mr. Shahn, and a few other men we don't recognize. At the end of the table sits a short, old, grizzled man wearing dark sunglasses--he is blind--playing a guitar. Surprisingly, his playing is lovely; he entertains the table with folk songs, although he plays as much for himself as for the table. The people at the table talk with each other and laugh and do not listen to him.

There are pitchers of BEER and BOWLS with FRIED CLAMS and PLATES of RAW OYSTERS. HOT DOGS and FROGS LEGS and ears of CORN are also laid out across the table.

Bruno and Sonya are here, too. Everyone's eating.

BRUNO WEISS
Arrright, ante up, ante up! For the pageant!

The WOMEN THROW MONEY INTO THE CENTER OF THE TABLE. Sonya's EYES WIDEN. SHE WANTS THAT MONEY...

THE WOMEN (AD-LIB)
I'm gonna win... It's me this year!

The Women look to Sonya to ante up.

SONYA CYBULSKI
I don't have.

BELVA
Then she can't join! She didn't put in!

ANOTHER WOMAN
That's right!

CLARA
Hey Bruno, ain't you gonna introduce us to your new friend?

BRUNO WEISS
Yeah--this is Sonya, everybody.
Escaped the Great War, over in Europe--must've been very hard...
(beat)
Anyway, 'fore we do the pageant, I just wanna say...I know I'm a lucky man, to have such a big family around me. And Mr. Shahn: you gave us a beautiful spread this year, so--thank you.

How is Sonya going to get that CASH? ANGLE ON SONYA as we HEAR:

MR. SHAHN (O.C.)
Beginning of our biggest season, we wanted to kick it off right.
Memorial Day is a start to a long, hot summer.

BRUNO WEISS (O.C.)
We hope. And I'm looking to get a new class of people in this year, a higher class.

Bruno rubs his fingers together to simulate CASH ACCUMULATION. He LOOKS OVER to SONYA.

MR. SHAHN (O.C.)
 That's good. And a lotta people're
 looking for spots in the show, too.
 Orlando's coming back to town.
 He's interested in doing his magic
 for us, he's getting very popular--

Bruno gets VISIBLY ANGRY:

BRUNO WEISS
 Orlando? What'd I say to you 'bout
 him?
 (beat)
What'd I say?!?
 (beat)
 I TOL' you not to bring that
 fucking guy back!

Belva offers her opinion:

BELVA
 I think he's real cute.

BRUNO WEISS
 Shut your mouth! He's a deadbeat.
 A bum, you hear me?

MR. SHAHN
 Arrright, Bruno--can we enjoy
 ourselves here a little bit,
 please?

BRUNO WEISS
 I just wanted to get that straight.

MR. SHAHN
 You did.

BRUNO WEISS
 Okay, then. Good. Benjamin,
 you...you can start the pageant.

The BLIND MAN WITH THE GUITAR nods.

BLIND MAN WITH THE GUITAR
 Yes, Mr. Weiss. Of course.

He PLAYS a SONG. Belva and the Other Women stand, make a
 little line. Sonya does not. She is fixated on the POT.

MR. SHAHN
 Belva is first, the winner three
 years running... Very nice, Belva!
 (MORE)

MR. SHAHN (CONT'D)
There's Ilda--you put on a few
pounds since last year but it's all
for the best! Next is Clara...

Sonya watches Bruno. APPLAUSE from the MEN after each woman is announced. All the men have turned to the women as they parade, and SONYA seizes the OPPORTUNITY.

She STEALTHILY grabs the top few BILLS from the HUGE CASH POT, and quickly shoves it into her pocket.

The MEN GO NUTS, distracted:

MR. SHAHN (CONT'D)
We got a live one here!
(beat)
But oh oh oh... Looks like we got
a winner! We got a winner!

Mr. Shahn takes a junky metal TIARA off the table and places it on Belva's head. MORE APPLAUSE...

INT. APARTMENT - HALLWAY - NIGHT

The whole gang returns from the beach, and they are raucous and singing. Arm in arm, drunk, in the best of moods. Sonya is with them, but apart in disposition. A drunken Belva's counting her money:

BELVA
Hey! One of you didn't put in!
How cheap can you get?!

INT. APARTMENT

Bruno, Sonya, Belva enter the space. Belva pulls Bruno towards her and begins to make out with him. Sonya does not flinch, instead walking to her mattress. She turns her back to them, TAKES OUT THE MONEY SHE STOLE. HIDES IT UNDER A BOOK ON THE DRESSER.

Belva SHOVES Bruno's head to HER BREASTS, which are BALLOONLIKE.

BELVA
Suck me. Suck ME!

She bashes Bruno's head into her chest. He loves it, but it's almost comical now.

BRUNO WEISS
Go get the heels, I want you
taller...

Belva pushes him away, violently. Stares at him, hungry for him. She turns to SEE Sonya, who is now casually getting undressed, readying herself for bed.

BELVA
Wanna share...? It'll cheer you
up--

SONYA CYBULSKI
No.

BRUNO WEISS
Leave her alone and get the heels.
And the garter too.

Belva ignores him for a moment. She reaches down and takes Sonya's SILVER LOCKET off a dresser top. Looks at the photos inside:

BELVA
Who's that, your mother and your
father?

SONYA CYBULSKI
(curt; firmly)
Yes. Put it down, please.

BELVA
Where're they?

SONYA CYBULSKI
They die.

BELVA
(re: the other photo)
That that sister they're keeping
over there?

SONYA CYBULSKI
Yes. Her name is Elena.

Bruno interjects:

BRUNO WEISS
We're gonna fix that.
(beat)
All it takes is money.

ANGLE ON BRUNO as he comes over, fixing his pants. He takes the locket and gives it back to Sonya. As he does, he gooses Belva. She jumps, laughs, then:

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
Go get the heels. PLEASE.

Belva leaves for a moment.

BRUNO AND SONYA ARE NOW ALONE.

Bruno looks at Sonya for a beat. He's pretty wasted. Sonya eyes him with great trepidation.

Moves incredibly close to her. About to kiss her.
Whispered:

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
Know how beautiful you are? You're special, I could see that.

Then he puts his hand on her breast, massages for a beat. Then slips the hand inside the clothing. She stops him.

SONYA CYBULSKI
If you touch me I kill you and then I kill myself.

He pulls back, startled for a moment, then smiles, lets out a laugh:

BRUNO WEISS
You think I'm desperate? I'm not.
I'm an impresario. My girls come after me.
(grins; a drunken confidence)
I've had all of 'em--and I'm gonna have you.

SONYA CYBULSKI
(turns away)
I let them have you.

BRUNO WEISS
Yeah?

SONYA CYBULSKI
Yes. I am going to Polish union.
Or church. Tomorrow.

Bruno's smile disappears. He is surprised by her resistance.
He DARKENS, BLACK AS NIGHT:

BRUNO WEISS

With what? The money you stole?

Sonya turns back to him--afraid now that she's been caught.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)

I saw you take it. Yeah, you're different. But you're not as smart as you think you are. You're no better than the rest of us. You're a soiled dove--it's on your papers, what you did on the boat. Ain't nobody gonna take your money. Now, if you really want your sister back, you'll let me help you. Together, we can do business with some very wealthy men.

(beat)

So think about it. You wanna walk out that door and go to the union? Be my guest. They'll throw you right back on the street. You'll be dead in ten minutes. Or worse. See how much that helps your sister.

(beat)

Tomorrow's your first show. I got someone important coming--[it'll] be our first chance at the real money.

He flips over the book under which she's hidden the money,
TAKES HIS MONEY BACK.

ANGLE ON SONYA. Contemplating her horrendous dilemma. JUST THEN: Belva re-enters, wearing absurdly high heels. Bruno loves this. He begins to finger her between the legs, then re-buries his face in her breasts. He kisses them, sucks on a nipple, occasionally stealing a glance at Sonya...

CUT TO:

BLACKNESS.

BRUNO WEISS'S VOICE

Come take a trip with me... Around the globe...

We HEAR a GONG. The image comes to life as the light comes on from below. It is a CLOSE SHOT on BRUNO, otherworldly:

BRUNO WEISS

And without leaving the comfort of
your chair. Behold--all the women
of the world!

We WIDEN to SEE that we are IN:

INT. THEATER

BRUNO is ONSTAGE, on the side. A parade of the WOMEN comes marching onto the stage, smiling and swaying. Bruno begins to call each one forward:

BRUNO WEISS

There is...Miss Egypt! All the
mysteries of the great pyramids
will be revealed before your very
eyes by this modern-day Cleopatra!

Out steps one of his Women, who is in no way Egyptian. Voluptuous, the "Egyptian" is costumed like a bellydancer, and she does a BELLYDANCE move.

The CROWD OF MEN CHEER and WHISTLE. They love it.

BACKSTAGE

Is Sonya, who is DRESSED as the STATUE OF LIBERTY. She stands near each of the Women in their costumes as they get ushered onstage.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)

Or is it the Lady of Japan who
catches your fancy? This Geisha
girl has come from the Orient to
tantalize the senses and soothe the
white man's soul...

Out steps another of Bruno's Women, this one with pancake makeup and Geisha attire and absurd eye makeup for an Asian effect. She turns around for the audience, waving a fan. The CROWD "OOOHS" at the sight of her.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)

Find out how this Cossack of Love
brought Napoleon to his knees and
made the Kremlin quake with desire!

Out steps a third Bruno's Woman, dressed in a Cossack's elaborate outfit and giant fur hat.

ALL OF A SUDDEN: a MAN FROM THE AUDIENCE, OVERCOME WITH LUST, RUSHES THE STAGE. A team of BURLY MEN THROW HIM BACK INTO THE AUDIENCE. A TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY VERSION OF THE MOSH PIT, and the rest of the crowd LOVES it.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
And there's...GYPSY! Who turns
boys to men and men back to boys!

A fourth Woman, an older woman. Dressed, you guessed it, as a Gypsy.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
We've toured the world...

A TATTERED AMERICAN FLAG DROPS BEHIND EVERYONE on the STAGE.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
And now they're all yours, right
back here in America!

The OTHER WOMEN THEN GO TOPLESS and START TO DO A DANCE TOGETHER, a coordinated but ungraceful series of leg kicks set to the piano.

All of a sudden, SONYA is pushed toward the stage on by two other girls. Bruno continues:

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
Lady Liberty opens her arms and
welcomes you--to the bosom of
America! You'll be carrying a
torch for HER before too long!

OUT STEPS SONYA AS THE STATUE OF LIBERTY. It's humiliating.

The crowd goes SILENT at the sight of SONYA. SONYA is beyond uncomfortable as the crowd begins to murmur. She backs away, still on the stage, still exposed...

The WOMEN start SINGING:

THE WOMEN
*America, I love you,
You're like a sweetheart of mine,
From ocean to ocean,
For you my devotion,
Is touching each bound'ry line!*

As the women sing, we SEE the SILHOUETTE of a MAN STAND IN FRONT OF THE GIRLS (and the camera). We RACK FOCUS: it is OSKAR STRAUB.

CUT TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE DRESSING ROOM

CLOSE SHOT on SONYA as she REMOVES her MAKE UP from her face. She sits in front of one of the MIRRORS and INTENTLY works around her EYES. We HEAR:

MAN'S VOICE (O.C)

Mr. Weiss?

WIDEN to REVEAL: OSKAR STRAUB, a wealthy clothing executive. Mid-fifties in age, with a Van Dyke beard/moustache and wire spectacles. Sonya listens to the entire following conversation as a Woman brings a PLATE of FOOD to Bruno, who is seated at a desk across from a row of illuminated mirrors. He immediately dives into the boiled meat and potatoes.

Other Girls are bustling in and out.

OSKAR STRAUB

My name is Oskar Straub.

BRUNO WEISS

Yes sir, of course. I know about you. You're the garment maker, from uptown--so glad you could come.

OSKAR STRAUB

I was very impressed with your show.

BRUNO WEISS

Thank you. I'm just obliged for your high regard.

OSKAR STRAUB

My salesmen speak very highly of you.

BRUNO WEISS

Yes, a couple of them are regulars, as you know. I'm glad they tol' you about us.

OSKAR STRAUB
(sits down next to him)
I have a...problem.
(beat)
It's my son. His name is Leo. He
needs care. He's not...he's not a
masculine boy.

BRUNO WEISS
(nodding)
We could be of service to you,
definitely.
(beat)
Did you see anything in particular
you liked?

OSKAR STRAUB
(turns to Sonya)
I like this one.

Straub points to Sonya. The CAMERA DOLLIES INTO A CLOSE SHOT
ON SONYA as she REALIZES her new FATE is soon upon her.
Bruno hurriedly takes Mr. Straub by the arm and turns him
away from Sonya. Quietly:

BRUNO WEISS
She's new. She's different from
the others--she's very smart.
(beat; sotto)
Almost a virgin. Tender.

OSKAR STRAUB
Good.

Straub takes out a WAD OF CASH. HUGE AMOUNT.

OSKAR STRAUB (CONT'D)
Half now, half later?

Bruno's eyes bulge at the sight of the money, but he attempts
to act nonplussed. Straub peels off a LOT of money.

BRUNO WEISS
I'm sure we could accommodate such
an arrangement.

Straub hands Bruno a BUSINESS CARD:

OSKAR STRAUB
This is the address. Come tomorrow
afternoon, it'll be more
comfortable for my son if he's at
home.

Straub looks to Sonya, tips his hat, turns and walks away. Bruno turns to Sonya and Belva. He LOOKS to SONYA, who eyes him back.

Sonya begins to get emotional.

Bruno stands, walks over, staring at Sonya. Finally, she steels herself. Pointing to the cash in Bruno's hand:

SONYA CYBULSKI
For this, I keep all that money.

BRUNO WEISS
You'll get your cut.

Bruno pockets the money as we:

CUT TO:

INT. OSKAR STRAUB'S TOWNHOUSE - DAY

It is a magnificent place. Burgundy and ochre and wood and crystal chandeliers and paintings on the walls.

It smells of money, though nouveau riche to be sure. There is a grand staircase with deep red carpeting and an antechamber with golden-colored settees and plants.

Bruno and Sonya enter. Sonya eyes the townhouse with the same kind of awe with which she regarded the skyline. She has never seen such opulence. IN SONYA'S EAR:

BRUNO WEISS
Lookit this place... They understand one thing in this country, and that's money. Me and you catch one big fish like this, the rest come running.

Coming from the top of the staircase is Oskar Straub.

OSKAR STRAUB
My son is in the library.

BRUNO WEISS
Rest assured, Mr. Straub--it'll go good.

Straub nods. He then looks to the nervous Sonya and we:

CUT TO:

INT. OSKAR STRAUB'S TOWNHOUSE - LIBRARY

A smaller, though no less ornate space. Sitting on a sofa is: LEO STRAUB, bespectacled and withdrawn, awkward. A horse-face. His hands rest nervously on his kneecaps. His mouth seems permanently open, as though he were a whale screening for plankton.

OSKAR STRAUB

Leo? I want you to meet Sonya.

LEO STRAUB

Hello.

Sonya nods to him.

OSKAR STRAUB

I'll leave you now, you can talk,
get acquainted.

(to Bruno)

If they need anything, they can
ring the valet.

With that, Straub leaves the room. Bruno, Sonya, Leo.

A servant brings in some tea on a platter. The servant pours the tea on a small table, departs. Awkward.

LEO STRAUB

I'm not... My father wants me to
do this.

BRUNO WEISS

You and Sonya are gonna really like
each other.

(turns to Sonya)

Don't you think?

(no answer, so:)

Huh?

SONYA CYBULSKI

(sotto)

Yes...

Bruno turns to Leo:

BRUNO WEISS

You ever see such a beautiful
woman? Right here, right in front
of you?

LEO STRAUB

Is she Jewish?

BRUNO WEISS

Temple, twice a day. Sonya--why
don't you and Leo talk a little
amongst yourselves in there?

Bruno gestures to another room, a bedroom. Sonya stands. So
does Leo. Leo approaches Sonya when Bruno gives Leo a subtle
shove.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)

G'head, hold her hand. G'head.

Leo does.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)

Feels good, no?

(to Sonya)

Take him in there, relax him. Go
on.

Sonya leads Leo into the bedroom. And Bruno closes the door.
By himself, we can SEE that Bruno is EXTREMELY NERVOUS.
Bruno takes a glass bottle of alcohol off a shelf and pours
it in the teacup. Swigs it down.

INT. BEDROOM

Sonya and Leo. ALSO nervous. She sits on the edge of the
bed. Leo approaches, sits down next to her. He awkwardly,
mechanically kisses her. Turns away. Then he tries again,
adding a hand on her breast. Turns away again, stands up.

His back is to her. He is shaking his head.

LEO STRAUB

Do you even talk? You speak
English?

SONYA CYBULSKI

I speak English.

LEO STRAUB

Please leave.

(beat)

It's just not gonna happen.

Sonya stands, exits the room, re-entering:

INT. LIBRARY

Where Bruno is pissed to see her. He stands:

BRUNO WEISS
What're you doing?!? Get back in there.

SONYA CYBULSKI
There is nothing.

BRUNO WEISS
There's nothing?!?

SONYA CYBULSKI
He doesn't do it.

BRUNO WEISS
What the hell is wrong with you?
You gotta show him. Show him, come on!
Get the fuck back in there!

She does not move. Bruno seems ready to explode, but then turns on a dime, and his angle of attack changes most radically. Becomes surprisingly tender:

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
Sonya. Listen. You're the most beautiful woman that boy has ever seen.
(moves closer)
I could see the way he looked at you and I knew you were the one who could do this.
(moves even closer)
Go on and make him a man. Just close your eyes and pretend that he's the one you love.

ANGLE ON SONYA as she still looks conflicted. Then we:

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM

Sonya enters the bedroom. We SEE only her. We STILL HEAR:

BRUNO WEISS (O.S.; POST-LAP)
Sonya--
(beat)
Do it for yourself, and everyone you care about...
(beat)
You know how much this means for your family...
(MORE)

BRUNO WEISS (O.S.; POST-LAP) (CONT'D)

(beat)

Go on...

Then Sonya starts to walk toward Leo. She stands behind him and caresses his body. She kisses his neck. He turns, looks at her. She kisses him on the lips--if not passionately, at least with kindness.

He seems to begin to relax.

She continues to kiss him all over.

She steps back, DISROBES. The boy's EYES widen.

CUT TO:

INT. OX TAIL TAVERN - NIGHT

It is a turn-of-the-century tavern and restaurant that serves comfort food versions of American and Italian fare. Crowded and drunken and alive.

Bruno eats lustily, happily. Swigs MORE ALCOHOL. Sonya, on the other hand, is frozen.

The waiter brings Sonya her plate of SPAGHETTI. She stares at it.

BRUNO WEISS

That kid'll remember you the rest of his life. His father was happy too, thank God. I mean, lookit all this!

He is REFERRING TO the CASH he presumably took from Mr. Straub. He peels off some bills and slides them to her.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)

You shouldn't let the other girls see it--they'll get jealous. Most of 'em don't make that much in a week. They just ain't as fine-looking as you.

(more intimate)

Listen, for this kinda client, we won't pay the cops their usual share. It'll be just between you and me. Understood?

After a beat, she seems to decide it's the right move: TAKE THE MONEY. Sheepishly, she takes the money and puts it away. She does not eat.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
Aren't you hungry?

SONYA CYBULSKI
No.

BRUNO WEISS
That's spaghetti. It's delicious.

SONYA CYBULSKI
(under her breath)
Bloody worms...

A YOUNG WOMAN comes over, holding a selection of HATS. Bruno chooses one. The Woman holds a small mirror to him:

BRUNO WEISS
Oh, this is very nice--I like it.
I like it. And gimme a pack of
"Turkey Reds."

Bruno gives the Young Woman some cash, points to Sonya.
Referring to a HAT:

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
Why don't you give her one--put
that one on her.

The Young Woman gives Bruno a pack of "Turkey Red" cigarettes. Bruno then chooses a gaudy chapeau adorned with a big feather. It's absurd. The Woman puts the hat on Sonya.

SONYA CYBULSKI
I don't want it.

Bruno SEES TEARS STREAMING DOWN SONYA'S CHEEKS.

BRUNO WEISS
Arrright, she don't want the hat.
Go. Go.

The Young Woman leaves the table. Bruno pours a glass of wine, passes it to Sonya.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
Here.

SONYA CYBULSKI
How long I do this?

BRUNO WEISS
What?

SONYA CYBULSKI
For my sister, how long do I do
this?

A beat.

BRUNO WEISS
I don't know. I gotta work it out.
Have a drink.

After a beat:

SONYA CYBULSKI
I promised myself, I don't cry.

BRUNO WEISS
Well, you got nothing to cry about.
It's big, what happened. What's
the matter, you don't like money?

SONYA CYBULSKI
No. I like money.
(beat)
I don't like you.

Bruno looks at her.

SONYA CYBULSKI (CONT'D)
I hate you.

Bruno squeezes his glass until it BREAKS in his hand.

BRUNO WEISS
(quiet but burning)
I did this for you--not nobody
else! Not that fat uncle of yours!
He didn't want no part of you, that
fat fuck! You remember that!

SONYA STOPS IN HER TRACKS.

SONYA CYBULSKI
How do you know my uncle is fat?
(beat)
You saw him?

BRUNO WEISS
(caught)
No, I didn't see nobody. I, I just
figured.
(beat)
Now shut up and have a drink.
(MORE)

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
Just when it's all coming together,
all you can do is fuckin' complain.

Bruno calms down, takes yet another swig. The CAMERA DOLLIES INTO A CLOSE SHOT OF SONYA as she seems to begin plotting a move.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
You don't like the bloody worms,
we'll get you something else.
Waiter--

INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE BRUNO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bruno comes up the stairs and he is drunk to the point of nonverbal stupor. He is STUMBLING AROUND and barely able to walk. Sonya is behind him, helping him steady his gait from time to time. He WHISTLES to her, ridiculous, attempting to seduce. Then mutters to her:

BRUNO WEISS
I want you...
(beat)
Why d'you say no to me? You're the
only one...

And then right outside their door, Bruno COLLAPSES onto the floor. He is PASSED OUT. GONE. Sonya EYES him for a beat, then takes the apartment keys off him and opens the door.

INT. APARTMENT

Sonya DRAGS Bruno into the front of the apartment. Leaves him there.

INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM

She barrels into the bedroom and goes through all of her things. Puts sundry items into her pockets, among them her CRUCIFIX and her FAMILY PHOTO LOCKET. She opens a pouch in the lining of the trunk. INSIDE: some ENVELOPES. She looks at one of them.

CLOSE SHOT ON a WRINKLED ENVELOPE with an ADDRESS ON IT. SONYA LOOKS AT IT FOR A MOMENT, then pockets it.

Sonya steps over Bruno gingerly.

INT. HALLWAY

She closes the apartment door softly. Afraid to make a noise. She takes about two steps away from the door WHEN:

THE DOOR ACROSS THE WAY OPENS. It's Belva. There is SERIOUS CAMERADERIE happening inside her place--it's a party--and Belva seems as drunk as ever. Sonya grabs a peek inside.

It is ALL OF BRUNO'S WOMEN, and they are PASSING AN OPIUM PIPE AROUND. A Victrola plays a popular Blue Amberol record, a cylinder recording.

BELVA
We're having a little fun. Why
doncha c'mon in?

SONYA CYBULSKI
(smiles)
No... no thank you...

BELVA
Hoity-toity...
(under her breath)
Bitch.

Belva walks--or rather, stammers--to the bathroom.

When she's out of sight, Sonya HURRIES DOWN THE CORRIDOR and out the theater.

EXT. LOWER EAST SIDE STREET - NIGHT

Sonya walks out onto ORCHARD STREET, which is fairly busy--and fairly scary.

STREET URCHINS run past her, bumping into her as she walks briskly down the street, carrying all of her things.

SERIES OF SHOTS as:

She LOOKS UP AT STREET SIGNS, hurrying more and more: ALLEN STREET...CHRISTIE STREET...

EXT. LOWER EAST SIDE STREET - NEAR A PUB

She stops, out of breath, completely lost. She approaches a MAN outside the pub and shows him the ENVELOPE with the ADDRESS on it.

SONYA CYBULSKI
Please--tell me, where I go?

The Man shrugs, smiling, happy to oblige but unable to help:

ITALIAN MAN
Italiano, no Inglese!

He then goes on, speaking to her more in Italian. She turns away, fretting.

ITALIAN MAN #2
'Scuse me, lady--I speak English.

SONYA CYBULSKI
Please, where I go?

Italian Man #2 looks at the envelope address.

ITALIAN MAN #2
This is the wrong way.
(pointing)
It's very far... You have to go
across Houston, north...

EXT. WEST VILLAGE - MEATPACKING DISTRICT - EARLY MORNING

A neighborhood street. We STILL HEAR:

ITALIAN MAN #2 (POST-LAP; O.S.)
...and west, to where the
meatpackers work...

Sonya looks at the house, the street sign, the number. She's found her uncle. Maybe.

She RINGS THE BELL. After a moment, a diminutive woman with dark hair opens the door. We'll call her EDYTA, thirty.

SONYA CYBULSKI
This is home of Voytek Bistricky?

Edyta nods. Sonya virtually EXPLODES in HAPPINESS. Her FACE LIGHTS UP. She BEAMS. Begins to speak in POLISH, almost hyperventilating:

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLED) (CONT'D)
I'm Sonya! I'm his niece--is he
home?

Edyta smiles, warmly beseeching Sonya to enter, spreading her arms for an embrace:

EDYTA (SUBTITLE)
My God, my child, yes! We looked
for you, for so long...please, come
in--

INT. VOYTEK BISTRICKY'S HOUSE - FOYER

Sonya enters the space, which is dark and covered in earth tones. There is religious iconography everywhere. The house is quite decently appointed. Emerging from a room we can't see is:

VOYTEK BISTRICKY, fifty, crew cut, a big man. It's early; he'd been sleeping, but he's slipped on a t-shirt and pants. Stern, with bruised knuckles and what looks like black paint on his fingers and under his nails. He seems stunned to SEE SONYA.

Sonya grins widely, and immediately moves to HUG VOYTEK. She is OVERCOME WITH JOY, so much so that she virtually cries. He, in return, pats her back without saying a word. Yet. Then:

VOYTEK BISTRICKY (IN ENGLISH)
How you come here?

Sonya responds in Polish:

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE)
It was so long...and terrible,
Uncle Voytek.
(beat)
I, I must tell you everything.

VOYTEK BISTRICKY (SUBTITLE)
Sit down, please.

Voytek leads Sonya into:

INT. LIVING ROOM AREA

Which is sparse but warm. Voytek stands in the foyer; turns to Edyta:

VOYTEK BISTRICKY (SUBTITLE)
Bring her some food, some water.

He leans into Edyta's EAR and WHISPERS SOMETHING WE CAN'T HEAR.

She looks TROUBLED. He stares back, then, frustrated:

VOYTEK BISTRICKY (SUBTITLE) (CONT'D)

Go.

She departs to the kitchen. He comes over to Sonya and sits down.

VOYTEK BISTRICKY (SUBTITLE) (CONT'D)

They told me you weren't on the boat. At the Island, they said you and Elena never came.

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE)

You were there for us? They said you didn't come for us, but I knew it--I knew you were there, you wouldn't forget us!

VOYTEK BISTRICKY (SUBTITLE)

Yes. I looked for you.

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE)

We arrived, and then they just told Elena that she had to go to the hospital. They told me I had to go back. Then a man I met took me to New York.

VOYTEK BISTRICKY (SUBTITLE)

A man you met?

(beat)

What did he want from you?

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE)

He was a monster. He wanted me to do some things for him, but I got away, I ran away from him.

(beat)

And now I'm here. We just have to get Elena, that's all.

Sonya smiles. Edyta brings a tray of cookies and water and some tea out for the two of them. Edyta looks sick to her stomach. She goes back to the kitchen.

VOYTEK BISTRICKY (SUBTITLE)

Yes...yes.

(beat)

(MORE)

VOYTEK BISTRICKY (SUBTITLE) (CONT'D)
 We got your letters... It's very
 bad, what happened to your mother.

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE)
 She was so brave, Uncle... The
 soldiers shot father, and she tried
 to stop them. So...

SONYA BREAKS DOWN.

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE) (CONT'D)
 They cut off her head. Elena saw
 it, too...
 (beat; recovers a little)
 I'm so tired... I walked for so
 long to get here, all night. But
 I'm so happy.

VOYTEK BISTRICKY (SUBTITLE)
 (nods; then)
 Yes. You're safe now, so...rest.

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE)
 Thank you so much... I'm so glad
 to be with my family...

Sonya takes out the locket with the FAMILY PICTURES. She
 rubs the photo of her SISTER:

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE) (CONT'D)
 (sotto voce)
 And we'll bring Elena here.
 Soon...

He strokes her forehead, leans her back on the sofa. Gently.
 Seemingly with love. Whispers:

VOYTEK BISTRICKY (SUBTITLE)
 Yes, yes, we'll work it all out.
 Rest.

He walks over to the window, and opens it a crack.

VOYTEK BISTRICKY (SUBTITLE) (CONT'D)
 A nice breeze... You'll feel
 better. I have to go to work...

With a smile on her face, comfortable at last, she DRIFTS OFF
 and FALLS ASLEEP. SILENCE, except for SONYA'S BREATHING.

CUT TO:

A SERIES OF IMAGES

With no sound. We SEE: SONYA, dressed in a beautiful, flowing white dress, and she is in a lush GREEN PARK AREA.

She runs toward: ELENA, SONYA'S sister. ELENA is sitting under a tree, on a blanket, with UNCLE VOYTEK and AUNT EDYTA.

They are so happy to be joined by SONYA, who sits on the grass with them. She could not appear happier herself...

CUT BACK TO:

INT. VOYTEK BISTRICKY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Sonya is awakened by a LIGHT SWITCHING ON, right in her face. She's momentarily blinded, and as she recovers, she speaks (in Polish), still smiling:

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE)
I was dreaming--Elena was here and
we--

Sonya stops, her smile disappearing immediately. Then we SEE what she sees:

UNCLE VOYTEK, leading FOUR POLICE OFFICERS toward SONYA.
POLICE OFFICER #1:

POLICE OFFICER #1
We're gonna have to ask you to come
with us, please. And don't give us
any trouble.

SONYA CYBULSKI
I don't--understand.

POLICE OFFICER #1
You don't have proof of residence,
you're here illegally.
(beat)
You'll be detained at Ellis Island,
awaiting deportation.

Sonya turns to Voytek, DEVASTATED:

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE)
Uncle Voytek--

VOYTEK BISTRICKY (SUBTITLE)
I have a good name here, a business
--I won't be shamed!

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE)
But I didn't do anything--

VOYTEK BISTRICKY (SUBTITLE)
They told me what you did in the
ship! I'm only happy my sister
didn't live to see it. A disgrace--
a whore!

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE)
No--you don't know what happened--
please--

VOYTEK BISTRICKY (SUBTITLE)
God knows! God sees you!
You're a WHORE, in my house!

SONYA CYBULSKI
What about Elena?!? You can't
leave her there!

VOYTEK BISTRICKY (SUBTITLE)
I pray for her. She's sick--you
poisoned her! She's poisoned!

Sonya is DRAGGED OFF, SCREAMING. We SEE VOYTEK, and though
he has the steely exterior, we SEE a CRACK, a slight WINCE...

We SEE EDYTA, from the kitchen, WATCHING IT ALL: she blurts
out a:

EDYTA
No!

VOYTEK BISTRICKY (SUBTITLE)
(explodes in violent rage)
Shut up! Shut your mouth!

SONYA and EDYTA make EYE CONTACT. EDYTA CONTINUES WATCHING,
and HIDING at the same time. Edyta CLOSES THE DOOR as SONYA
is taken, kicking and screaming...

INT. ELLIS ISLAND - THIRD FLOOR - DAY

A SMALL CROWD, slightly panicked. Police Officers and
Immigration Officials are escorting each to a nearby CELL.
The CAMERA MOVES THROUGH THE CROWD to REVEAL:

SONYA. Her EYES are checked with a buttonhook. She is then
FINGERPRINTED. An IMMIGRATION OFFICIAL and a COP take SONIA
by the ARM and gently WALK HER down the DARK, TILED HALLWAY.

INT. ELLIS ISLAND - CELL

Sonya is put inside a large room, with unattended bunk beds. Windows with bars, and the windows are high--in order to see out the window, one would have to stand on the bed.

There are TWO OTHER PEOPLE, asleep and looking quite sick, on bunk beds. Sonya is jumpy, running to the window. It's too high for her, but she climbs on a bunk:

IMMIGRATION OFFICIAL

Ma'am?

SONYA CYBULSKI

Where is the hospital?

IMMIGRATION OFFICIAL

On the south side of the Island.
You can't see it from here. Is everything okay? You feeling sick?

SONYA CYBULSKI

(shakes head; then)

No... My sister is there...

IMMIGRATION OFFICIAL

Oh. No visitation for you, I'm sorry.

She steps down.

IMMIGRATION OFFICIAL (CONT'D)

Your deportation hearing's tomorrow--
-they don't work on Sundays.

(checks his notes)

But I see you were here already--
checked in by Mr. McNally? He'll be notified...

(as he writes)

There'll be some entertainment
tonight, for the detainees. Out on
the lawn, if you're interested...

(beat)

Listen, uh...I don't know what
you're here for, but if you look
healthy for the board, it helps.

A beat. The Official nods to Sonya. He spins around, leaves. The door is LOCKED behind her. She looks out the small window in the door, which looks out to the hall.

SONYA SITS ON THE BUNK BED, SEES other IMMIGRANTS, waiting to be put in other cells or quarantined.

ANOTHER IMMIGRANT speaks, shrouded in darkness under a bunk bed. A woman, wizened and old beyond her years.

ANOTHER IMMIGRANT (SUBTITLE)
 You're Polish? I'm from Gdansk.
 It's terrible, the way they treat
 us here. They make us victims.

A beat. Sonya looks up at the Immigrant. Coolly:

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE)
 I'm not a victim.

Sonya moves to a sink against the wall. There are three, right next to each other, with a long mirror above the sinks. She turns on the water, looks into the MIRROR.

Without a hint of self-pity or soul-searching, she begins the process of improvement. She repeatedly runs her splayed fingers through her hair, her hands substituting for a comb.

She then begins to slap herself on each cheek. HARD. She then PINCHES herself on each cheek. HARD. ANOTHER SLAP. HARD.

She reaches under the sink. RUBS HER FINGER hard against a SHARP BOLT that protrudes from a pipe.

HER FINGER IS CUT. BLOOD.

She takes her bloody finger and rubs it on her lips, like lipstick.

She washes her hands, checks her appearance again in the mirror.

ALL OF A SUDDEN, we HEAR:

CHANTING.

SONYA STOPS. She turns. It's coming from the HALL. She moves to the window in the DOOR. PEERS OUT.

It's a RELIGIOUS PROCESSIONAL.

A PRIEST leads a SMALL GROUP OF THE FAITHFUL. They hold up a STATUE of the MADONNA HOLDING BABY JESUS.

The PROCESSIONAL passes by the door. They are SINGING "KYRIE ELEISON".

It is as though Sonya were transported back to her youth. She is moved. She presses against the glass, her hands against the steel door. In Polish:

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE) (CONT'D)
 (sotto; to, and for,
 herself)
 Mother Mary...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CELL - NIGHT

Sonya is lying on her BUNK BED. She BEGINS TO HEAR SINGING. OPERA-STYLE. It is AMAZING. Where is that coming from?

The other IMMIGRANTS in the CELL, this time numbering around EIGHT, all clamor at the WINDOW looking out at the water. The WINDOW is high, too high, so they all sit on the top bunk beds near the window.

SONYA joins them. SHE SEES, on a STAGE that has been set up on the GREAT LAWN:

ENRICO CARUSO

SINGING. It is SPECTACULAR, almost miraculous. He BELTS out a PUCCINI PIECE, and he does it with his characteristic FORCE and PASSION and COMMITMENT.

A SMALL ORCHESTRA is assembling itself, and CARUSO then starts to sing SCALES. He's WARMING UP, REHEARSING.

A CLOSE SHOT ON SONYA. We HEAR: a "TAH-DAH!" from the small orchestra. a PRE-LAP.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE GREAT LAWN - NIGHT

All the DETAINÉES, the OTHER IMMIGRANTS, are seated on benches on the lawn. SONYA is in the middle of the crowd, and she is just as AWED as anyone by the show.

On the stage is a VAUDEVILLE-STYLE ENTERTAINER. He BOWS, and the IMMIGRANTS APPLAUD.

VAUDEVILLE-STYLE ENTERTAINER
 Thank you, ladies and gentlemen!

THREE TRANSLATORS are perched strategically around the CROWD, quietly translating for different groups--RUSSIAN, ITALIAN, GERMAN. Sonya sits in the unofficial "Polish" section, and the translator whispers his Russian version of the show to them...

VAUDEVILLE-STYLE ENTERTAINER (CONT'D)

You will be entertained tonight by
the one and only Enrico Caruso, the
world's finest tenor!

(beat)

But first, a touch of magic! From
a master prestidigitator--a
veritable Magus, who will amaze you
with his gravity-defying derring-
do! Ladies and gentlemen, I give
you...ORLANDO THE GREAT!

A PIECE OF MUSIC is played by the surprisingly competent orchestra.

OUT STEPS: ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN.

"Orlando the Magician," thirties, as he is known to almost everyone except for his mother. He is the consummate entertainer--and he has an open face and a tremendously warm smile. His eyes can penetrate your soul, it seems; and he has charisma to spare. A star.

Sonya's ATTENTION is heightened. Orlando BOWS. The crowd applauds. His THEME MUSIC PLAYS, an original composition which sounds like a circus ditty.

VAUDEVILLE-STYLE ENTERTAINER (CONT'D)

Behold--the Death Drop! The most
dangerous trick ever attempted!
Even the legendary Houdini himself
does not dare to flirt with doom in
such a manner!

Orlando STRETCHES HIS ARMS OUTWARD, a HUGE GRIN on his face. His loyal assistant, ROGER, who says he's twenty-one and looks no older than fifteen, is off-stage, checking the rigging. ORLANDO summons TWO POLICE OFFICERS, who are holding a STRAITJACKET. The two cops TEST the jacket, pulling on it and checking the latches.

POLICE OFFICER WITH THE STRAITJACKET

It's definitely real!

Orlando is ready for his straitjacket; it's put on him, and he jokes:

ORLANDO

A lotta people think this is where
I belong!

Sonya, along with the rest of the crowd, LAUGHS. The cops SECURE ORLANDO in his jacket, and they tie a ROPE around his ANKLES. The cops and Roger and two other men PULL the ROPE, YANKING ORLANDO UPSIDE DOWN.

AS they continue to YANK, he RISES, SUSPENDED IN AIR, UPSIDE DOWN.

VAUDEVILLE-STYLE ENTERTAINER

We ask you to be very quiet. The
slightest sound could prove to be
fatal!

SONYA GASPS; it looks as though Orlando is in terrible
peril...

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN

My mother always told me to avoid
high places!

SONYA, THE CROWD ALL LAUGH. ORLANDO is pulled up to a PLATFORM, about 100 FEET in the air. He UNHOOKS HIMSELF from the rope with only his feet and legs--in itself a rather remarkable achievement--then proceeds to walk a tightrope that stretches perhaps 80 FEET ACROSS.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)

And my doctor told me to avoid
excitement!

HALFWAY ACROSS THE TIGHTROPE, ORLANDO...FALLS!

SONYA AND THE CROWD SCREAM...

But Orlando is tethered to the rope by a cable. HE HANGS UPSIDE DOWN, in a straitjacket, swinging:

VAUDEVILLE-STYLE ENTERTAINER

Oh, ladies and gentlemen, this is
TERRIBLE! SOMETHING HAS GONE WRONG--
-IS ORLANDO HURT?!?

COMMOTION in the crowd. Orlando, still swinging upside down.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN

I'm fine, I'm fine! The question
is, why are all of you upside down?

SONYA and the CROWD LAUGH, CHEER. Then, in a sudden BURST, the CABLE RELEASES ORLANDO, and he DROPS STRAIGHT DOWN INTO A LARGE TUB OF WATER BELOW.

MORE SCREAMS. And then--

The TUB TURNS RED--BLOOD RED!

SONYA'S EYES BULGE in FEAR. THE CROWD GASPS YET AGAIN! SECONDS GO BY. What will happen? Is the great Orlando dead?

VAUDEVILLE-STYLE ENTERTAINER

Oh no, ladies and gentlemen, this
is tragic! Orlando the Great has
fallen! This is TRAGIC!

Is he dead? In a word, NO.

After a few worried moments of COMMOTION, ORLANDO CALLS OUT from...BEHIND THE AUDIENCE!!!!

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN

YES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, IT'S
TRAGIC! WHATEVER WILL HAPPEN TO
ORLANDO THE GREAT?!?

Everyone TURNS AROUND. He is not only ALIVE, but looks to be in tip-top shape, dressed in a white dress shirt and black pants. Hair is combed, believe it or not.

THE SPOTLIGHT SWINGS TO HIM. Ta-DA! FROM THE ORCHESTRA.

He BOWS, GRINNING. THE CROWD GOES WILD. SONYA SEEMS GENUINELY MOVED BY ORLANDO'S STUNNING COMEBACK.

Orlando PULLS a MULTI-COLORED HANDKERCHIEF from his SLEEVE, HANDS it to an Audience Member. He then PULLS a WHITE ROSE from the other SLEEVE.

He turns and hands it to:

SONYA. She lights up. AND SO DOES HE. There is undoubtedly a CONNECTION between the two of them. She is entranced, yes, but he too is certainly struck--by her memorable face...

He PAUSES briefly, staring at her. He cups her chin with his hand, gently. Sotto voce, almost inaudible, completely sincere and serious:

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)

(under his breath)

God, you're beautiful...

He then continues his march to the stage. SONYA is THUNDERSTRUCK by ORLANDO, finding him simply magnificent, beautiful, singular, transcendent...

He HOPS UP, amidst tremendous applause, and then silences the crowd. He waits a BEAT, then:

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)

Ladies and gentlemen, the Great Caruso will sing for you now. But before I go--as I look out at all of your faces, I am reminded that, at one time, we were ALL immigrants. I have just returned from a tour that took me from Chicago, to St. Louis, and on to San Francisco... I saw this great country--and I know someday you will all see it too! So I say to you now: don't lose faith! Don't lose hope! The American dream is alive...for you!

The TRANSLATORS REPEAT WHAT HE SAYS. And when they are done, he is wrapping up, about to depart the stage to THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE. Sonya exhales, for the first time in minutes...

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)

GOODNIGHT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN...and now I give you...CARUSO!

THE ORCHESTRA STARTS UP, PLAYING A PIECE OF PUCCINI. Out steps the corpulent and commanding ENRICO CARUSO.

APPLAUSE.

He begins to BELT OUT a piece from "LA BOHEME".

CUT TO:

EXT. EMBANKMENT

We STILL HEAR the CARUSO. As we do: a small boat with a sail comes up to the side of the embankment.

A BIG, STOCKY GUY with a smashed nose and massive arms and broad shoulders, named HEINZ, ties the boat to the side.

Stepping out: CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY and BRUNO WEISS. They seem focused.

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
Thanks, Heinz. We'll be back.

EXT. GREAT LAWN

THOMAS MCNALLY walks through the crowd of immigrants,
SEARCHING. MEANWHILE:

EXT. ELLIS ISLAND - NEAR THE GREAT LAWN - INTERCUT

BRUNO WEISS is behind the AUDIENCE, watching McNally. An
IRISH COP approaches Bruno.

IRISH COP
Hey Jew--

Bruno looks at the Irish Cop.

IRISH COP (CONT'D)
(moves closer)
What're you doin' back here, pimp?

The normally smooth-talking Bruno is mumbling, taciturn,
almost shy.

BRUNO WEISS
I'm, I'm not a pimp. I'm a
showman.

IRISH COP
Yeah? What're you gonna show me?
C'mere.

The Irish Cop pats him down.

IRISH COP (CONT'D)
You armed, showman? It's Federal
property, you know. You wouldn't
show up here armed, would you?

BRUNO WEISS
No, officer. I'm not looking for
any trouble.

IRISH COP
I bet you're not. Someday we'll
catch you with your hand in
somebody's pocket. And then we
won't go so easy on you.

EXT. GREAT LAWN

Thomas McNally FINDS SONYA. HE GOES OVER TO HER, PULLS HER OUT OF THE CROWD. Sonya RESISTS, YANKING HERSELF FREE. TWO GUARDS COME OVER to SUBDUE HER.

EXT. ELLIS ISLAND - NEAR THE GREAT LAWN

The Irish Cop looms over Bruno. Bruno SEES that McNally has nabbed Sonya.

IRISH COP
How you feel about that?

BRUNO WEISS
I understand.

IRISH COP
What?!?

BRUNO WEISS
(a little louder)
I understand, sir.

As Bruno tracks Sonya's removal from the crowd:

IRISH COP
Arrright, Jew. You g'head for now.
But we'll be watchin' out for
you...

INT. CELL

Sonya is in her cell. We STILL HEAR CARUSO. Bruno shows up.

Sonya takes a step or two backward, afraid that he might well beat her. He steps closer to her. He does indeed look threatening, but when he speaks, his tone is oddly more gentle than we would have expected--at first.

BRUNO WEISS
What I gave you, it wasn't better
than this? Better than what your
uncle did to you?

SONYA CYBULSKI
You give me a little money. I give
you everything.

BRUNO WEISS

But now they're gonna send you
back. And there ain't nothing left
for you there no more. There's
only war, a lotta killing.

(beat)

It's not even your home anymore.

SONYA CYBULSKI

I don't know where is home.

(beat)

What I do for you, that is home?

He looks at his shoes. He is honest now, and oddly human:

BRUNO WEISS

Sonya, you stick with me, you've
seen the kinda money we could make
together--don't you want it to get
your sister outta here? 'Cause I
know who to go to to get her.

(beat)

I'm the only one who could do that
for you.

SONYA CYBULSKI

I don't trust you.

BRUNO WEISS

You're gonna have to.

SONYA CYBULSKI

(quietly contemptuous)

No. I don't trust you. But if you
don't do it, then I tell police you
hide the money from them. I see
how they talk to you. And you are
so afraid of them.

He is put in his place.

BRUNO WEISS

Get your things if you're coming.

She looks at him for a beat, then reaches down for her
things. He grabs her by the wrist. She pulls away.

SONYA CYBULSKI

You clear my name. You fix my
papers. You give me the money.

She grabs her things again. He stops her:

BRUNO WEISS

Hey--

(beat)

Don't you ever try to leave me
again. Not until our business is
done.

She STARES at him; her silence betokens agreement.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)

(loud, to a guard)

Arrright, we're ready!

EXT. EMBANKMENT

It is near the main building at Ellis Island. We STILL HEAR CARUSO, still singing, in the distance: a piece from PUCCINI'S OPERA "LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST". In the water: that small sailboat.

Bruno all but drags Sonya toward the boat, his hand clasping her wrist tightly. They are moving toward the boat. McNally's already in it.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN is NEARBY. He and ROGER, his associate, are PACKING UP THEIR THINGS.

ORLANDO SPOTS Bruno and Sonya. HE SMILES.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN

Hey, Roger--look--there goes our
friend! That animal...

(softer)

Walking off with the most beautiful
girl I think I ever saw in my
life...

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. BRUNO'S APARTMENT - MORNING

A cacophony comes from below, awakening Sonya from her slumber. She dresses quickly, and moves to the mirror. She starts putting on make-up.

CLARA'S VOICE

Hey Sonya!

Sonya turns, pokes her head out the window:

CLARA

You were a real hit last night, on stage! Those boys are dyin' for ya!

Sonya smiles listlessly, in order to invite conversation with Clara. She reaches for a cigarette, which Clara hands to her:

SONYA CYBULSKI

I just move a little and I wave. I don't know why they cheer...

CLARA

Well, you got 'em wrapped around your finger, so keep it up!

INT. HALLWAY

The hallway is bustling. The girls move from one side to the other. There is random instruments playing what seems like random notes; and there is the sound of saws and hammers.

Sonya wends her way down the stairs.

INT. BACKSTAGE

The busy environment intensifies. Sonya looks down, at the seats, and OBSERVES that WORKMEN have REMOVED the first row. In their place, a wooden ORCHESTRA PIT is being constructed.

Many members of a SMALL ORCHESTRA are here, with their instruments, and they are practicing and tuning and playing, forming an aural chaos that somehow achieves a certain beauty.

Sonya looks on the stage to see: ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN. He is in a collared white shirt and slacks. She cannot help but SMILE at the sight of him.

A BIG AND BEAUTIFUL BACKDROP is being PAINTED BEHIND HIM. It has THE STATUE OF LIBERTY in the center; around it, IMAGES of ORLANDO'S WORLD TOURS: one from PARIS, LONDON, TOKYO, CHICAGO, SAN FRANCISCO. Places he's gone.

He is playing the VIOLIN and doing a magnificent LITTLE DANCE, astonishing for its grace and pure commitment. A cigarette dangles from his lip.

Orlando SPOTS HER. HIS FACE BREAKS OUT INTO A WARM SMILE. He WINKS at her. He plays a little faster, dances a tiny bit faster.

Sonya's breath is taken away as she watches. Bashful, she ducks out of sight.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN

Hey! Wait--where you goin'?

INT. BACKSTAGE DRESSING ROOM

Sonya spots Bruno and Mr. Shahn. They are in the midst of a serious discussion that verges on an argument, although Bruno is cheerfully intense, almost happy, as he puffs away on his Turkey Red cigarette.

MR. SHAHN

...You think I'm loaded, with all this money--

BRUNO WEISS

My girls are the reason you could build on this place, Mr. Shahn. And you've seen Sonya out there these past few weeks--they go wild for her!

MR. SHAHN

I understand that, Bruno. But you're not the only act I got--I can't spend all my proceeds on the girls.

BRUNO WEISS

But what I'm telling you is, we're the ones who bring in all the customers. And Sonya puts a whole new complexion on this package. You can't go wrong promoting her.

MR. SHAHN

And I'm telling you, I can't swing it right now. We're expanding and we'll see where it goes. But for now, no.

Bruno SPOTS Sonya as she listens to the conversation.

BRUNO WEISS
Okay. We'll talk again. But
you'll see who the queen of hearts
is.

He stands, walks over to SONYA.

INT. BACKSTAGE AREA

Bruno is walking backstage, toward the front of the theater.
As an aside, to Sonya:

BRUNO WEISS
We should do something about your
clothes--you should be elegant.
(beat)
I thought maybe we'd--

Bruno halts in his tracks. FREEZES.

He SPOTS ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN. A CRUSHING BLOW.

Mr. Shahn walks out behind Bruno. Bruno turns around.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
(seething; to Shahn)
You brought him back?

MR. SHAHN
He's popular, Bruno--he works hard.
The customers kept asking me about
him.

Orlando spots the men.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
Bruno! So nice to see you again--I
missed you on my triumphant tour!
Boy, I really brought in the crowds
while I was away. Got plenty of
work without you there to trash my
reputation.

Beat. Bruno seethes. Then:

BRUNO WEISS
Don't talk to me, you piece of
shit.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
Oh, you're so high class. I wish I
coulda had you with me on my trip!
(MORE)

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)
I know you would have been happy
for me.

BRUNO WEISS
You want my advice? Stay the fuck
away from me.

Bruno grabs Sonya and spins around. As he takes her back
upstairs.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
Bruno, what happened? I thought we
were pals! C'mon back here, I'll
do a trick for you!

Bruno goes upstairs. She STARES at Orlando.

BRUNO WEISS
Sonya! Come on!

Sonya turns, walks upstairs...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THEATER - NIGHT

The evening show. ORLANDO is in the middle of his act. The
orchestra is playing a piece of music, he is doing a dance.
He stops, the crowd applauds. A female ASSISTANT helps him.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
In honor of my return to the Jewel
Box, I will now perform an act of
levitation, known only to the great
monks of Tibet!
(to the Assistant)
Miranda, go among the audience and
find us a beautiful subject.

ORLANDO stares directly at SONYA, who is backstage but
watching with real glee. The Assistant goes looking for a
woman in the male audience.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)
No no, not him.
(crowd laughs)
Much as I find all you men
appealing, I do believe I see a
better candidate right here.

He summons for Sonya. She steps onstage to WHISTLES. Bruno is backstage; he SEES this, and gets STEAMED. He does nothing--yet.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)
Take my hand. I am going to put
you in a trance now...

He runs his hand over her face. She is indeed in a TRANCE.

He THEN GESTURES AROUND HER WHOLE BODY. And yes, SHE FLOATS. He takes a hoop and passes it over her body.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)
I shall now bring her down, down,
down...

He lowers her. He CLAPS ONCE in her face.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)
Do you feel refreshed, my dear?

SONYA CYBULSKI
Yes! I do!

THE AUDIENCE ERUPTS IN CHEERS. SONYA SEEMS THRILLED.

Orlando BOWS. He goes offstage one way, and she another, but she keeps looking at him, and he at her.

BACKSTAGE

Mr. Shahn URGES Bruno to swallow his pride. Bruno seems agitated.

MR. SHAHN
C'mon, go--this is show business!
They love it!

THEN BRUNO comes ONSTAGE. Unenthusiastic:

BRUNO WEISS
That was Orlando the Great, ladies
and gentlemen.
(beat; perks up)
And now, the moment you've all been
waiting for...come take a trip with
me... Around the globe...

A GONG. The light comes on from below again, on Bruno:

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
 And without leaving the comfort of
 your chair. Behold--all the women
 of the world!

BRUNO'S WOMEN come marching onto the stage, smiling and
 swaying. Bruno calls each one forward:

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
 Miss Egypt! All the mysteries of
 the great pyramids will be revealed
 before your very eyes by this
 modern-day Cleopatra!

Out steps Clara. She does her BELLYDANCE move.

The CROWD OF MEN CHEER. And then a VOICE CUTS THROUGH the
 crowd:

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
 Egypt, by way of Budapest!

The AUDIENCE LAUGHS at the HECKLE. Bruno is shocked by the
 heckle. He recognizes the voice, but tries to continue.

Sonya is again elaborately made up as a STATUE OF LIBERTY,
 with a see-through dress. Make-up now covers her face. She
 waits her turn.

BRUNO WEISS
 This Lady of Japan will catch your
 fancy. Our Geisha girl has come
 from the Orient--

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
 If I gotta sit through any more of
 you, I'm gonna commit *hara kiri*!

MORE LAUGHTER. SONYA STEPS FORWARD.

BRUNO WEISS
 Sir, you are interfering with
 audience's right to enjoy the show--

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
 They're not listening to your crap!
 They're looking at the women!
 (re: Sonya)
 Especially THAT one--she's WAY too
 good for you!

MORE LAUGHTER, CHEERS. Bruno's eyes bulge. He has been
 HUMILIATED. His face turns red.

He CHARGES INTO THE AUDIENCE, RUNS RIGHT AT ORLANDO, who is fleet of foot and of course graceful and wily.

Bruno seems primed to beat the shit out of Orlando, but the crowd laughs and jostles him. They simply don't take him seriously...

Orlando hops up, onto the seats, and leaps from one to the other, back toward the stage.

He leaps up: Orlando puts his hands on Sonya's cheeks, KISSES her, right on the lips. The crowd goes "WOOOO".

SONYA is in a DAZE...

As Bruno CLOSES IN on the stage, Orlando steps to his left. Just as Bruno is about to grab him, he HITS a HIDDEN PEDAL and a TRAP DOOR OPENS BELOW HIS FEET.

Orlando DROPS DOWN through the floor and BOLTS.

Mr. Shahn, meanwhile, is beyond upset at the ruined show. He approaches the women:

MR. SHAHN

What're you doing? Sing, c'mon--
(to the orchestra)
Play--"America, I Love You"!

The WOMEN start SINGING:

THE WOMEN

*America, I love you,
You're like a sweetheart of mine,
From ocean to ocean--*

Mr. Shahn charges to Bruno, who has run backstage--

INT. BACKSTAGE AREA

Shahn confronts Bruno, grabbing his arm:

MR. SHAHN

BRUNO! I want you out!

BRUNO WEISS

Me?!? What about him?!? He
started the whole thing--

MR. SHAHN

The people loved him! You went
crazy!

BRUNO WEISS

He's a coward! You saw, he turned his back and ran!

MR. SHAHN

I don't care! You fight in my theater?!? I want you out, I want your girls out! I'll get my own!

BRUNO WEISS

Well, I wouldn't stay here anyway-- not for all the tea in Chinatown!

MR. SHAHN

Good, go to the street! Cops'll be waiting for you there!

Bruno SPINS AROUND, grabbing Sonya. He tugs her upstairs, and the other girls follow.

INT. APARTMENT

Bruno is already packing up his things. In an explosive state. Sonya stands by Bruno, in a world of her own. Thinking, clearly, of Orlando. The other ladies are all bustling, in a huff.

BELVA

Oh my God... That was so wrong, what he did!

BRUNO WEISS

I don't know what his beef is with me! I never did nothing except try and help him.

Sonya speaks up, curious. She cannot help herself:

SONYA CYBULSKI

You...knew him a long time?

BRUNO WEISS

(of course)

Yeah, I know him. I made him a friend of mine, in the sweatshops. I gave him money, I helped him get started. I was the one tol' him to do his act over at Ellis Island. I thought maybe we'd be partners.

CLARA

Maybe he thinks you did something
to him, baby.

BRUNO WEISS

(appalled)

What...?!?

(beat)

Why don't you girls go and start
packing your stuff? We gotta be
outta here, you heard Shahn.

THE WOMEN FILE OUT. All except for Sonya. A beat. Sonya
and Bruno, alone. Bruno stops packing. Does not make eye
contact with her. He gets unexpectedly emotional, his eyes
tearing up. He begins to speak, at first to himself, aloud.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)

She asks if I did something to
him...? What about what he did to
me?

(looks to Sonya)

You know, I had a girl and...and I
liked her. She was very elegant.
So I didn't tell her about the
show, about what I do. I kept it
from her.

(he stops packing)

And then he brought her around! He
knew I didn't want her to see it,
but he brought her anyway! And
that was the end--she broke it off
with me and went with him!

(beat)

Anyway, after that I promised
myself, no more lovey-dovey shit.

Bruno goes back to packing. Under his breath:

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)

And someday, he'll pay for it.

Bruno takes a SWIG of his FLASK, LEAVES to the kitchen.
Then: a THWAP! at the window. Sonya moves to the window to
SEE:

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN,

Who SMILES and WAVES to her. She SMILES back, a shy smile.
Then he leaves. She stays at the window for a beat.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. TOMPKINS SQUARE PARK - DAY

It is a beautiful day in the beautiful and green park. Bruno and Sonya and the ladies. Bruno takes a SWIG from his LITTLE WHISKEY FLASK. Sotto:

BRUNO WEISS

You watch, we'll get a good crowd here. And I got a new routine to match the costumes...

Bruno stands atop a park bench, with Sonya and the other girls now around him. A small crowd of people begins to gather:

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)

Ladies and gentlemen, gather 'round! Come see the daughters of the finest families in New York Society!

Sauntering by is CLARA. A WHISTLE.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)

I give you the Astor family's wayward little girl! Her father told her to go get a job!

Some laughter. Out steps Belva. Some scattered applause.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)

Or will it be the child of Mr. Frick and his financial empire? She just had her coming out party-- how much more she comes out depends on you, gentlemen!

More laughter. Then, stepping forward: Sonya, cigarette dangling from her mouth and hat off to the side of her head. Looking more like the pro:

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)

And now please meet the one and only heiress to the Vanderbilt fortune... She was brought here directly by her chauffeur, in the lap of luxury...

We SEE ROGER, the assistant to Orlando the Magician, in the crowd. He steps forward. As he approaches Sonya, Bruno continues, about another girl:

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)

J.P. Morgan's prized progeny--she grew up with servants and now she serves you...

ROGER THE ASSISTANT (SIMULTANEOUS)

Ma'am?

(takes off his cap)

I'd like you to show me around the park, if you would.

SONYA CYBULSKI

(anxious to get it over with)

Okay...you talk to him--

She directs him to Bruno. Bruno sees this, and stops his spiel. He steps down from the bench.

BRUNO WEISS

So what do you think, kid? You sure you're ready for her? You think you're man enough? She's a real woman, you know.

(whispers)

My best, as you can see.

ROGER THE ASSISTANT

Yessir.

A beat. Weiss seems troubled:

BRUNO WEISS

Don't I recognize you?

ROGER THE ASSISTANT

No sir.

BRUNO WEISS

You sure?

ROGER THE ASSISTANT

No...I ain't from 'round here.

Bruno SEES a POLICE OFFICER in the distance, on the other side of the park, patrolling.

BRUNO WEISS
Gotta be a little discreet. Never
know who's watching.

Moves very close to Roger:

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
Arrright, seven dollars.

Roger PAYS him.

INT. TENEMENT HALLWAY

Bruno is opening the door to an apartment, with Roger and Sonya right behind him. It's a seedy place, more seedy than the theater spot he'd lived in.

An OLD LADY sits right outside the door. Bruno hands her a COIN and says:

BRUNO WEISS
Thanks, old mama.

Bruno opens the door. It's an empty space with a mattress and a dresser with a basin with water and a towel nearby. Roger and Sonya enter.

INT. TENEMENT APARTMENT

Sonya closes the door. Roger is there. She approaches.

SONYA CYBULSKI
You're not sick?

ROGER THE ASSISTANT
No.

She opens his pants, looks down at his penis. Turns and begins to undress. She wipes her face and arms with the washcloth and water from the basin. Roger, meanwhile, watches her for a beat, impressed, then goes to the window. Opens it. She spins around.

Roger WHISTLES out the window. She TENSES:

SONYA CYBULSKI
You call your friend? No friend--

Roger turns back around and faces her. Doesn't do anything.

SONYA CYBULSKI (CONT'D)
You don't want?

A beat. No response.

SONYA CYBULSKI (CONT'D)
You don't get the money back.

She starts dressing. THEN A KNOCK ON THE DOOR. Soyna is startled; Roger lets out a grin. Sonya PANICS--

SONYA CYBULSKI (CONT'D)
I said no friend--please--

Roger runs to the door; Sonya moves to try to stop him, frightened now.

Roger opens the door. It is ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
Hello.

Sonya is surprised. She backs up. Cautious. And yet, of course, excited as well.

SONYA CYBULSKI
Hello.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
Thank you, Roger.

Roger smiles, leaves. The door closes, and the TWO ARE NOW ALONE.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)
I hope you're not upset I came.
(beat)
I had to do that--that animal you
work for, he'd never let me see
you.

SONYA CYBULSKI
No... I'm, I am glad you come...
(beat)
Why do you make trouble? In the
theater?

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
Well, I like to stir the pot every
now and then.
(beat)
'Sides, you gotta admit, Bruno
deserves it.

SONYA CYBULSKI
You kiss me. I should have hit
you.

He points to his CHIN, as if to say, "GO AHEAD, HIT ME."

SONYA CYBULSKI (CONT'D)
I don't want to...

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
No? Okay, then.

She cracks a slight, bashful smile. Orlando sobers:

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)
How'd you get with Bruno, anyway?

SONYA CYBULSKI
I had trouble, in the ship. They
want to send me back, but he help
me.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
(knowing what that means)
Trouble on the ship...?

SONYA CYBULSKI
Yes...
(beat)
He is bad for me, I know. But...

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
But *what*?

SONYA CYBULSKI
But maybe I am supposed to be with
him.
(beat)
Maybe God, He meant for it.

Orlando frowns just a touch at this fatalism. He approaches
her, with her coat in his hand. He hands it to her.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
There's a lot I don't know. But I
don't think God meant for you to be
with Bruno.

EXT. NEAR THE PARK

Bruno sits, then paces on the bench. The girls have all
gone, save Clara.

CLARA
How come I'm always last? Huh?

BRUNO WEISS
Sonya's kid, you know him?

CLARA
No--you heard what I asked you?

BRUNO WEISS
(to himself, not knowing
where)
I swear, I seen him before...

Bruno gets up, walks to:

EXT. TENEMENT APARTMENT BUILDING

Bruno SEES ROGER LEAVING THE BUILDING. WITHOUT SONYA. His eyes widen. He enters the building, with purpose.

INT. TENEMENT HALLWAY

Bruno charges up the stairs, opens the door.

REVEALING: SONYA AND ORLANDO, in a state of intimate, though not sexual, conversation, dressed. They are STARTLED to SEE BRUNO.

BRUNO looks oddly devastated, more than we might have expected considering the business he's in.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
Hello, Bruno.

BRUNO WEISS
(quiet rage)
You don't touch her. EVER.

SONYA CYBULSKI
He pay the money. Here--take it--

She holds the money to Bruno. Bruno pushes it away.

BRUNO WEISS
I don't want his money.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
Since when don't you want money?
That's all that matters to an
animal like you anyway--

BRUNO WEISS

Shut up!

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN

Well, I guess next time I see her,
that'll be for free, too?

Bruno's EYES well up. A shocker, to see this side of him:

BRUNO WEISS

I said SHUT UP! You don't get to
be with her!

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN

What's the matter?
(realizing)
You falling in love with your own
merchandise?

Sonya is stunned by this comment. Bruno ABSOLUTELY EXPLODES
and he LUNGES AT ORLANDO. SONYA LETS OUT A SCREAM:

SONYA CYBULSKI

No! Stop! Stop!

Orlando avoids Bruno's blows with stunning agility and
coordination.

Bruno, meanwhile, is windmilling, throwing haymakers and
lunging repeatedly.

INT. TENEMENT HALLWAY

NEIGHBORS, having heard the commotion, LEAK OUT INTO THE
HALL. NEIGHBOR #1 says to his wife:

NEIGHBOR #1

I better get the police.

INT. TENEMENT APARTMENT

Bruno MANAGES to LAND a VICIOUS BLOW to Orlando's CHEEK, but
Orlando comes back with a ferocious punch to the center of
Bruno's chest, throwing Bruno back and STUNNING HIM.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN

You done yet, animal? Or you want
more?

Bruno responds by PULLING OUT HIS SHIV. A SHARP KNIFE that
he keeps hidden in his belt.

BRUNO WEISS
You ain't laughing NOW, are you.

SONYA CYBULSKI
Bruno, please--don't do it. Let
him go!

Sonya CHARGES at Bruno; Bruno VIOLENTLY SHOVES HER BACK. She
is KNOCKED DOWN.

BRUNO WEISS
Back off! Him and me got business!

Bruno starts swinging with the KNIFE. Orlando picks up a
WOODEN CHAIR in order to defend himself. Like a lion and his
tamer in the circus.

Sonya runs to the DOOR, OPENS THE DOOR to YELL FOR HELP.

INT. HALLWAY

JUST AS SONYA IS SCREAMING for HELP, she SEES that FOUR
POLICEMEN are charging up the steps toward the apartment.
They enter:

INT. APARTMENT

The Policemen grab Bruno and Orlando. They separate them:

POLICEMAN #1
Whoa whoa whoa--

One of the officers recognizes Orlando. POLICEMAN #2:

POLICEMAN #2
Mr. Orlando! What--what happened
here? This guy giving you trouble?

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
No, I'm all right.

The Policemen look at Bruno, holding his knife:

POLICEMAN #2
You--put the knife down. NOW.

A beat. BRUNO STANDS THERE, HOLDING THE KNIFE. Pondering.
Then he thinks better. He drops the knife.

POLICEMAN #2 (CONT'D)
Arrright, take him in.

BRUNO WEISS

What about him?

(to Orlando; in Yiddish)

Shtick dreck!

Orlando reacts with quiet rage--his eyes flash--but he pretends not to understand. The Cops don't register this, instead still focused on Bruno:

POLICEMAN #2

Shut your mouth! You're lucky your teeth ain't all over the floor!

(to Orlando)

You mind comin' in for a little bit, Mr. Orlando? I'm sorry, it's just for some questions.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN

Yeah, no problem...

The MEN GET DRAGGED OFF. SONYA IS HORRIFIED; a COP takes her by the arm. As Bruno gets taken away, he yells:

BRUNO WEISS

Stay away from her, don't touch her!

POLICEMAN #2

Shut up!

Sonya watches Bruno get taken away and Orlando follows with the cops...

INT. BRUNO AND SONYA'S NEW APARTMENT - NIGHT

It's a considerably more downscale place than the other apartment. Not quite the tenement space we've just seen, but not exactly an apartment in the Dakota, either.

Sonya enters the apartment. Belva is here, smoking some opium.

Sonya begins to collect the laundry. After a moment of silence, Belva speaks:

BELVA

He ain't never been to jail before.

Sonya turns around:

BELVA (CONT'D)

Let's hope he don't get killed.
They don't like Jews in the tombs
too much.

SONYA CYBULSKI

Bruno take care of himself good.
He will be okay.

BELVA

Well, he always took care of us
pretty good.

(beat)

Ain't he, sister?

SONYA CYBULSKI

I never ask for him to take care of
me. I don't need him, I make my
own money.

BELVA

Yeah? You know all the men in New
York? You know the ones with money
from the ones who take advantage of
you?

(beat)

All I know is, we ain't had no
problems before. Not 'til you come
along.

Sonya looks troubled by this for a moment. She then picks up
a basket of laundry: SHEETS. Takes the basket to:

EXT. ROOF - DUSK

Sonya hangs the white sheets on a line. They BILLOW like
giant flags. The wind picks up a touch, blowing her hair.

Coming up a small roof ladder: ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN.

He appears between two sheets, his shadow making itself
apparent first. He SMILES at Sonya.

He WHISTLES. She is pleased to see him, but somehow, her
face reflects conflict.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN

Hello!

SONYA CYBULSKI

Hello...

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
 Not easy finding your new place--
 what's wrong?

She is silent.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)
 Was it our little fight, Bruno and
 me?

SONYA CYBULSKI
 They tell me downstairs, I don't
 make money without Bruno.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
 (waves that off)
 Ah, don't worry about that. He'll
 be back. I just said to scare him--
 they'll let him out in the morning.

He steps toward her. A beat; he hesitates, then, sober:

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)
 Listen, uh...
 (beat)
 I gotta go away in the morning. On
 a tour.
 (beat)
 You could come with me, maybe be my
 assistant? You won't have to
 live...like this.

Sonya is surprised by the offer, and initially her face
 betrays a flash of good feeling, of hope. Then reality kicks
 in.

SONYA CYBULSKI
 (with regret)
 No...I don't... My sister, they
 have her in the hospital, on Ellis
 Island. I don't ever leave without
 her. Every week I send money, for
 her care.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
 I see.

Sonya gets emotional.

SONYA CYBULSKI
 I don't know what I do...
 (beat)
 (MORE)

SONYA CYBULSKI (CONT'D)
I try to pray for answers but I
don't even go to church. Bruno
tells me if I go out there is too
much danger.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
Well...he may not be too wrong
about that. New York's pretty
tough if you don't know your way
around.

She sits down on the ledge, dispirited.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)
You wanna see something?

He takes out a CRUMPLED CARD from his pocket. He shows Sonya
a PICTURE POSTCARD of the DEL CORONADO HOTEL in SAN DIEGO.
It's quite wrinkled, as though it's been in his pocket for a
long, long time. But it's cherished nonetheless.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)
This is in California, out west.
The sun's always out there. It's
nice and warm, people have a good
time...

SONYA CYBULSKI
It's beautiful...

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
Yeah, 's a beautiful world out
there. I saw it last time I was
out there, while back...

SONYA CYBULSKI
On the tour--you don't get lonely?

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
Nah...I been on my own since I was
seven years old. I don't really
even remember my mother or my
father, so... Tell you the truth,
it was a lotta fun.

SONYA CYBULSKI
I think you have too much fun.

She stands hangs a sheet.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN

Maybe...

(beat)

Sonya--

She turns.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)

I'm gonna come back for you.

She smiles gently, a knowing smile. Then:

SONYA CYBULSKI

You don't come back for me.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN

Yes I will.

(beat)

I'm telling you, I will.

SONYA CYBULSKI

You don't.

He lets out a sheepish grin.

SONYA CYBULSKI (CONT'D)

But it's okay, I am okay now.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN

(moved by her resilience)

You're okay...? You do all this
for your sister, huh?

(beat)

Arrright, why don't I take you to
pick Bruno up in the morning. Then
he'll really owe you.

(beat)

He's in love with you, you know.

SONYA CYBULSKI

I don't want to talk about Bruno
anymore...

Orlando smiles at her. They embrace. It is TENDER, CHARGED.
Then he moves in to kiss her--on the forehead. Then...on the
lips. She returns the passion.

They sink down onto the hard surface of the roof, where they
make love.

EXT. "THE TOMBS" - DAWN

We are outside the legendary prison in downtown New York City. It is a foreboding structure. Walking up to the building are Orlando and Sonya.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
He's in there, somewhere. When you
see him, give him my love.

Orlando turns to walk away.

SONYA CYBULSKI
You go now?

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
(nods; then)
Tour leaves in two hours... But
you'll be all right--police
station's just over there, it's the
safest spot in the whole city.
(beat)
I'll see you soon. Get him to take
you out every now and then--tell
him to take you to church.

SONYA CYBULSKI
What--is your name?

Orlando the Magician smiles.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
What's it matter?

He KISSES her once more. He backs away. Waves once. She waves to him. He spins around, back to her, walks off. Never looks back.

ANGLE ON SONYA. She sits down on the kerb, in virtual darkness.

We PRE-LAP a LOUD SQUEAKING NOISE.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE "TOMBS" - DAY

Much later; broad daylight. The GATE OPENS. Out steps BRUNO and three other prisoners. Bruno's looking a bit worse for wear, haggard and tired...

He SPOTS Sonya, on the kerb. Surprised to see her.

BRUNO WEISS
I didn't think you'd stick around.
(beat)
After that Orlando thing.

SONYA CYBULSKI
He went away.

BRUNO WEISS
Yeah? Why didn't you run with him?

SONYA CYBULSKI
We go now.

BRUNO WEISS
Well...arright then. You waited
here for me. I don't forget that.

She gets up, starts to walk down the street. He walks, too.
He catches up to her, and they disappear down the block...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE BRUNO'S APARTMENT

Bruno and Sonya approach their apartment. A small, almost
HUNCHBACKED MAN is waiting in the hall, holding a small
PARCEL wrapped in an oilcloth sack.

HUNCHBACKED MAN
You Bruno?

BRUNO WEISS
Yeah?

HUNCHBACKED MAN
You talked to Jordan, on the inside-
-about a package?

BRUNO WEISS
(embarrassed)
Wait a minute, come on...

Bruno leads Sonya into:

INT. APARTMENT

Sonya turns back as Bruno closes the door almost all the way.
A crack is left, and she sees an exchange: MONEY in Bruno's
hand goes to the Hunchback; the Hunchback hands him the
oilcloth sack.

Bruno unwraps the sack. It is a PISTOL.

Bruno opens the gun to SEE the BULLETS, also takes a box of shells. He NODS to the Hunchback, who leaves.

Sonya backs away from the door. After a moment, Bruno re-enters. He stares at her, she at him.

BRUNO WEISS

I need it.

(to himself)

No one's gonna be able to fuck with me now...

(beat)

Orlando ever comes back and gives me trouble--

SONYA CYBULSKI

He is gone, he don't come back.

BRUNO WEISS

He better not. If he knows what's good for him.

ALL OF A SUDDEN, ALL THE GIRLS COME IN, SURROUND HIM. They kiss him. He slips the sack behind his back.

THE WOMEN

Bruno! Bruno, you're back!

BRUNO WEISS

(smiles)

My girls... You think they could keep me locked up?! They knew I had to get back to you...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARK - LATER

Bruno and Sonya and rest of the women walk through the trees to a clearing in Tompkins Square park.

They all SING an Eastern European folk song--familiar to them but not to us.

As they walk to their place in the park, Sonya strides alongside Bruno.

He observes the leaves beginning their fall.

BRUNO WEISS
 Season's beginning to change.
 Gonna get cold soon.
 (beat)
 We're gonna have to find a new
 place, go inside... Maybe one of
 Shahn's competitors...he'd love
 that.

They arrive at a bench. The other Women are getting ready.

SONYA CYBULSKI
 Mr. Bruno?

BRUNO WEISS
 Yeah?

SONYA CYBULSKI
 Tomorrow is the day my mother and
 father, they die. I go to the
 church.

BRUNO WEISS
 Church...? What's that gonna do
 for you?

SONYA CYBULSKI
 I pray there, for them. I am close
 to God there. I have comfort.

BRUNO WEISS
 I don't believe in any of that
 show. I only believe in me.
 (beat)
 But...you stayed with me, you did
 your part.
 (beat)
 Sure...you wanna go, you can go...

SONYA CYBULSKI
 Thank you... I pray for all of us.

Belva leans forward, having heard a bit of this exchange:

BELVA
 Pray for me, honey. Pray I meet a
 rich man!

Bruno stands up on the bench, and shouts:

BRUNO WEISS
 Ladies and gentlemen! May I have
 your attention!
 (MORE)

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
Please observe--these lovely ladies
are here for your pleasure!

ANGLE ON SONYA. We HEAR a PRE-LAP: CHURCH BELLS.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SAINT STANISLAUS - DAY

A beautiful church, a Polish church, in New York's Lower East Side. We START ON THE STEEPLE, TILT DOWN to REVEAL that Bruno and Sonya have arrived at the front of the building.

They pause in front.

BRUNO WEISS
Well, here you are. Here's your
church.

SONYA CYBULSKI
Thank you.

BRUNO WEISS
Okay... Just make sure you're in
the park by six.

As she walks up the stairs:

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
Enjoy yourself.

She goes inside. We STAY on BRUNO for a beat.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH

It is lovely inside as well. The ceilings are high. The structure is ornate, dark, concrete.

It is surprisingly crowded for a random day.

Sonya enters and dips her fingers in holy water. She crosses herself, then:

A FELLOW BELIEVER hands her a CANDLE, which is unlit. HE LIGHTS IT FOR HER. She SMILES, nods a "THANK YOU" gesture.

They sing. THE CAMERA DOLLIES PAST the FACES of MANY CHURCHGOERS as they LOOK AT THE PROCESSION FROM their PEWS.

The PRIEST TOSSES INCENSE to and fro. A BELL GONGS RHYTHMICALLY, breaking the silence inside the massive space.

Sonya approaches:

THE ALTAR

A LITTLE CROSS stands on the ALTAR.

THE PRIEST moves to a position right behind it.

The BELIEVERS, including SONYA, KNEEL. The BELL CONTINUES to RING.

The BELIEVERS all take THEIR FIST and TAP their CHEST with each GONG.

The CAMERA DOLLIES PAST THE BELIEVERS as they all MUTTER, in different LANGUAGES:

THE BELIEVERS
God forgive me...

We STOP at SONYA, who says the same. In Polish.

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE)
God forgive me...
(beat)
Mary, protect my mother and
father's soul... Mary, protect my
sister...

The Priest stops the INCENSE. He BOWS HIS HEAD, holds out his arms, palms upward:

PRIEST
Let us pray... Lord, give us the
strength to accept your divine
will... We put our faith in your
eternal wisdom... From the
darkness, we cry to thee...

The BELIEVERS all RESPOND in astonishing unison:

THE BELIEVERS
Amen.

ANGLE ON SONYA. She has the stare of a true believer in her eyes. She fixates on the Priest, and the statue, and the CROSS.

BEHIND A COLUMN

We SEE BRUNO. He sees the bowl of HOLY WATER, attached to the wall. Dips his hands in the water, washes them just a bit. He spots SONYA as the ceremony comes to a close.

He watches her surreptitiously, eyes her as one would eye a foreign specimen. He looks around the church, making certain he is not watched, and he then rolls his head in all directions, viewing the structure with a strange combination of awe and ridicule.

He goes back to staring at Sonya, curious of her every movement.

INT. NEAR THE ALTAR

Sonya approaches the PRIEST, who is putting away some of his items from the ceremony.

SONYA CYBULSKI

Father?

PRIEST

Yes?

SONYA CYBULSKI

I...I want to confess.

PRIEST

Of course. Please--

The Priest gestures toward an enclosed wooden booth, about twenty feet away.

INT. CONFESSIONAL

A small, dark space. Sonya kneels. We HEAR a WINDOW SLIDING OPEN. The Priest's SILHOUETTE appears. Sonya begins to speak in Polish.

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE)

Bless me Father, for I have sinned.
It has been many months since my
last confession.

PRIEST

My child, in English, please. I am
Polish only by descent.

SONYA CYBULSKI

Yes. Okay.

SILENCE. A long beat. Then:

PRIEST

What are your sins?

SONYA CYBULSKI

I...I have many sins...

(beat)

I lie. I try to steal money...and food...

She cannot contain her emotions, and tears flow from her eyes. Utter distress:

SONYA CYBULSKI (CONT'D)

I use my body, for money...

PRIEST

Tell me child, how this has happened.

SONYA CYBULSKI

I come over on a ship, here, to here. There is no food, there is no room. It is very dirty, and everyone is sick and together, like animals. I look for food, for my sister, because she is more weak. A man, he offers food, a little bit.

(beat)

So...I give myself to him for the food.

A beat. The Priest stirs just a bit.

SONYA CYBULSKI (CONT'D)

Then the man bring three other men. And they force me.

She cries.

SONYA CYBULSKI (CONT'D)

So I am...ashamed.

PRIEST

I do not judge you, child. God has already punished you for your sins.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH - OUTSIDE THE CONFESSIONAL - INTERCUT

Bruno has ambled up to the side of the structure, and pressed his ear against the curtain in an effort to hear what is going on. He PUTS OUT HIS "TURKEY RED" CIGARETTE, on the floor.

As he listens, it becomes clear to us that it SHAKES HIM...

INT. CONFESSIONAL

Sonya continues.

SONYA CYBULSKI

Father?

PRIEST

Yes?

SONYA CYBULSKI

I am with another man now. Here.

PRIEST

Go on.

SONYA CYBULSKI

He is not a good man. I stay with him, I sell myself because I get him to bring my sister to this country. I decide to do this, and so now I will not go to Heaven.

PRIEST

All souls can be saved, child. Our Lord died for us so that he may save us despite our sins. You must repent and change your ways; only then can you open your heart to the Lord's mercy. Remember that.

INT. CHURCH - OUTSIDE THE CONFESSIONAL

An emotional Bruno gets roiled as he listens...

INT. CONFESSIONAL

Back INTO THE CONFESSIONAL:

SONYA CYBULSKI

I do not feel worthy of His love.

PRIEST

But does the shepherd not rejoice
even more when the lost lamb
returns to the fold...?

(beat)

You must continue to have faith in
your own salvation.

SONYA CYBULSKI

I will, Father. I promise.

PRIEST

For your penance, ten "our Fathers"
and ten "Hail Marys". And you must
find a way to leave that man.

ANGLE ON SONYA:

SONYA CYBULSKI

Then maybe I do go to hell.

INT. CHURCH/OUTSIDE THE CONFESSIONAL

Bruno HEARS THIS, WALKS AWAY. A beat later, SONYA exits the
CONFESSIONAL.

EXT. CHURCH

Sonya exits, SEES Bruno right outside, smoking a cigarette.

BRUNO WEISS

I didn't know you'd be done so
soon.

Sonya nods, still RATTLED from that conversation with the
Priest. She then walks down the steps, and the two depart
together...

INT. APARTMENT

Sonya and Bruno enter. She begins to get into her COSTUME.
After a beat:

BRUNO WEISS

(beat)

Why doncha take the night off?

SONYA CYBULSKI

(surprised)

Okay...

BRUNO WEISS

Yeah. Good.

She eyes him, as suspicious of his kindness as ever. He walks over to her.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)

You know, I was thinking...
Tomorrow, maybe I...I'll go over to
Ellis Island. Find out about your
sister Elena.

(beat)

Okay?

Her face BRIGHTENS--for a moment. Then she is again skeptical:

SONYA CYBULSKI

Why you do this for me--now?

BRUNO WEISS

I just wanna make sure
you're...happy.

SONYA CYBULSKI

Why you care if I am happy?

Bruno is caught. He averts her gaze. Turns his back to her, and to us. A beat, then softly:

BRUNO WEISS

I don't know...

(beat)

I thought maybe you could see, with
you and me...it's not just about
the money...

He turns to her. He reaches out to her, to touch her. She pulls away, gently.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)

(embarrassed)

It's uh...it's getting late. I
gotta go see my attorney, and the
cops. Wipe my record clean, if I
can.

Sonya moves to the sofa, sits. She looks out the window. Bruno eyes her. Then, believing himself unseen:

He WRAPS his PISTOL, in a small white TOWEL and PLACES IT
ATOP the CUPBOARD. But Sonya SEES this in the reflection of
the dark window.

Bruno TAKES A SWIG from his little FLASK:

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
I'll be back.

He CLOSES THE DOOR.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

We PAN OVER the CLEAN SPACE to REVEAL SONYA LOOKING OVER at THE LOCKET PHOTO OF HER SISTER...

Just THEN: A NOISE. SOMETHING HAS HIT THE WINDOW.

She looks out.

It is ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN.

He waves to her, climbs up the FIRE ESCAPE with shocking ease and agility.

A dream come true for her. She is thrilled. She lets him in the window.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
I told you I'd come back. You
didn't believe me, did you!

SONYA CYBULSKI
I--I didn't know so soon!

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
(laughs)
I got into a little disagreement
with the promoters. Doesn't
matter, I don't need 'em. And then
I lost my whole salary at cards...
You shoulda seen the crowds, though--
-they loved me.

Orlando parades around the apartment.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)
Wow. Bruno's really moving up in
the world, from the looks of this
place.

Sonya laughs.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)

You know, when I was out there on
tour, I won't lie to you. There
was a lot of girls.

(beat)

But I kept thinking about you.

Sonya is MOVED.

SONYA CYBULSKI

I think of you, too. All the time.

(beat; whispered)

Every day I want you to come back.
But I tell myself, I don't hope...

He strokes her hair sweetly, then kisses her.

SONYA CYBULSKI (CONT'D)

Bruno says he will find out about
my sister tomorrow--I wish it could
all be done, and the three of us
could go away.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN

We don't have to wait for all that.
I got money, Sonya. Lots of it,
from the show.

She is momentarily thrilled; and then she darkens as she
realizes something:

SONYA CYBULSKI

Bruno has a gun now. If you and I,
we go, maybe he is very dangerous.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN

A gun! Oh, he's a big killer now.
Well, he might hurt himself. I
can't allow him to do that.

(sobers)

Where is it?

Without looking, she points to atop the cupboard. Orlando
reaches, takes down the towel. He unwraps the towel.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)

(laughs; then)

This little thing isn't gonna hurt
anyone.

Orland takes the bullets out of the weapon. He THROWS THEM
OUT THE WINDOW.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)
 Let's see how tough he is now, with
 his gun.

Orlando tucks the gun into his belt. Poses pompously. Then wraps the gun up, puts it back.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)
 Get your stuff together. And we'll
 go. We'll go tonight.

SONYA CYBULSKI
 No--we don't--he will be suspicious
 and he will go to Ellis Island. He
 will stop me from getting my
 sister.

She's right. Orlando thinks for a minute, then:

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
 Yeah, all right...I'll come back
 tomorrow.

SONYA CYBULSKI
 No, please--don't leave. Not yet.

She KISSES HIM...

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Post-coital. The apartment is dark. Sonya and Orlando are in bed, asleep. We HEAR a NOISE, OUTSIDE, in the HALLWAY.

INT. HALLWAY - SIMULTANEOUS

Bruno trudges up the steps. He is drunk. He drops his keys in the dark hallway. Fumbling, he curses to himself:

BRUNO WEISS
 Goddamn...think straight...

He gets on his hands and knees, trying to find the damned keys. A RAT runs right over his hand. Loudly:

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
 Jesus!

INT. APARTMENT

Sonya gasps, wakes Orlando:

SONYA CYBULSKI
Go, out the window!

Orlando looks back at her, calm:

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
Nah. No more games with this guy.
I'll scare him so bad he'll never
bother you again.

Orlando gets up, takes out the PISTOL:

SONYA CYBULSKI
No, don't--

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
I'm just gonna scare him.
(re: the gun)
It's empty. I promise.

SONYA CYBULSKI
But we leave soon--why make
trouble?

Orlando opens the door as Sonya frets.

INT. HALLWAY

Orlando enters the hall. Bruno looks up.

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
Bruno! Look what I got for you!
Bruno!

The GUN IS POINTED right at BRUNO. Bruno gasps. Under his
breath:

BRUNO WEISS
Where did you get that...?

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
Where d'you think I got it,
jackass?

Bruno moves toward Orlando.

SONYA CYBULSKI
Please don't--put the gun down.

BRUNO WEISS
You're with him again? Don't you
want your sister?

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
She don't need you no more, Bruno.

SONYA CYBULSKI
(turning to Bruno)
I give you all my money. Just let
us go.

Bruno SEEMS to realize something. His shoulders sink. He
seems absolutely crestfallen. Whispered:

BRUNO WEISS
You can't go...Don't go...

SONYA CYBULSKI
Yes. I leave with him...

ORLANDO THE MAGICIAN
Well, I guess this is goodbye...

Orlando approaches Bruno with the GUN. He puts it against
Bruno's TEMPLE.

Orlando cocks the gun. It CLICKS INTO PLACE. Bruno's EYES
POP. Orlando tries to stifle a laugh.

Orlando PUSHES the WEAPON HARD AGAINST Bruno's FOREHEAD NOW.

BRUNO WEISS
(sotto voce)
Sonya...

Orlando laughs, PULLS on the TRIGGER. The hammer is about to
give way.

The TRIGGER on THE GUN CLICKS. BRUNO JUMPS, only to discover
that the weapon is NOT LOADED.

Orlando LAUGHS LOUDLY.

Orlando steps back, and then his laugh stops, his SMILE
disappears. All of a sudden his expression oddly BLANK. He
looks down to SEE:

A SHIV, STICKING FROM HIS ABDOMEN. BLOOD QUICKLY SOAKS HIS
SHIRT.

Sonya, who is behind Orlando and hence not fully
comprehending yet, to Orlando:

SONYA CYBULSKI
Is enough. He understands.

Bruno does not respond, also somewhat in shock. Orlando turns to Sonya. She SEES the KNIFE, the BLOOD. SHE GASPS.

Orlando CRUMPLES TO THE GROUND. THE AMOUNT OF BLOOD is enormous, oozing now onto the floor.

Sonya's mouth is agape, a silent scream. She buckles, collapsing near the bleeding body. She WAILS over Orlando. Bruno shakes, near tears. He moves to Sonya:

BRUNO WEISS
(to himself)
I, I didn't know... I thought he
was gonna kill me...
(to Sonya; re: the gun)
I thought it was loaded...
(sotto; tears welling)
I...I'm sorry...

She does not move.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
We gotta get rid of him...

She is silent. Turns away from Bruno.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
Help me... Please...

Bruno grabs the body by the foot. Blood SMEARS ALL OVER THE FLOOR as Bruno drags the body into:

INT. APARTMENT

Bruno drops the body. Thinks for a minute. Collects TOWELS. Sonya enters behind him, as if in a trance. Bruno PULLS the SHIV out of Orlando's chest. He wipes down the handle. HANDS IT TO SONYA, the towel wrapped around the handle.

BRUNO WEISS
Get rid of this. Can you do that?

She takes THE SHIV--with her bare hand.

She throws the shiv down the shaft into what is called the PRIVY PIT. The garbage pile at the bottom of the shaft. Meanwhile:

INT. HALLWAY

Bruno gets down, soaks up the blood.

INT. APARTMENT

Bruno takes a sheet off the bed, wraps ORLANDO in the sheet as Sonya looks on, still dazed. Then he wraps Orlando's body in the RUG.

SONYA CYBULSKI
Be gentle with him... He shouldn't
be thrown away like the trash...

Bruno hears her. He rolls the body almost GENTLY--
RESPECTFULLY--in the rug.

The TOWELS ARE PLACED IN A PILE on the fire escape. BRUNO
LIGHTS THEM on FIRE.

BRUNO AND SONYA EXCHANGE LOOKS. She seems catatonic. In an
effort to rouse her:

BRUNO WEISS
Sonya--[if] you're mixed up in
this, you'll never get out of it.
You'll never get free.

Sonya looks up at him. She seems to make a realization:

SONYA CYBULSKI
It's my fault...
(beat)
I told him to stay...I showed him
the gun...
(sotto)
It's my fault...

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Bruno and Sonya emerge, and Bruno hoists the BODY on his
BACK.

It is heavy, burdensome...

The streets are empty and dark (this is before the modern
powerful streetlamps, remember); it is late.

EXT. STREET

Bruno walks ponderously, bent over with the RUG/BODY on his back.

Sonya walks slowly and in that trance behind him, a thousand-yard stare, a sleepwalker with her eyes open.

BLOOD CASCADES DOWN FROM THE RUG ALL OVER HIS FACE AND BODY.

The RUG/BODY SLIDES OFF BRUNO'S BACK. He falls.

Sonya helps him get back on his feet, helps put the BODY on his back.

EXT. EAST RIVER

Bruno and Sonya make it to the East River. They DUMP the BODY into the RIVER. The RUG/BODY FLOATS FOR SEVERAL BEATS.

Bruno and Sonya are deeply concerned.

And then, as though it has obeyed their wishes, the BODY SINKS.

Bruno LOOKS AROUND to see if anyone has seen anything. He TURNS to walk away. He takes a few steps back toward the city.

Sonya remains fixated on the spot where the trunk has disappeared into the water.

Bruno turns back, walks to her. Tenderly, nudges her to come with him.

BRUNO WEISS

Sonya--

(moves close)

We gotta act like nothing's wrong,
like nothing's happened...

After a beat, the two go off...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROOFTOP - THE NEXT DAY

It is a nice morning. Bruno sits, distracted, as Sonya and the other Women are BATHING. Sonya bathes listlessly. He looks at her;

she does not look back, instead staring into space. We are *in medias res*. Clara chides Belva, but the camera, and our attention, is elsewhere:

CLARA

What do you expect, lady? You're not taking it from behind! Anything else, they get at home. That's where the real tips are.
(beat)
That's what they like.

Then we HEAR a YOUNG VOICE:

YOUNG VOICE (O.S.)

Hey!

Bruno turns to see: ROGER THE ASSISTANT, yelling from a nearby rooftop. They begin a yelling contest:

ROGER THE ASSISTANT

You seen Orlando? I'm lookin' for him!

BRUNO WEISS

No...we ain't seen him! Not for awhile!

ROGER THE ASSISTANT

But Orlando come to see Sonya, last night!

BRUNO WEISS

Look kid, I'm TELLING you, we ain't seen him! Get outta here!

As this exchange takes place, still in her trance, Sonya stands, gets out of her tub, puts a sheet around herself.

ROGER THE ASSISTANT

(re: Sonya; pointing)

Well, SHE saw him! I know she did!

BRUNO WEISS

I said get the fuck outta here!
What's wrong with you!?

Bruno THROWS A BAR OF SOAP at Roger, who skips to avoid being hit. Roger stares at Bruno and Sonya. A beat, then:

ROGER THE ASSISTANT

I ain't stupid! I know he was here!

CLARA
What's his problem?

Roger runs off. The Women, uncomprehending but sensing something is wrong, awkwardly continue to go about their business...

EXT. PARK - THE NEXT DAY

Bruno and his girls. Sonya is here too, dressed to the nines and yet merely going through the motions.

The girls prepare for their work, but they are even more curious about Bruno's distractions.

Bruno watches Sonya with great trepidation as he attempts to continue his "act". We've heard it before, seen it before. But now the context is different, and Bruno's braggadocio has never seemed more empty, more depleted of its verve:

BRUNO WEISS
These are the daughters of the
finest families in New York
Society...

Sauntering by is CLARA. Again.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
I give you the Astor family's
wayward little girl... Her father
told her to go get a job...

Out steps Belva. Again.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
Or will it be the child of Mr.
Frick and his financial empire?
She just had her coming out party--
how much more she comes out depends
on you, gentlemen.

Laughter...

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
And now please meet the one and
only heiress to the Vanderbilt
fortune... She was brought here
directly by her chauffeur, in the
lap of luxury...

Sonya sits, forlorn, on the bench. She does not get up.
Bruno is flummoxed by her unresponsiveness. He looks at her.

Sonya shakes her head. NO, her eyes tell Bruno; I CANNOT DO IT.

CLARA
(whispers)
What's the matter, honey? Doncha
feel well?

Sonya hyperventilates. The Women whisper amongst each other.
Bruno continues, about another girl:

BRUNO WEISS
H--here is J.P. Morgan's prized
progeny--she grew up with servants
and now she serves--

We HEAR WHISTLES. Soft, at first. Everyone FREEZES. They
get louder...and LOUDER...AND LOUDER.

HALF A DOZEN COPS appear, from down the walkway. Holding
CLUBS, blowing THEIR WHISTLES.

EVERYONE is SURPRISED.

They all TAKE OFF in DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS. BRUNO IS ABOUT TO
BOLT. BUT HE SEES THAT SONYA IS STILL STANDING IN ONE SPOT.
HE GRABS HER BY THE ARM.

THEY RUN.

EXT. PARK - OVER SUBWAY GRATING

Bruno PULLS UP the GRATING with great difficulty. The COPS
APPROACH RAPIDLY. He all but PUSHES SONYA down the metal
stairs that lead to a SUBWAY TUNNEL.

He ventures down with her, but does not have adequate time to
PULL the GRATE over him before the COPS are right on him; she
moves SLOWLY, trying to RUN in the absurd SHOES that are part
of her "costume"...

INT. SUBWAY TUNNEL

Sonya, meanwhile, is tens of feet away, in the darkened
SUBWAY TUNNEL.

Bruno turns to her, and sees her feet are bloodied. She has
stopped running.

They duck into a:

INT. RECESSED AREA

With a metal stairwell up to another grating, which leads to the street.

Bruno looks back to the coming police, then charges to her, PUSHES her into a DARK WALL RECESS.

SHE HIDES, in the RECESS IN THE WALL. IN THE DARK.

He holds his finger to his lips: BE QUIET.

BRUNO WEISS
Get outta here. Wait near my
place--I'll find you...

THE COPS COME DOWN THE STAIRS. Bruno turns. Steadies himself.

RUNS out, onto the TRACKS.

INT. TRACKS

Bruno runs, in full view--intentionally--of the police. A COP #1:

COP #1
Hey! Hold it there! Hold it!
(to the dark)
Hey Rodney! I found one of 'em!

The other COPS join Cop #1.

WALL RECESS

Sonya does not run. Instead, she waits to see what will happen with Bruno. She can HEAR and SEE everything as the COPS CONFRONT BRUNO:

COP #1
Your crazy Polack bitch killed him,
didn't she.
(beat)
You better help us find her.

BRUNO WEISS
What're you talking about?

COP #1
(explodes)
You know what we're talkin' 'bout!
(MORE)

COP #1 (CONT'D)
Fuckin' guy's body floated up--and
she was the last to see him!

BRUNO WEISS
You guys don't got nothing...

Cop #2 takes a menacing step forward. He SWATS Bruno once,
hard, with his CLUB. Bruno falls to one knee:

COP #2
We just come from a search of your
apartment, buddy-boy. And we got
the weapon, from the privy pit.
Her fingerprints are all over it.
So give her up!

Bruno is stunned by this news, by the finality of it. They
LOOK AT HIM, HE AT THEM. TENSE. Then he LOOKS AWAY as
though they are not even there.

COP #1
So fuckin' stupid...

The COPS DESCEND ON HIM without MERCY. They CLUB him,
BEATING him with a VENGEANCE.

SONYA SEES THE WHOLE THING. COVERS HER EYES in AGONY.

BLOW BY BLOW, the beating is brutal--but not quite complete.

The COPS stop short of killing Bruno.

COP #2
(panting)
You got any money?

Another COP reaches into his COAT POCKETS. They find certain
things--a watch, which he listens to, then throws away. Then
they find a BILLFOLD.

COP #2 (CONT'D)
(panting)
That looks like somethin'.
(to Bruno)
Least you made it worth our time.

COP #1
(panting)
You bring her to us on a silver
platter by noon tomorrow or it's
your ass we're comin' for. 'Cause
if it wasn't her, it was you.
(to the other cops)
(MORE)

COP #1 (CONT'D)
 C'mon, let's get outta here. He
 knows where to find us.

The Cops depart. After a beat, Sonya emerges from her HIDING PLACE. She approaches Bruno, still on the ground, bloodied and in terrible pain.

She helps him up. He STAGGERS, but is able to make his way...

They make it to another GRATE.

BRUNO WEISS
 Stay away from me...find a place to
 hide...

She does not answer. He goes to the street.

INT. APARTMENT - LATER - NIGHT

A dark place, only one small light on. We SEE BRUNO, seated in a chair, bruised and bloodied, touching his ribs. He is broken up inside as well as out. He HEARS FOOTSTEPS OUTSIDE, in the HALLWAY.

Coming through the DOOR after some activity with the lock is: SONYA. Lit from behind, almost like a ghostly silhouette. She steps into his light.

SONYA CYBULSKI
 Why you do that for me?

BRUNO WEISS
 I owed it to you, didn't I...?

SONYA CYBULSKI
 I don't leave you.

She HOLDS a SMALL BROWN PAPER BAG. She opens it. Inside: ALCOHOL, CLOTH BANDAGES, COTTON.

She TENDS TO HIS WOUNDS. He mutters, almost inaudible, through clenched teeth and great pain:

She OPENS A BOTTLE OF LAUDANUM--WHICH IS OPIUM.

SONYA CYBULSKI (CONT'D)
 Is for pain...

She pours out a cap-sized helping. He takes it, drinks it. He speaks through the PAIN:

BRUNO WEISS

Sonya--it's not safe here for you.
They want you. You gotta get outta
town.

SONYA CYBULSKI

I hear the police, Mr. Bruno. If I
leave, they blame it on you. And
anyway, I don't leave without
Elena...

Bruno reaches over, picks up his hat. HE PULLS OUT THE
LINING. A HUNDRED DOLLARS.

BRUNO WEISS

It's all I got left...it's enough
for a boat and not much else...

SONYA CYBULSKI

A boat?

BRUNO WEISS

(defeated)

Yeah... I know someone at Ellis
Island who could've fixed things
for us, gotten your sister. I
woulda told you before, but I
didn't want you to leave me. But
the cops took my money.
So I can't help you no more...

SONYA CYBULSKI

I get money. For all of us to
leave.

BRUNO WEISS

(incredulous)

How...?

SONYA CYBULSKI

Maybe I don't do it. But I try...

(beat)

You need to rest.

BRUNO WEISS

No... I can't... If we're gonna
go, I gotta see him tonight. Go
try and get the money--you get
caught, the less you know, the
better.

(beat)

(MORE)

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
 Meet me at South Street, by the
 market, in two hours--you think you
 can do that?

She nods. She takes the crucifix, and the SILVER PHOTO
 FRAMES LOCKET, the one with the photos of her SISTER and
 PARENTS, and DEPARTS.

EXT. UNCLE VOYTEK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sonya peers through the lit window looking into the KITCHEN.
 Uncle Voytek and Aunt Edyta are there, but then Voytek
 collects his things and leaves the house. Seems like he's
 off to work. Edyta is alone, wiping down the stove.

Sonya approaches the house and raps on the glass, as gently
 as she can. Edyta comes to the door, SHOCKED to SEE Sonya.
 Her face goes white. She comes to the door. In Polish:

AUNT EDYTA
 Sonya...you can't stay!

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE)
 Aunt Edyta... Please--I have to
 talk to you.

Edyta looks around, almost in a panic.

SONYA CYBULSKI (CONT'D)
 What I have to ask may make you
 angry. But I must ask. Please.

After a beat, Edyta nods, allows her inside.

INT. UNCLE VOYTEK'S HOUSE - NEAR DOOR

Edyta and Sonya. In Polish, sotto voce:

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE)
 This is so very difficult for me to
 say...
 (averts Edyta's gaze)
 Last Sunday, I, I went to church,
 for the first time in a long time.
 I prayed to Mary. Because I know
 she suffered so when her son was on
 the cross... She cried many bitter
 tears...as have I now.
 (direct to Edyta)
 (MORE)

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE) (CONT'D)
I have gone through so many
trials...has it become a sin for me
to try so hard to survive?

AUNT EDYTA
Sonya, please...

SONYA CYBULSKI
Aunt Edyta, is it a sin to want to
survive, when I have done so many
bad things?

Sonya closes her eyes. Edyta is upset as well:

AUNT EDYTA
Your uncle is a proud man--I can't--

Sonya continues, independent of what Edyta has just said:

SONYA CYBULSKI (SUBTITLE)
Uncle Voytek has rejected me. But
I ask you to believe that I can be
saved. God has sent to me someone
so very cruel--someone who made my
life a sin... And yet now he
suffers for me. So I am learning
the power of redemption...
(beat)
I need money, for Elena, so that we
may leave the city. It is a lot of
money, and Uncle Voytek will be
angry. But we will never come
back, never.
(beat)
Will you help me?

Edyta looks at Sonya. She looks troubled. We:

CUT TO:

EXT. SOUTH STREET - FISH MARKET - LATE NIGHT

The activity is already starting to pick up. Sonya
approaches the market. A WHISPERED VOICE:

BRUNO WEISS
Sonya...? Did you get it?

She turns. Bruno is half-shrouded in the dark. She holds
out a ROLL OF BILLS. He takes her arm and leads her to:

EXT. EAST RIVER - DAWN

Bruno and Sonya enter a small boat with both a sail and oars. The sailor is HEINZ, whom we first met earlier when Bruno and McNally went to retrieve Sonya from Ellis Island. The boat pushes away...

EXT. EAST RIVER - DAWN

The boat, in fairly choppy water. SONYA SEES THE CITY RECEDING. HEINZ is working overtime to navigate. After a beat of silence, Sonya stares at the looming potential destination: ELLIS ISLAND.

She turns back to Bruno, who is SWIGGING the Laudanum.

EXT. ELLIS ISLAND - BACK WALL

The rowboat docks. Bruno and Sonya step out, climb up a series of iron steps that jut out of the brick. Heinz stays in the boat.

They WAIT a BEAT, then a FIGURE APPEARS, walking closer to them. It is CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY. Sonya's first instinct is to recoil. Bruno steps forward to McNally, hands him the MONEY. McNally counts it all quickly, nods, then:

HANDS BRUNO a SMALL PACKET OF FOLDED PAPERS. The two walk within earshot of Sonya.

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
She's in the clear now. Another
hour, she and her sister leave for
New Jersey.

Sonya shoots a look to Bruno as McNally continues. Is Bruno not coming?

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
(CONT'D)
Boat's there, their names're on the
ledger. It goes to California
tonight.

McNally talks to Bruno in a more intimate tone:

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
(CONT'D)
Listen, Bruno. I'm doin' you some
big favors here.
(MORE)

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
And...from now on, you know you 'n
me gotta be strangers.

BRUNO WEISS
Yeah...I know...

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
If I see you 'round town, I'm
walking the other way.

SONYA CYBULSKI
No, you don't worry--Mr. Bruno, he
come with us!

McNally senses some awkwardness.

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
C'mere. You don't wanna be seen--

He walks them toward:

EXT. EQUIPMENT SHED

McNally TAKES a SET OF KEYS off his belt, opens the door.
They enter.

CUSTOMS OFFICER THOMAS MCNALLY
Your sister'll be here when the
hospital doors open, in one hour.
I'll sign her out. Good luck to
ya.

And like that, he is gone.

INT. EQUIPMENT SHED

A small wooden shack, one window, a door, some chairs, some
gardening equipment.

Bruno and Sonya stand there for a beat.

THUNDER RUMBLES. RAIN BEGINS TO FALL.

SONYA CYBULSKI
You don't come...

BRUNO WEISS
I can't... I come with you, they
look for you the rest of your life.
(beat)
(MORE)

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
[If I came,] You and your sister'd
never get settled, maybe wind up
dead or in jail.

SONYA CYBULSKI
But--what do you do here?
(beat)
They blame you--they say you kill
him, by yourself--

BRUNO WEISS
Don't worry about me. I've
survived worse.

He TAKES ANOTHER SWIG of the LAUDANUM.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
You got everything you need. You
got a boat to California, your
sister's going with you--

SONYA CYBULSKI
Yes. Thank you for it.

Bruno looks at her as though she is nuts.

BRUNO WEISS
Thank me?!? Thank me for what?!?

He approaches her, almost assertive.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
Do you know when you first got
here, I told that guy--
(gestures outside, re:
McNally)
--to pull you out of the line? I
paid him! I fixed it so your uncle
left, and you had nobody! If it
wasn't for me, maybe you come here
clean--and none of this happens.
But I did pick you. It's what I
do. I been doing it for years,
same routine. And I never thought
twice about it. Never.

Sonya puts her hands to her mouth. Completely horrified.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
I don't blame you for hating me.
(beat)
Up 'til now, I never killed
anybody.
(MORE)

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
 But it don't make a difference,
 really. 'Cause if you could lick my
 heart, you would taste only poison.

Sonya is SPEECHLESS. She cries.

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
 (almost angry)
 See, you wanna think there's
 something good in everybody--but
 there isn't. So go and forget
 about me. You'll be something
 else. My future isn't your future.

She stares at him as he sways--is he going to collapse?

BRUNO WEISS (CONT'D)
 'Cause I'm nothing to you.

This captures her attention. He is fading. Perhaps it is
 the opium, the LAUDANUM that he kept drinking, the beating he
 took, the sheer exhaustion.

SONYA CYBULSKI
 You are not nothing.

She STARES AT HIM FOR SEVERAL BEATS. THEN, UNEXPECTEDLY:
Sonya SPREADS her arms wide to EMBRACE HIM. The embrace is
almost maternal, NOT sexual at all.

Bruno sinks to his knees. She caresses his head. Tender.
 Strokes his hair.

The rain begins to SEEP THROUGH THE ROOF, and taps Bruno on
 the head.

She takes the WATER that has dribbled on her hand and his
 head, and she uses it to push back his hair and clean his
 face as much as she can.

He looks up at her, but seems to stare a thousand yards past
 her.

The RAIN POURS DOWN... They do not move for a BEAT...

His HEAD SINKS FORWARD, and she strokes his head as if he
 were her infant.

He has FALLEN ASLEEP.

A NOISE.

He awakens. It is LATER. THE RAIN HAS STOPPED, THOUGH IT IS STILL CLOUDY. The WIND HOWLS. He looks up to SEE: SONYA, from behind. She is EXITING THE SHED, as quietly as possible so as not to wake him. He does not stop her.

Sitting up with great effort, he looks through the glass window in the door.

HE SEES: SONYA RUNNING TOWARD HER SISTER. We cannot HEAR them; we merely SEE them EMBRACE THROUGH the WARPED GLASS.

Bruno's eyes FOLLOW them as THEY HURRY TO THE SIDE OF THE ISLAND.

THROUGH ANOTHER WINDOW, BRUNO SEES the TWO DISAPPEAR down the EMBANKMENT.

A MOMENT LATER, the small BOAT WITH THE SAIL emerges, TRAVELING AWAY FROM THE ISLAND.

With all his effort, BRUNO STANDS. HE EXITS THE SHED. We PAN OVER to a window.

The CAMERA DOLLIES toward that WINDOW, which is open.

Through the open window space, we can SEE the BOAT with a SAIL, in the distance, on the water...

On the LEFT SIDE OF THE FRAME, the WINDOW GLASS ENABLES US to SEE a REFLECTION of BRUNO WEISS, walking toward the main building.

We HOLD on this for several beats. BRUNO WEISS, walking away from us, toward the FERRY, toward the city.

SONYA and ELENA CYBULSKI'S BOAT, further and further into the distance, toward Jersey, toward something new.

The End