

EXT. NEW YORK CITY (1955) - DAWN

45th Street between 10th and 11th Avenue, a sanitation truck spritzes both gutters, White Wings push heavy scrubbers behind. PAN to the Rialto Bar & Grill.

INT. RIALTO BAR & GRILL - DAWN

At the bar FRANK, 51, the owner, shines quanticles on bottles of Four Roses and Cutty Sark, tobacco smoke wends its way through the well-lit crack under a door to a back room, HEAR a muted BUZZ.

INT. BACK ROOM, RIALTO BAR & GRILL - DAWN

A card game in progress, glasses and an ice bucket burnished with a NY Giants logo. Five players: JEROME, EDGAR, GEORGE, SHECKY and TONY, the latter, in his 50's and a generation older than the others, his body wasted with poor health, an anomalous scarf around his neck, a threadbare suit and a soiled fedora.

The game moves rapidly, raises and calls made with chips, grunts and gestures, Tony the standout in this group not only because of age but a demeanor which, on the one hand, commands respect, on the other is unintentionally imperious, resented only by the callow Shecky. Tony's chips are dwindling to nothing.

SHECKY

Pair of ducks...Peanut Butter and
Jelly...Fishhooks...hey,hey, Lucy
and Ricky...and what have we got
here, Six Tits...

(to Tony)

Looking good --

Shecky deals a last card, Tony studies his cards, pushes out most of his pile, Shecky matches him, as the others drop out a last card turned up.

SHECKY(cont'd)

Broadway.

Shecky shows his straight and scoops in all the chips.

SHECKY (cont'd)

This is how we play the game.

(to Tony)

Your action, sir.

Tony passes the deck to George, raises and calls proceed, Tony at a disadvantage with his meager chips.

TONY
Didn't Morton run this game?

JEROME
Mutt's dead.

EDGAR
Four years.

SHECKY
Where you been?

EDGAR
You know where he's been.

Shecky CACKLES, Jerome and Edgar impassive, George irritated. Tony hesitates on the ante.

GEORGE
(kindly, to Tony)
What d'you think, Mr. Anthony, you
in?

Tony takes out a dollar bill, writes a big number on it, but the bill lays lonesomely in the middle of the table. Now, Shecky places a long index finger on the dollar bill, pushes it back to Tony.

SHECKY
Cash is spoken here, Pops. No
markers.

Tony glances at George, he shrugs helplessly. Shecky pushes one of his own towering stacks of chips towards Tony, Tony regards this pile.

SHECKY (cont'd)
It's your money, I'd love lending
it to you.

Jerome and Edgar are silent, impassive; cardplayers.

SHECKY (cont'd)
What d'you say, pal, in or out?

TONY
-- Excuse me?

SHECKY

Do you want to borrow money or
don't you?

Abruptly, Tony pushes away from the table.

TONY

(to Shecky)
That chair stays warm.

On Tony's exit, George turns to Shecky.

GEORGE

The man was a player.

SHECKY

Not on my team. Can't hit the long
ball anymore. He does a nickle and
what happens? You smell the pooch
all over him.

(to George)
Your action, sir.

GEORGE

Pass.

INT. BAR, RIALTO BAR & GRILL

Tony heads for the pay phone, but Frank intercepts him,
reaches under the bar for the house phone.

INT. KITCHEN, JOE BERNTSEN'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

Joe, early 30's, a muscular blue-collar guy with a Viking
demeanor, at the stove is his practical wife, LOUISE, 30, at
the table a child, TONIO, 5. The phone rings, Joe reaches
for it but Tonio gets there first.

TONIO

Uncle Tony! Hi!..You coming
over? -- You going to bring me a
present?..Yeah! Yeah!..A gold one!

Joe snatches the phone from Tonio.

JOE

What's happening?...How much?...I'm
on my way.

Louise regards Joe as he hangs up.

INT. RIALTO BAR & GRILL

Joe hurries in, passes Frank who jerks his head towards the card room ("You've got a problem back there").

INT. CARD ROOM - EARLY MORNING

Tony's seat is vacated, he is watching the game, perched on the edge of a neighboring pool table.

George nods to Joe as he crosses to Tony, reaches in his pocket, pulls out a wad of bills folded in half and secured by a rubber band which, in one motion, he rolls on to his wrist, peels off hundreds.

SHECKY

(to Joe)

Who're you, his Daddy?

Shecky immediately has Joe's attention.

JOE

And who are you --?

Tony reaches for a pool cue as Shecky waves his hand over his towers of chips.

SHECKY

The winner.

JOE

You don't look like no winner to me. What you look like is a worthless sack of shit with a laundry bag full of magic tricks and a little mechanic's weenie to go with them.

It happens fast, Shecky on his feet with the .38 he has drawn from his ankle, he tries to aim at Joe but fails because immediately Tony has the tip of the pool cue against Shecky's chest, driving it into him, the gun barrel forced upwards, the piece clattering to the floor and Shecky gasping for breath. Chairs scrape as Jerome and Edgar, all wary, rise to their feet.

TONY

Sit down.

Jerome and Edgar sit. Tony kicks the .38, it slides across the room and stops just short of the wall, a score in shuffleboard.

TONY (cont'd)
 (to Joe)
 Let's go.
 (to Shecky)
 You play a nice game of cards, son.

Tony flips the pool cue, catches it by the tip, presents the cue handle to the hapless Shecky who receives it as Joe and Tony exit.

The back room of the Rialto Bar & Grill has fallen all quiet, the remaining occupants staring at the door.

EDGAR
 The Maestro.

GEORGE
 Hasn't lost a step.

EXT. RIALTO BAR & GRILL - MORNING

Tony and Joe walk rapidly down the street, in silence. A red light.

JOE
 ...Why don't you call me before the game?

TONY
 That's a handout.

JOE
 And what was this?

TONY
 A rescue...The cards got cute on me.

JOE
 Since when?

TONY
 Five years.

Joe reaches in his pocket again, the rubber band rolls onto his wrist, Tony pushes Joe's hand back into Joe's pocket.

JOE
But I owe you five years.

TONY
You've overpaid. How's my boy?

JOE
Sends you his love.

TONY
You're lying.

JOE
He wanted to come with me.

Tony smiles.

TONY
That's better.

Joe grins, a shiver from Tony, Joe stops, is about to readjust the scarf but Tony grabs his wrist, handles the scarf himself. A moment, Joe studies Tony.

JOE
I want to show you something.

They climb into Joe's car.

INT. CAFE DE LA PAIX, SAVOY-PLAZA, 58TH ST. & 5TH AVE. -
MORNING.

Joe has situated Tony beside him with an unobstructed view of the classy establishments across 5th Ave., a department store and its exclusive ground floor shoe department, tucked unobtrusively next door, a world-class jeweler.

The Bartender steps up.

JOE
Gimme two beers.
(to Tony)
What'll you have?

TONY
Martini, English gin, drop of
scotch, twist of lemon peel. Nice
'n cold.

The Bartender grins, "Here's a man who knows what he wants", goes to mix the martini.

TONY (cont'd)
Who's the encore beer for?

JOE
You're gonna love him.

The drinks are served, the Bartender lingers for approval. Tony takes a sip, nods, as the Bartender goes Tony's gaze shifts past him, into sets of mirrors reflecting a mature couple seated at a corner table, an illicit air about them, beautifully dressed, drinking glasses of champagne and eating scrambled eggs. Joe follows Tony's gaze.

JOE (cont'd)
It's Maddi, ain't it?

TONY
What about her?

JOE
I can tell, a guy like you clocking them two while sipping that stuck-up drink with garbage peel --

TONY
Yeah? And --?

JOE
It makes you think of her.

TONY
(threateningly)
Me 'think' or you?

JOE
Okay, me.

TONY
Well, un-think. What are we doing here?

JOE
(anxiously)
Uh-uh -- "What are we doing here?"...Well, here comes 'What' now.

Tony and Joe are approached by a working man, an anomaly in this place, a belly and a broad chest topped by a huge head of hair but everything in proportion and a basso profundo voice to go with it, MARVIN ASHER, 32; Marvin moves easily.

JOE (cont'd)
Marvin, meet Tony.

Marvin makes an Arab genuflection, fingers to forehead, lips, and navel.

MARVIN
The Maestro. Enchanted.

Tony does not smile, Joe signals the bartender to set up Marvin with yet another beer as they move to the lone table by a window, squarely facing the jewelry store across the street.

MARVIN (cont'd)
(to Tony)
How're you feeling?

TONY
Good morning, Marvin, what's on your mind?

JOE
Easy, easy, Tony. Mosler, Gardall, Fire King. The best alarm man in the business.

TONY
You in for Chickie?

MARVIN
Chickie is out-of-town, Dannemora. Besides, I could clean his clock.

TONY
Now you don't have to.

JOE
A little respect, Tony, don't y'know Marvin almost put the Manufacturers Trust Company into Chapter Eleven.

TONY
What do you do during the day, Marvin?

MARVIN
Television.

TONY
You're on television?

MARVIN

I fix them. Top store in the Bronx. Jerome Avenue -- come on in, Philcos, Dumont, Admiral, I'll bring you in a picture like you're standing on second base...Retail interests you?

Tony turns to Joe, "Who is this clown?", Marvin, no fool, senses the situation, nervously chug-a-lugs his beer, picks up a second. Tony is not impressed.

JOE

Talk, Marvin.

But Marvin is silent for a moment, Tony follows his gaze across the street to the jewelry store.

MARVIN

Smash 'n grab. Joe and me have timed it a dozen times, you park over there 10:30 AM, middle of the morning, the slow zone of the day, the light changes, the traffic stops, you pull up, now we jump out and cut, 17 seconds, the feature window, cabuchon ruby, canary diamond, Ceylon sapphire, red, white and blue, and you drive us away.

Marvin giggles involuntarily.

MARVIN (cont'd)

Don't y'love it?

TONY

I don't drive.

MARVIN

Listen, Maestro, you're just one job away from being once again the hottest jewel thief in the business.

Silence.

MARVIN (cont'd)

This is going badly, isn't it?

TONY

(to Joe)

He belongs on television.

MARVIN

Captain Kangaroo. With the big pockets. If I had a coat like that, I could clean out Lambert Brothers on a walk-through.

Tony's attention drifts again, to the intimate couple in the corner. Meanwhile, Marvin changes his tune.

MARVIN (cont'd)

Okay, you're a legend. So I accommodated you. But if you'll pardon me, you don't look so legendary right now. This is a simple job -- a carbon of the Carson, Pirie, Scott thing in Chicago last spring -- but like any job, it needs a mind behind.

Tony turns his attention back across the street.

TONY

Van Cleef & Arpels.
(trancing)
Worth saying twice, Van Cleef & Arpels. Y'know why? Plainclothes, Clothes as well, badges and guns, more bells than AT&T plus the National Cathedral. No, thank you.
(to Joe)
Where'd you say Maddi was?

JOE

We been looking for her since before you got out.

TONY

-- So she's dead?

Joe makes a helpless gesture.

TONY (cont'd)

Or just shackled up like some semi-pro.

Tony pushes away from the bar, the meeting over. Marvin regards Tony.

MARVIN

What happened in Ossining?
Allergies from the River --?

JOE
 (to Marvin, angrily)
 Hey, hey --!

Tony, off his stool, restrains Joe.

TONY
 It's okay. You're right, Mister
 Marvin, I could be scared. But I'm
 not.
 (after a moment)
 'Smash 'n grab'? Sorry, I'm too
 old for that.

MARVIN
 What's 'old'? Show me 'old'.

TONY
 The legs. I don't run so fast
 anymore.

MARVIN
 I'll work you out, the track at the
 Kingsbridge Armory.

TONY
 No good, I've shortened stride.

And Tony is gone, Joe obediently trailing after him, Tony sneaks a look back, Marvin hopes it is for him but it isn't, Tony's eyes are on the mirrored couple in the corner, he seems them steal a goodbye kiss.

EXT. JOE'S APARTMENT - TWILIGHT

Tony is about to ring the bell, an involuntary SHIVER, he takes a deep breath, turns around and spontaneously faces the last rays of the sun, removes his hat, drinks in the vestiges of light, they seem to warm him, the SHIVERING stops, he gathers himself and turns into the doorway.

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The bell rings, Joe nods to Tonio who is in his pajamas, he runs to the door, opens it, jumps into Tony's arms. As Tony lowers Tonio, he palms him a packet of gum.

TONIO
 ...Teaberry.

Tony guides Tonio's hand to Tonio's pajama shirt pocket, they hide the gum there. Now Tony reaches in for the bulge in his overcoat, extracts a package, hands it to Tonio who rips it open; a miniature steam locomotive.

TONY

-- Camelback - cab over the boiler...

Tonio examines it wide-eyed, sets it down preciously.

TONY (cont'd)

C'm'on, we got batteries. Go.

Tonio flips a switch, the locomotive lights up, puffs steam, chugs and whistles around the room. Tonio is beside himself, Joe all aglow, even Louise emerges from the kitchen, takes off her apron, suppressing a smile.

LOUISE

Dinner's ready.

Tony unwinds his muffler, reaches into another pocket of his coat, pulls out a child-size engineer's hat, squares it up on Tonio's head.

LATER

Tonio, now in his pajamas but still sporting the engineer's hat, kisses his father goodnight, hugs Tony.

TONY

...I'm the bakehead, your helper, you're the brass hat, the boss. And when we get highballing, we're looking at nothing but green eyes.

TONIO

Full steam ahead! Don't go!

TONY

Gotta stay 'on the advertised' --

TONIO

-- Who says?

TONY

The Yardmaster.

TONIO

Couldn't you beat him up?

TONY
Normally, but it's a 'short line'
and I'm carrying the mail.

Tonio is stopped, he purses his lips, a tremble at separation.

TONY (cont'd)
Don't worry, I'm in charge --

As Tony gives him a goodnight hug, Tonio slips Tony a stick of teaberry.

TONY (cont'd)
But deep down inside, you're the
actual boss.

Tonio beams, all okay now.

LOUISE
It's enough now...go on, Tonio.

Tonio runs off to bed, Joe fills Tony's shot glass, Louise refills their coffee cups, the three sit in silence.

JOE
Where'd you get that railroad
stuff?

TONY
A guy I did pushups with in the
yard. Punched tickets on the
Hudson River Line. Then helped
himself to the baggage car. Got
off one day at Ossining for good.

Another silence.

LOUISE
Guess who I saw today?

Tony and Joe are not interested.

LOUISE (cont'd)
Maddi.

Tony drains his jigger, chases it with a sip of water.

TONY
(carefully, to Joe)
-- Where is she?

JOE
You don't want to know.

Louise is all uncomfortable, sensing her mistake. Joe squirms, the veins in Tony's temple pulse. He gets up.

LOUISE
(to Joe)
Remember I told you, to tell him
right away.

Joe shrugs helplessly.

LOUISE (cont'd)
Tony likes to get without asking.

Tony regards Louise, his look ties her up in knots.

LOUISE (cont'd)
I'm sorry.

TONY
Never apologize for the truth.

He turns to Joe, impatient now for detail.

JOE
(reluctantly)
...Gruetter

On hearing the name, Tony unconsciously rises up on his toes, Joe stands up in response.

JOE (cont'd)
Where you going?!

TONY
Sit down.

LOUISE
(narrating)
He's going to The Silver Slipper.

TONY
Good thinking.

JOE
I'm coming with you.

TONY
No thank you, I know my way. Sit
down.

But Joe doesn't sit.

JOE

Stay away from Gruetter, Tony.
He's climbed the rungs, all
connected now. The Loudest Voice
at the Bund Meeting.

TONY

Thank you, again, now back off.

JOE

I can't --

TONY

You know what I got in my pocket?
A five-year marker. I never
thought of it as a marker. It was
a gift. But you keep reminding me
of it. So tonight I'm calling in
this "marker" -- sit down.

Joe sits, Tony already at the door, a SHIVER, wraps his
muffler, glances down the hall, Tonio is standing outside his
bedroom door. Tony glances down, the toy locomotive has
landed at his feet, he squats, flips the switch and the toy
engine choo-choos back down the hall to Tonio.

TONY (cont'd)

(to Louise)

Thank you for dinner.

(to Joe)

Stay put.

And Tony disappears, Joe all a-quiver, Louise gasping for the
air that has been sucked out of the room.

INT. THE SILVER SLIPPER - NIGHT

A West Village night club, a relic of the boites in post-war
Manhattan.

On the postage-stamp stage, VIVIAN, a singer trumped by the
quality of her musicians, working the tables are pro waiters
and at the door a beautiful maitre d', MADDI, comfortable
with and not hiding her middle age, she marshals an aura of
sophistication, even class, as she weaves her way through
tables, expertly guiding a couple down front. The man
pleased with the selection reaches in his pocket to shake her
hand, the couple sits and Maddi returns to her podium folding
a bill into her bra.

A group have surfaced at the door, butter-and-egg guys from out of town, they've made the rounds and are showing it.

CUSTOMER
 (to Maddi)
 -- Three, down front, Gorgeous.

The guy plunges his hand in his pocket, JINGLES his change with a come-hither smile, Maddi gathers three menus and turns back to the customer -- only to find her view blocked -- by Tony.

MADDI's POV - TONY

Grim, unshaven, a curled white collar and the remains of his expensive suit. Maddi's reaction is shock and fear and pain, for her the whole room has gone SILENT.

CUSTOMER (cont'd)
 (to Tony)
 Hey, fella, are you aware you're jumping the line --?

TONY
 Beat it.
 (to Maddi)
 Let's go.

The Customer touches Tony's elbow.

CUSTOMER
 Looky here, just a minute --

TONY
 (to the other two
 Customers)
 Tell your friend to take his hand off my arm.

The glint in Tony's eye makes itself known.

SECOND CUSTOMER
 Take your hand off his arm,
 Walter --

Walter needs no further urging and Maddi heads straight for the door, she pauses at the Hatcheck Girl's booth, DOTTIE, Maddi hands her a sheaf of menus.

MADDI
 Take over.

INT. GREYSTONE HOTEL, 92ND ST. & BROADWAY - NIGHT

An elevator, an old Otis in a cage operated by the night man from Barbados. As Tony and Maddi ride up with him, he is about to say something in greeting, thinks better of it.

INT. CORRIDOR, GREYSTONE HOTEL - NIGHT

Neither seedy nor clean, a smell of sour dirt off the carpets as Tony unlocks his door.

TONY

Go ahead.

Maddi enters, all uncomfortable leading the way.

INT. TONY'S APARTMENT, GREYSTONE HOTEL - NIGHT

A barebones pair of rooms, the lowest end of this low end residential hotel on Upper Broadway.

TONY

Take a seat.

Tony pulls out a chair from a table which doubles as a dining area, he checks her lookaround.

TONY (cont'd)

Not great.

She sits, stirs uneasily.

TONY (cont'd)

Sometimes I miss the old Majestic.
I heard the price but I've
forgotten, how much did you get for
it?

Maddi raises her hands helplessly.

TONY (cont'd)

Spare me, 'I never did have a head
for figures'.

MADDI

I'm sorry, I --

TONY

Never mind, the money was yours,
call it a Decorator's fee.

Tony helps himself to a shot of whisky.

TONY (cont'd)
And then you went on to Miami with
a guy --?

MADDI
(correcting)
Indian Creek.

TONY
-- That's right, some Social
Register pimp.

MADDI
I thought I loved him.

TONY
Cease and desist, I'll cry. And
who have we got on first now, the
bad Deutschmark -- Herman Gruetter.
Why doesn't someone advise him to
change his name?

MADDI
Herman's of German extraction --

TONY
'Extracted' from what, a tube of
strudel? Or a tub of grease?

MADDI
Your Joe was on my tail. He scared
me. So I took off for Key West.
But Herman surfaced right behind
me, took the cabana next to mine.

TONY
Perfect. And to top it off, when
you two went digging in the sand,
you found a ring which, at this
moment, is blinding me --

MADDI
I earned this ring.

An ominous silence.

MADDI (cont'd)
-- Go ahead, say it.

TONY

You always did land on your feet
-- With your legs spread wide.
But why pick a stranger who was
looking to get in my way?

MADDI

And you his, says he.

TONY

'Says' who?! An operetta pimp who
was shadowing my moves and
eavesdropping on my life? Oh, I
saw him in the wings mimicking the
words, but I knew he could never
learn the music. Waltzing around
me like some Viennese gnat. I'd
swat him away, but he kept coming
back like a bad piece of
sauerbraten. This is who you
climbed into bed with? A ratfink,
some cop-whisperer, I stepped up
for family and did a nickle -- and
he stepped right in. What happened
to your taste?

Silence, Tony suddenly all within himself.

MADDI

Can I go now?

TONY

Where?

MADDI

Away from -- this...

TONY

'This'? I waited five years for
'this'.

(a moment)

And you didn't.

Maddi stands up.

MADDI

You know the expression, 'Charity
begins at home'?

TONY

Joe's family.

MADDI

What was I, some trick? A wombless
tramp to rank on for a pug and his
wife in Ozone Park 'and baby makes
three'?

TONY

(steadily)

We were working together, and yes,
they had a baby coming.

MADDI

So what? So you could be a hero?
You owe me five years. I was the
schmuck-ette who loved you. Say
you're sorry.

TONY

I don't make apologies,
particularly to 'the trade'.

MADDI

Y'know, Tony, I'd almost like to
help you.

Tony implodes, the veins in his forehead pulse.

TONY

'Help me'? 'Help me'?! I'm all
mixed up. Do I break out the
violins -- or the razor? Put that
ring on the table.

Maddi takes off the ring and sets it on the table.

TONY (cont'd)

The bracelet.

She removes an accompanying bracelet and places it beside the
ring.

TONY (cont'd)

-- The coat.

Maddi stands up and lets a Persian Lamb fall off her
shoulders.

TONY (cont'd)

C'm'ere.

She moves to him.

TONY (cont'd)
Now the rest of it.

Maddi unzips her dress, it puddles to the floor. Their eyes lock, Tony waits, Maddi unsnaps her bra and Tony stares at Maddi's breasts, unconsciously now, he reaches behind for a belt which hangs over a tie on the back of a closet door. Raises the belt above his head -- his arm freezes mid-air.

MADDI
Whatsa matter, go ahead --

Tony's arm twitches involuntarily and the belt slips from his fingers. The room airless now, Maddi facing Tony, nude to the waist.

TONY
Get dressed.

A shaken Maddi fumbles with her bra.

TONY (cont'd)
Get out!

He rips open the door, pushes Maddi out, pitches her dress into the hallway, turns back inside, discovers the fur coat and throws that out too, SLAMS the door.

INT. TONY'S APARTMENT, GREYSTONE HOTEL - NIGHT

Tony pours himself a jigger of whisky, tosses it back, his eyes land on Maddi's ring and bracelet lined up on the table. He snatches them, flings the door open again.

INT. HALLWAY, GREYSTONE HOTEL - NIGHT

Maddi stands half-nude in the hallway, her bra and dress in her arms, her Persian Lamb coat pulled tight over her shoulders. Tony pitches the ring and bracelet out onto the hallway carpet but Maddi does not track where they land, her eyes are on Tony.

TONY
Gruetter will miss them.

Tony's eyes are LOCKED on Maddi's.

MADDI
Y'know something --?

TONY

What!

MADDI

You don't know whether to kill me
or fuck me.

Tony takes one threatening step toward her, then turns back inside.

INT. TONY'S APARTMENT, GREYSTONE HOTEL - NIGHT

Another shot of whisky and he turns around again, peers out the open door.

TONY'S POV

Maddi at the elevator gate, she looks back down the hall to Tony, raises her hand tentatively, poignantly, sincerely, almost a wave. The bracelet resting on top of the pile of clothes in her arms catches the light of the elevator, sparkles, the elevator gate closes and she is gone.

INT. TONY'S APARTMENT, GREYSTONE HOTEL - NIGHT

Tony wheels back inside, SLAMS the door, picks up the phone and dials.

TONY

Joe --?

JOE

(phone)

Yeah.

The phone seems to go dead.

JOE (cont'd)

-- Tony...you there?

Another moment.

TONY

...Where does this Marvin live?

JOE
8th and 19th. Upstairs. Over the
Dominican bakery.

TONY
I'll be there in half an hour.

JOE
You're in?

No response.

JOE (cont'd)
Are you telling me you're in?!

Tony stares at his table, all bare now.

TONY
A guy's got to live.

He coughs involuntarily, wraps the scarf tighter around his neck, hangs up.

INT. BATHROOM, MARVIN'S APARTMENT - DAY

IDA, 28, Marvin's Puerto Rican 'lady', is showering, voluptuous, practiced, the shower curtain half-open. Marvin appears in his bathrobe, Ida chuckles, she parts his bathrobe and reaches inside. Marvin giggles half-embarrassedly, but in a moment his bathrobe is off and he is into the shower.

Ida laughs delightedly and then she SCREAMS delightedly, Marvin pulls the shower curtain closed, but the doorbell RINGS.

INT. FOYER, MARVIN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Ida, in her wrapper, opens the door to find Tony and Joe.

JOE
How y'doing, Ida, y'know Tony?

IDA
Sure, I know Tony -- from The Big
'O'.

Marvin, back in his bathrobe and again all smiles, appears now too, behind Ida, his hands on her shoulders.

TONY
-- 'From the' what?

IDA
The Orpheum Ballroom. You never
danced. You drank at the bar. I
was the little girl from San Juan.

TONY
-- All wet behind the ears.

IDA
I beg your pardon--

TONY
There were no 'little girls' at the
Orpheum.

Ida laughs, too loud.

MARVIN
(to Ida)
Don't you want to get dressed?

IDA
No.

MARVIN
That's okay, I'll help you.

And Marvin escorts Ida out, Joe shifts nervously, Tony's eyes
on the bedroom where Ida and Marvin have disappeared.

TONY
(to Joe)
She could mess up a man's head. He
thinks straight?

JOE
This is an alarm man.

Tony squints.

JOE (cont'd)
..You've been away. He's come up.

Marvin reappears in a silk dressing gown.

TONY
I thought your business was in the
Bronx.

MARVIN
It is. Do I have to live there,
too?

Joe helps himself to the pot of coffee on the table, guides Tony to a seat, Marvin plays host, all ingratiating.

MARVIN (cont'd)
We got The Maestro -- cause for celebration.

TONY
No guns.

Marvin freezes.

MARVIN
...Then let's forget about it.

Tony rises to exit, Joe eases him back down.

JOE
Tony...Tony...

TONY
I'm not in the armed robbery business.

MARVIN
I 'shoul'da stood in bed'.
(to Joe)
You got me all hard -- you said Tony was in.

TONY
I am. But no guns. And no smash and grab. We go for the vault.

Tony lets the utterance register, Marvin awash in astonishment.

MARVIN
The Van Cleef & Arpels vault?!

TONY
They say you're the best alarm man in the business.

MARVIN
Of course!

TONY
Don't y'want to step up?

Marvin heaves a nervous sigh.

MARVIN
I dunno. I dunno.
(to Joe)
Wow.

Joe beams.

JOE
Now we're cooking --

TONY
Four-and-a-half inch composite
Manganese. Cross-locked, punch-
resistant, tempered glass trigger,
bridge-mounted, chrome-plated
bolts...if it's the same safe I
looked at five years ago.

MARVIN
You ought to be a Gardall salesman.

TONY
I know one. Upstream, the Hudson
River. Because he found it more
profitable to go the other way.
Wouldn't you?

Joe smiles. A sudden silence, quickly filled by Joe.

JOE
(to Tony)
You got around up there --

TONY
Nothing goes wasted.

Marvin scrambles to his feet.

MARVIN
Coffee? Cutty? Cognac? What'll
y'have?

TONY
No guns.

MARVIN
No guns. Okay, I understand, it's
a risk for you, you did time --

JOE
Drop it, Marvin.

MARVIN

It's gone. But who's our yegg?
I'm talking a real peterman.

JOE

We'll need a genius.

MARVIN

(to Joe)
Tony's the genius.

TONY

My personnel file is obsolete.
Everybody's too up-to-date now,
they've all been in the Signal
Corps. This Gardall guy I know was
in the Service, rotated out in
California.

Joe squints.

JOE

'California'?

TONY

He had an Army buddy who --

MARVIN

(interrupting)
Cecil.

TONY

That's the guy.

MARVIN

Cecil the Surfer, blew Gooks out of
bunkers in Pusan. Now he's got the
Bank of America crazy. Night
drops, vaults, safe deposits. A
triple threat.

TONY

Call him.

JOE

Now?

TONY

Now.

JOE

(doubtful, to Tony)
'-- California'?

Marvin opens a closet, reaches in the pocket of a pair of coveralls, opens an address book, dials.

MARVIN

(phone)

...Cecil, this is Marvin in New York -- yeah, yeah, we met at the Mosler Convention -- yeah, that's me -- I got a position for you -- I know you're a busy fellow, but let me tell you who's in charge -- Tony...yes, The Maestro himself --

Marvin raises his eyebrows to Tony, nods.

MARVIN (cont'd)

...What time will the plane get in?

Marvin nods again, hangs up, regards Tony.

MARVIN (cont'd)

Maybe one day my name will make a guy run for the airport.

TONY

A caution -- Cecil's swift, can go to his left.

JOE

-- Women?

TONY

Addicted.

Silence.

MARVIN

Well, we'll keep his eye on the sparrow.

TONY

As long as it's not a bird.

Tony gets up to exit. A hush.

JOE

(prayerfully)

'Van Cleef & Arpels'.

MARVIN

What's the get?

TONY

Oval rubies, baguette diamonds, the 'ribbon bracelet', snowflake brooches, bouquet brooches. I'm talking, what's her name, Grace Kelly, the Duchess of Windsor and the Maharajah of Jaipur. They might own an item. But not all of them.

JOE

Hot.

Marvin swallows.

MARVIN

Awful hot. Who'll fence it?

TONY

My department.
(to Joe)
Let's get out of here.

As they exit, Marvin flips a switch. An electric train begins to circulate the room, tracks have been laid against the walls.

TONY (cont'd)

-- What kind of toy is that?

MARVIN

That's no toy, that's a Hornby Series 3-Rail locomotive.

TONY

Do they sell one that runs on a battery?

MARVIN

I'll make you one.

Tony flashes a rare smile.

TONY

(to Joe)
-- Marvin grew up nice.

Tony jerks his head towards the door and he and Joe are gone.

EXT. PATINA - DAY

Tony appears at the door of this new and already fashionable jewelry store, carving a niche for itself not on Fifth Avenue, rather Madison in the upper Sixties. Tony looks the plainclothes Security in the eye, the man opens the front door.

INT. PATINA - DAY

All quiet, thick-carpeted, spare salespeople, only two or three but multilingual, presiding the owner's wife, SANDY LAVINE, 50, she spots Tony, he immediately heads for a back room, Sandy BUZZES the door open, a Guard shows Tony through.

INT. BILLY LAVINE'S OFFICE - DAY

Spacious, tasteful paintings, an antique photograph of Cecil Rhodes at a DeBeers minemouth, on the table in front of BILLY, 55, a swatch of black felt, an uncut diamond lies centered on the fabric, a loupe beside it.

Billy and Tony shake, big smile from Billy, a master of bonhomie.

BILLY
...I've missed you.

TONY
Thank you.

BILLY
How long has it been?

TONY
Five years.

BILLY
Seems longer --

TONY
For you or me?

A moment.

BILLY
What was that protege of yours,
name? ...The Swede?

Another moment.

TONY

Joe.

BILLY

I saw Joe one night at The Spindletop. He was eating filet. God knows what you were eating. Does he appreciate what you did for him?

TONY

I didn't ask. We work together.

BILLY

So you've reopened your business?

TONY

No.

BILLY

Then what can I do for you?

TONY

I expect to come into an inheritance.

Billy registers the last. He falls silent, stares down at the stone in front of him.

BILLY

(to the stone)

I love this girl. She's a sweetheart. She talks to me in dulcet tones, right down to her girdle. An incredible soft blue. A cozy blue. Not that cold you hit between the sunny layers in a Catskill lake. How big an inheritance?

TONY

An estate.

Billy folds the diamond into a tissue.

BILLY

Whose?

TONY

Phipps out of Whitney by Oppenheimer. And there's more, bringing up the rear.

BILLY

Hold the rear, could we discuss up front?

TONY

You're my man, Billy. I knew you'd be interested.

BILLY

Not in the way you might think. Until your probate clears, however, I would be willing to advance you a -- present.

TONY

A 'present'?

BILLY

In celebration of your return to the living. And in expectation of any up-front expenses you might incur.

Tony rises and exits a second door, Billy unfolds the tissue diamond in front of him, inserts his loupe.

BILLY (cont'd)

(to the diamond)

Hello, my darling --

EXT. VAN CLEEF & ARPELS - DAY

Tony striding down Fifth Avenue glances across the traffic to the facade of the famed jewelry store, a Security man stands just inside the outer front door. Tony crosses Fifth Avenue, walks almost past the front of the store, but pauses at the store window beyond the Security man. Security's back to him, Tony looks into the window.

TONY'S POV - VAN CLEEF & ARPELS WINDOW - DAY

A 'beach scene', a pair of earrings, diamond pendants, hang from the branch of a miniature tree planted in a mound of sand.

The pendants sway slightly.

CLOSE-UP - TONY

His nose presses against the glass of the window.

TONY'S POV

The pendants jiggle now, the SOUND of a subway train passing underneath.

ON TONY

Stepping back from the show window, he glances up the Fifth Avenue, a grate at the cornice where the end of the store meets the sidewalk.

OVER THE GRATE

Tony reaches in his pocket, withdraws a packet of Teaberry, removes a stick, unwraps it, pops the stick in his mouth and carefully folds the pink wrapper, bends to tie his shoelace, peers down into the subway tunnel below.

INT. BMT SUBWAY - DAY

A neglected station on the Coney Island line. Tony trots down the kiosk steps, pays his way through the non-attended turnstile at the west end of this 'Fifth Avenue' stop (the attended change booth at the east end). He walks towards the short end of the platform, descends a flight of iron steps to the tracks, heads down the track to a niche, turns into the niche, daylight slants through a grate above illuminating the litter of cigarette butts, burnt matches, empty cigarette packaging and candy wrappers at Tony's feet.

Tony backs out, walks down the track to the next niche, turns in, another shaft of daylight, a mound of sidewalk refuse, a pink Teaberry wrapper fluttering on top of the pile. Tony steps to the wall, discoloration at the base, he kicks the wall, flakes discolored from mold, peel off.

Tony unsheathes the blade of a pocket knife, pushes the point into the wall, the wall falls away. A RUMBLE, a train passes, stops, Tony backs against the wall, the SOUND of subway doors opening then closing, the 'N' train clatters off to Coney Island and Tony steps out of the niche but before he exits, he stoops to retrieve his folded Teaberry wrapper.

INT. VAN CLEEF & ARPELS - DAY

Tony enters the Accessories Department, DuPont pens and lighters, extravagant vanity cases, watch fobs. Tony bends over a showcase, a SALESMAN waits politely.

TONY

...I'm interested in the compact.

SALESMAN

Yes, sir.

He unlocks the showcase, presents the item to Tony.

TONY

Could you open it?

SALESMAN

My pleasure.

The Salesman opens the compact.

SALESMAN (cont'd)

The 'Minaudiere' -- the Magician's Box. Paris, 1930. The senior Monsieur Arpels notices an American heiress slipping her lipstick into a plain tin container -- and he invented this...voila, a well-bred woman could now discretely tuck away her hankie and powder.

TONY

Thank you. How much is it?

SALESMAN

Twelve hundred.

Tony hesitates.

SALESMAN (cont'd)

Also in mother-of-pearl for nineteen?

TONY

-- Yes.

The Salesman chuckles, shrugs.

SALESMAN

I knew you were going to say that. We're out of the mother-of-pearl for the moment --

Tony sighs disappointedly.

SALESMAN (cont'd)

We've notified Paris -- hopefully next week - the mother-of-pearl is really beautiful...

TONY

I'll be back in town next week, do you have a rest room on this floor?

SALESMAN

Yes sir, right over there, next to timepieces.

The Salesman slides to another customer as Tony heads for the rest room.

INT. VAN CLEEF & ARPELS MEN'S ROOM, LOWER LEVEL - DAY

Tony at a urinal, he hears a toilet flush, he remains at the urinal while a well-dressed Employee washes his hands, exits, Tony moves down the urinals to the corner of the room, puts his hand up against the wall, a faint discoloration resembles that of the niche at the 5th Avenue subway stop. Tony puts a second hand up, puts his ears to the wall, listens. Removes one hand.

ON TONY'S HAND

A slight discoloration.

ON TONY

Tracing the residue on the palm of his hand with the fingernail of his other hand, scratches gently, the fingernail leaves a fine line. Tony returns to the main floor, notices a side entrance to the store that exits into the Fuller Building, the ground floor of which Van Cleef & Arpels occupies. He uses this exit to leave the store.

INT. CAFE DE LA PAIX, SAVOY-PLAZA HOTEL, 58TH ST. & 5TH AVE. - DAY

Tony joins Joe and Marvin, drinks in front of them, Tony helps himself to the remains of a pot of coffee, but never takes his eyes off the Van Cleef & Arpels windows across the street.

MARVIN

...It's like cracking the Bank of England.

TONY

You've been to England?

Marvin shrugs an embarrassed 'no', checks his watch defensively. Tony turns to Joe.

TONY (cont'd)
The 'N' train to Coney Island --

JOE
What about it?

TONY
Is there one to Queens Plaza at
4 o'clock in the morning?

A moment.

JOE
I dunno.

Tony turns to Marvin, he shrugs, raises his palms, who the hell would know that?

TONY
(to Joe)
Get me a schedule.

JOE
-- You'll have it tonight.

TONY
I don't want it 'tonight'.

Joe lets this register.

JOE
...You're going to Gruetter's --?

No response.

JOE (cont'd)
Okay, I'm going with you.

TONY
Negative.

Another nervous silence, Marvin chews a fingernail.

MARVIN
(to Tony)
You want to stay away from that
Kraut. Nasty connections.

Tony looks sharply at Marvin.

MARVIN (cont'd)
Of course that's none of my
business.

(MORE)

MARVIN (cont'd)

(rises)

I got a plane to meet, Cecil's due at seven.

And Marvin is gone. Tony watches him disappear.

JOE

Marvin's okay.

TONY

I don't care what he is as long as he's got the right box of tools and can handle an alarm.

Tony leaves money on the table.

TONY (cont'd)

-- What 'nasty connections' was he talking about?

JOE

Downtown. The Police Commissioner's office. Gruetter's developed serious juice since you been away. Does double-duty, loyal informer and heavy grafter, knows where to spread the Franklins around Foley Square.

Tony levels Joe with a look.

JOE (cont'd)

Okay, he puts his lederhosen on one leg at a time.

INT. GRUETTER'S OFFICE, THE SILVER SLIPPER - NIGHT

HERMAN GRUETTER, 45, at work at his desk, is wrapping stacks of currency in binders, slouched in a chair beside a curtained window is his younger brother, REMMY, 23, wearing an overcoat in the overheated room. Gruetter affects an ineffable European charm, quasi-Viennese, pseudo-charismatic. Remmy is a huge sweet-faced junkie in awe of, and enraged at his smaller-in-size but big older brother.

LOUIS, the manager, makes a note of each denomination as Gruetter passes them to him -- then inserts the stack into a cash bag, draws the string tight.

GRUETTER

(to Louis)

Half in the vault, half with a deposit slip.

LOUIS

Will do.

Gruetter doesn't include Louis as he makes final notes on the night's take, but Remmy's eyes flicker over the transaction.

GRUETTER

(to Louis)

Have you heard from Maddi?

LOUIS

No.

GRUETTER

So you don't know where she is?

LOUIS

No.

GRUETTER

-- Okay.

Dismissed, Louis heads out and down a corridor, as the door closes Remmy opens a snuff box. As he reaches in for a pinch of powder Gruetter, like a cat, is upon him, snaps the box closed on Remmy's thumb and forefinger, squeezes it, Remmy YELPS with pain.

GRUETTER (cont'd)

Scha! Schtill!

Remmy quiets to a WHIMPER, Gruetter relaxes his grip on Remmy's fingers, the box flies open, the powder spills over Remmy's belt, Gruetter snatches up a folded newspaper, whisks the grains away, Remmy stares longingly at the little white cloud as it disappears into nothingness.

GRUETTER (cont'd)

A nasty little boy with a nasty little habit.

REMMY

Don't worry about me.

GRUETTER

You? Forget 'you'! Me! My cabaret license. They love owners with junkie little brothers. Shutter me for a month -- or 10K under the table.

The door opens, Gruetter looks up, irritated to discover Louis has returned.

GRUETTER (cont'd)
You were making a drop --?

LOUIS
Not yet. A couple visitors here to see you.

GRUETTER
Who?

A moment.

LOUIS
Maddi's old boyfriend --

GRUETTER
And --

LOUIS
-- I forget his name, the plug who walks around with him.

GRUETTER
Where?

LOUIS
They're at the bar.

GRUETTER
Send him in, leave his palooka at the bar.

Louis goes, Gruetter arranges himself.

REMMY
Takes a lot of puff for that Ginzo to show up here.

GRUETTER
The poor soul's lonely. Released at last and looking for a little excitement. Parole Officers are not sparkling conversationalists.

Remmy, digesting the instruction, huffily squares himself up. Gruetter regards Remmy for a moment, opens a desk drawer revealing packet-on-packet, capacity heroin.

GRUETTER (cont'd)
And you, relax, take a sniff. And above all, don't get excited.

Remmy helps himself, Gruetter locks the drawer shut as the office door opens again. Dottie, the Hatcheck Girl, shows Tony in.

GRUETTER (cont'd)
Good evening.

Tony checks out the room, in response Remmy spreads himself out in the corner.

TONY
You looking for me?

GRUETTER
That was a long time ago.

TONY
Maddi says you sold the apartment.

GRUETTER
It had a bad odor.

TONY
Where's the money?

GRUETTER
She's wearing it.

A heavy silence. Gruetter looks Tony up and down, stops at his shoes.

GRUETTER (cont'd)
Speaking of attire, could we treat you to a pair of clogs? Perhaps some trendy Italian sandals? Update the Ossining-issue footwear you're sporting or are those an out-of-jail stop at Thom McAn's?

Tony smiles, a lethal smile, the silence lengthens.

TONY
...Did you know, Herman, I got mustered out of the Army in Austria? A 'lady' friend asked me to get us tickets for the Salzburg Opera. My accent's no good but I'll give it a try.
(rolling the words)
Die Fledermaus. Lotsa hit tunes. I'd like to say you remind me of the hero...but truth? You're a dead ringer for the comic relief.

(MORE)

TONY (cont'd)
 Like some 3-day-old schneken in
 Hanscom's Bakery.
 (to Remmy)
 That's a pastry, son.

Remmy is up and at Tony, a razor FLASHES, Gruetter dives for Remmy but Tony is there before him, twists Remmy's arm grotesquely, Remmy SCREAMS with pain, his razor drops, Remmy swivels now, a .45 in his other hand.

TONY (cont'd)
 Kindly put that away.

Remmy glances at Gruetter. Gruetter blinks and Remmy lowers the gun. Remmy takes a noisy breath in the airless room, disappears into the bathroom. Tony stares at the closed door, then back at Gruetter.

GRUETTER
 Maddi was with you. Now she's with
 me...A girl gets lonely. And you,
 'Maestro', were out-of-town for too
 long.

Gruetter opens his door but Tony doesn't budge.

GRUETTER (cont'd)
 -- More?

TONY
 Yes.
 (quietly)
 Be careful --

GRUETTER
 (sings)
 -- "It's my heart"?

TONY
 (perversely)
 Yes.

Gruetter is stunned by the sincerity of Tony's response. Tony doesn't let the moment last.

TONY (cont'd)
 You like Eydie Gorme?

Gruetter, bewildered by the switches, is searching for words when Remmy reappears from the bathroom, his nose all red, SNEEZES violently.

TONY (cont'd)
And put a muzzle on that coked-up
chihuahua.

EXT. SILVER SLIPPER - NIGHT

Tony and Joe leaving, walk right into Marvin and CECIL, 32,
blond, tan, a silk sport shirt with a billowy collar burying
the knot of a tie, hand-painted with a Hawaiian beach scene.

MARVIN
(to Cecil)
Look at this, they're right here.
What'cha doin'?

JOE
Exiting.

MARVIN
Tony, this is Cecil.

CECIL
'Maestro'. Epic. The legend.

Cecil shakes Tony's hand oddly, Tony on withdrawing his hand,
looks at it.

TONY
(to Marvin)
Why did you bring him here?

MARVIN
Cecil's idea, wanted to get right
to it and I knew where you were.

CECIL
I work best fresh. You know what
they say, 'Off the plane with Cecil
Wayne'.

Tony looks questioningly at Marvin.

CECIL (cont'd)
Toes-on-the-nose.

Joe can't suppress a smile.

MARVIN
The man had a rough flight.

CECIL
Chinese wax job.

MARVIN

He needs a drink. A martini.

CECIL

You mean a Manhattan mai-tai.

TONY

A Manhattan Margarita.

CECIL

I stand corrected. You're coastal,
Tony?

TONY

If you call Far Rockaway the coast.

Marvin giggles.

TONY (cont'd)

No chicks, Cecil.

CECIL

Who? Me? The last beach bunny I
looked at was sharkbait. I'm over
it.

TONY

Okay, goodbye.

CECIL

For now.

Cecil extends his hand, but Joe grasps Cecil's hand, runs his fingers over Cecil's fingertips, nods to Tony.

JOE

Smooth as a baby's ass.

CECIL

You got me all excited there.
Maybe you was a woolly woofter.

Tony regards Cecil like a creature from outer space, Cecil catches the look, not smiling now.

CECIL (cont'd)

I'll be in the green room. And
when you're ready, babe, I'll hang
ten. You act the part of a legend.
But I've seen legends turn into
canvas commandoes.

TONY
I'll try not to disappoint you.
Joe?

Joe smiles.

JOE
(to Cecil)
'Later' ...Is that good?

Cecil laughs, hugs Joe who is all surprised. Cecil catches a last glance from Tony.

CECIL
I hear you. No sisters, not even
salty ones. A promise --
(to Marvin)
Toes on the nose.

Cecil and Marvin disappear into The Silver Slipper.

INT. SILVER SLIPPER - NIGHT

Vivian SINGS:

VIVIAN
We're having a heat wave,
A tropical heat wave,
The temperature's rising
It isn't surprising
She certainly can can-can.

Cecil and Marvin seated at a distant table, Cecil takes a sip of his drink, Vivian who has practiced antennae, has caught his eye and she, his.

INT. JOE'S CAR - NIGHT

Joe at the wheel, Tony beside him, heavy silence.

JOE
-- Cecil?

TONY
Too much sun.

A smile from Joe.

JOE
Did you see that tie? I counted
two hula dancers and three breasts.

TONY
 Maybe they ran out of material. Or
 had too much.

INT. SILVER SLIPPER - NIGHT

CECIL AND MARVIN'S TABLE

Vivian seated with them, the Waiter opens a bottle of champagne, pours for Vivian and Cecil, Marvin covers his beer.

MARVIN
 (to Vivian)
 -- I saw you seen us.

VIVIAN
 Louis papers the house, he likes
 the corners. They get my
 attention.

CECIL
 Corners are private. 'Private' is
 money.

Vivian smiles, turns back to Marvin.

VIVIAN
 -- So how y'been, Marvin?

MARVIN
 You remember me --?

VIVIAN
 How could I forget you? You got
 Ida fired when you made her teach
 you the merengue.

Marvin laughs.

MARVIN
 Yeah, yeah. Them little beads got
 loose. The dress slid off her
 shoulder, and out fell two big
 beads. Beautiful. Puerto Rico and
 Santo Domingo side-by-side. A
 Caribbean earthquake.

VIVIAN
 (explaining, to Cecil)
 The Orpheum Ballroom.

MARVIN
 (to Cecil)
 A dance palace.

CECIL
 (to Vivian)
 You go both ways?

VIVIAN
 Excuse me?

CECIL
 You sing and dance?

VIVIAN
 I dance up a storm.
 (to Cecil)
 Gee, her anatomy
 Makes the mercury
 Jump to ninety-three.

Cecil is getting unnerved, he drains his champagne, pours more, signals the Waiter. Marvin eases back his chair.

MARVIN
 Well, I better be getting home.

VIVIAN
 (to Cecil)
 Y'hear that? The devoted husband.
 I worked alongside a Puerto Rican
 muchacha, now she's a married lady
 and what am I doing, still shaking
 my butt.

CECIL
 Your butt's a national treasure.

VIVIAN
 Y'think?

CECIL
 As if!

Marvin looks from Cecil to Vivian and back.

MARVIN
 Good night, dear Vivian. I'll
 remember you to Ida.
 (to Cecil)
 'Later'.

EXT. VAN CLEEF & ARPELS - NIGHT

Joe walking Tony past the store.

TONY
 ...We've got to come from left
 field.

Joe pauses in response, Tony waits, prompting him.

JOE
 I've been up and down these blocks
 too many times --

TONY
 In the day --?

JOE
 And night. Since you stepped up.
 (a moment)
 Where's left field..?

TONY
 The Fuller Building.

They walk rapidly now towards Van Cleef & Arpels and the towering office building which houses the store, a venerable architectural relic of the thirties climbing some forty stories, populated by busy dentists, stock brokers and construction companies during the day, a lone GUARD in the lobby at night.

EXT. LOBBY, FULLER BUILDING - NIGHT

Tony and Joe peer in, the GUARD is deep into the bulldog edition of the Daily News, seated at a desk, his back swivelled to the door.

TONY
 -- His shift?

JOE
 Twelve to eight. When do we go?

TONY
 Mid-way.

Tony strides on, Joe following, Tony peers down an alley, a loading dock and beyond that, access to the propinquitous Van Cleef & Arpels; an invisible-from-the-street side door.

Joe turns to Tony, having digested the geography.

JOE
 (nods)
 ...left field, all right.

Tony smiles and they walk away.

EXT. VAN CLEEF & ARPELS - DAY

A taxi pulls up, Cecil jumps out, strides confidently through the great glass front doors.

INT. VAN CLEEF & ARPELS, SELLING FLOOR - DAY

Cecil moving swiftly in and around showcases, perfectly inconspicuous, impersonating a well-heeled nobody from out-of-town, a type Van Cleef's salespeople are instructed to leave on a long leash. Cecil pauses at the top level, expensive pieces displayed in an elaborate case, behind the case desks manned by store executives and beyond them the massive Arpels vault, open during the day, Salespeople trafficking in and out, Cecil clocking the scene expertly and unnoticed.

AT THE MAIN SHOWCASE

An elegant woman in her 40's, a Lily Dache hat, a mink stole, her hair perfectly coiffed, is examining a ring, the SALESMAN deferential, Cecil waiting his turn, his eyes flickering over the glittering jewels with an occasional glance back at the busy vault.

SALESMAN
 ...It just came in over the weekend, Mrs. Brady.

MRS. BRADY
 Please call me Fiona, George --

The Salesman bites his lip.

MRS. BRADY (cont'd)
 (a smile)
 -- Given the amount of time and money I've spent here.

SALESMAN
 I'll try, Mrs. Brady.

Cecil inserts himself.

CECIL
 May I call you 'Fiona'?

MRS. BRADY pretends she hasn't heard.

SALESMAN
 (to Cecil)
 I'll be right with you, sir.

Mrs. Brady looks the suddenly-attractive Cecil up and down, uncertain of her reaction. Cecil's mouth opens wide, his tongue flutters. Mrs. Brady jerks her head back down to the showcase and the ring she is examining.

MRS. BRADY
 (to the Salesman)
 -- 'Came in' from Paris?

SALESMAN
 From our shop in Caracas. Special order for a metals heiress.

CECIL
 (intruding)
 Aluminum? Forged from that good Venezuelan water?

SALESMAN
 Tin. Their market plummeted. Between you and me, Mrs. Brady, she suddenly didn't have the wherewithal.

CECIL
 I'll bet you have the 'wherewithal', Fiona.

SALESMAN
 -- Please, sir.

MRS. BRADY
 (to the Salesman)
 I love the color, I love the shape. But I'm afraid it's a carat or two too dear, George.

CECIL
 Too 'dear' for Fiona, but maybe not for me.

SALESMAN

Sir, this is a copy of the Coeur Bleue we made for the Empress Marie-Louise.

CECIL

I'm impressed, George, we all know the Empress was real fussy about her ice. But would you mind trying it on again for me, Fiona, you have a ring finger just like the lady I have in mind.

A moment.

MRS. BRADY

(to the Salesman)

I think not. There's a little yellow in that Bleue. But please stay in touch in the event that anything else 'interesting' comes in.

Now Mrs. Brady gives her attention to Cecil, looks him up and down, sniffs. Cecil smiles knowingly.

CECIL

...Did y'know, Fiona, I'm in the metals business.

MRS. BRADY

Used cars?

Despite Mrs. Brady's response, Cecil laughs charmingly and Mrs. Brady departs, the Salesman immediately puts the ring away.

CECIL

Anything you'd like to show me?

The Salesman bites his tongue, flicks some imaginary lint off the black velour around the 'Coeur Bleue', ignores Cecil.

CECIL (cont'd)

There is a little 'yellow in that blue', George, you must admit Mrs. Brady has the good eye.

The Salesman looks up but Cecil has disappeared, the Coeur Bleue copy sparkles on the black velour, waiting to be returned to the vault.

INT. MARVIN'S TV SHOP - DAY

A basement operation on Jerome Avenue in the Bronx, steps down from the street, the front door locked, the shade pulled down.

But the lights shine bright inside, primitive TV aerials of various heights and shapes line the walls, the shop itself a morass of wires, tools, discarded cabinets and bare monitors.

At a clean work table, Cecil is diagramming on butcher paper, its edges tacked. At the same time, Marvin is soldering alligator clips, Tony presides at this impromptu meeting as Joe, arms folded, standing at the basement steps, observes.

CECIL
...She's a nice safe. TL slash 30.
Re-locked.

TONY
And --?

CECIL
Punch-proof.

TONY
- 'A nice safe'.

CECIL
I'm through it like a ticket on the Red Line. They didn't test it for Cecil Wayne Underwood.

TONY
-- the lock itself?

CECIL
Bridge-mounted. A cutie.

TONY
Tricky?

CECIL
'Tricky' but sweet.

TONY
So it's going to take time.

CECIL
-- Maybe five minutes. The blast will wake up the neighborhood.

TONY
You don't have four.

Marvin looks up.

MARVIN
-- Less than four?!

TONY
We go on the shift change.
Graveyard-to-day, AM. Because back
at the station house, the oncoming
Polizei always show up five minutes
early. The Eight-to-fours and the
Four-to-eights meet and greet.
Cooping and bullshitting. We punch-
through at 3:55, the alarm blows --
the shift changes, there's milling
around, confusion, we got an actual
four minutes, so we do it in less.
(to Cecil)
Can you?

CECIL
'I'll have to' is the easy answer.

TONY
And the hard one?

Cecil falls silent, a sudden impasse, Marvin stops work,
Cecil eases back from the table, offended.

TONY (cont'd)
We brought you in from the Coast.

CECIL
You want a medal?

TONY
They said you were a good one.

CECIL
Not 'good', great. I'm Da Mamie in
this trade, but you're treating me
like some Shubee.

Joe smiles anxiously.

TONY
Keep talking.

CECIL

Set your watches for three minutes
forty-five seconds. I'll be in and
out.

A silence emanates from Tony, the others follow suit.
Finally:

TONY

Okay.

CECIL

Just don't say you trust me.

TONY

You can count on it.

Now Cecil smiles.

MARVIN

Your 'stuff'?

CECIL

Nitro.

TONY

How good is it?

CECIL

'How good is it?' Put it on the
end of a condom, you got an
erection for life. You got a crack
in your ass, it'll fix the fissure.
A brown recluse bites you, it'll
suck up the poison. That's how
good it is.

TONY

You sift it yourself?

CECIL

Then spank it and gin it.
Monsanto's asked for the patent but
I'm giving it to American Cyanamid.

Tony manages a smile.

TONY

That's enough.

CECIL

-- I'm not through.

TONY
Yes, you are --

Cecil eases back, Marvin pulls the plug on the iron, and Joe joins them at the work table.

CECIL
(to Tony)
-- What?

TONY
We're going to do it.

MARVIN
When?

TONY
Tonight.

CECIL
'Tonight'?!

TONY
You're in the right frame of mind,
Cecil. And you're my kind of
mechanic.
(to Joe)
You find us the car.

EXT. SILVER SLIPPER - NIGHT

Busy out front, taxis picking up and dropping off customers merge with pedestrian traffic, PAN UP to floors above, a cheap West Village apartment building, one and two-roomers, MOVE IN on the second floor.

INT. VIVIAN'S DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

THRASHINGS of love-making, a GROAN of pleasure, then SILENCE, the rustle of Vivian rising from the cot in her dressing-room. She climbs into a sarong she wears for her performance, powders down, touches up her lipstick, Cecil jumps off the cot, Vivian pushes him away.

VIVIAN
Don't touch me, Champ. You'll ruin
my makeup.

But Cecil takes her hand, guides it to his crotch.

VIVIAN (cont'd)
 Wow. Talk about a quick recovery.
 Tell y'what, save that for me and
 we'll take it back to your hotel.

A KNOCK on the door.

LOUIS (V.O.)
 You're on.

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT, TONIO'S ROOM - NIGHT

Joe bends over Tonio in the dark, he kisses him, Tonio awakens.

TONIO
 Where you going?

JOE
 To work.

TONIO
 Why?

JOE
 To make money.

TONIO
 Who's the boss?

JOE
 Uncle Tony.

TONIO
 Good.

JOE
 Will you miss me?

TONIO
 You're humble and loveable,
 'Underdog'.

JOE
 You're watching too much TV.

Joe smiles forgivingly.

TONIO
 But you're my 'Underdog'.

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Louise pushes the button on the clock charm she wears around her neck, the face lights, she grasps the charm and checks the time upside down.

EXT. 72ND STREET MARINA, HUDSON RIVER - NIGHT

Joe slips a shank into the door of a nondescript last year sedan, crouches under the wheel to hot-wire, jumps in and drives away.

INT. MARVIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Marvin packing his tools, Ida meets him at their front door with two jiggers of whisky. They touch jiggers, throw them back, Ida takes Marvin's empty from his hand, sets it down next to hers, they kiss passionately.

Marvin separates from Ida and he bends to his satchel, the latches CLICK.

INT. MARVIN'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ida hurries back to bed. The SOUND of a car pulling up on the street outside, switches on the radio, a Spanish language station plays salsa as she pulls the covers over her head.

EXT. EDISON HOTEL, MANHATTAN - NIGHT

Cecil swings through the revolving door at the side entrance, 51st St. empty except for a few Madison Square Garden stragglers, post-hockey game drinkers spilling into the early hours of the morning.

A waiting car pulls up, Cecil joins Marvin in the back seat, Joe at the wheel, drives away.

EXT. GREYSTONE HOTEL, 92ND ST. & BROADWAY - NIGHT

Tony exits, walks to the corner of 95th and Broadway, the car pulls up, a front door opens, Tony takes the passenger seat beside Joe.

EXT. '5TH AVE.' ENTRANCE, BMT, CONEY ISLAND LINE - NIGHT

Joe pulls up, the rear doors of the car swing open, Marvin and Cecil hop out and descend to the subway, Marvin carries his tool chest, Cecil a scuffed, peeling leather Gladstone.

ON THE CAR, 57TH STREET - NIGHT

Joe drives past the freight entrance to the Fuller Building, Tony in the passenger seat beside him.

INT. BMT SUBWAY - NIGHT

Cecil and Marvin walking rapidly down the tracks, retracing Tony's steps, a train approaches, they duck behind a steel pillar.

Flash-lit, Cecil and Marvin peer into the first niche, the walls dark and peeling but no mark. They walk on, duck into the second niche, Marvin's beam finds the hole Tony poked. Marvin reaches into his toolbox for a chisel, a wedge and a short-handled sledgehammer, goes to work on the wall, the dank plaster falls away easily.

EXT. FREIGHT DOCK, FULLER BUILDING - NIGHT

Joe reaches into his breast pocket, a silver shank, silently opens the door to the lobby.

TONY AND JOE'S POV

The Guard swivelled at his desk, fixated on the Daily News, his back to the door, a sudden, silent two-step as Tony approaches him, SAPS him, Joe throws a perfect length of rope over, ties him up with a yeoman's expertise, Tony tilts his head towards a lobby alcove and Joe rolls the Guard into it, all tied up his chair, unconscious, his head lolling.

INT. BMT - NIGHT

Marvin breaks through the niche wall, Cecil grabs his Gladstone and leads the way into the lower level of Van Cleef's, strides knowingly along an aisle leading to the rear door of the store, Marvin follows him with his tool chest.

Marvin halts Cecil, points to an alarm overhead, Marvin attaches his alligator clips, disarms the bell and Cecil confidently open Van Cleef's rear door to admit Tony and Joe.

INT. VAN CLEEF & ARPELS - NIGHT

Tony leads the way across the selling floor to the upper level and the vault, its door locked at night, and the approach to the vault now protected by a wall-to-wall sliding gate, invisible during the day.

Cecil hunches over the lock to the gate, prepared to pick it. Tony grabs him, points to a secret alarm overhead, Tony snaps his fingers and Marvin hands him a mirror from his tool chest. Tony sets the mirror, it catches the light beam from the alarm, reflects it, continuously disarming it.

Tony nods to Cecil, he picks the gate lock, slides the gate open and hurries to the vault as Marvin unlimbers drills.

INT. FULLER BUILDING ALCOVE - NIGHT

The Guard comes conscious, stirs, blinks, befuddled by his surroundings, gets his bearings, peers over his shoulder at his desk, using his toes, he aims the chair and his body tied into it, at the desk; ROLLS ever so slightly.

INT. VAN CLEEF & ARPELS - NIGHT

Tony takes a position which gives him a vantage point not only over Cecil and Marvin at the vault, but also Joe looking-out down below, peeking through the satin-curtained show windows on 5th Avenue. The street is quiet, an occasional car or newspaper truck passes, no pedestrians, Joe nods to Tony, Tony signals Cecil and Marvin to begin.

Cecil sets his 'points' with chalk, Marvin hands him a drill, the vault sprays steel chips, the drill WHINES, Marvin spritzes the bit with lubricant, but the bit breaks, Tony steps closer but Marvin has already presented Cecil with another bit, it is inserted, WHINE-WHINE, the steel flies, the oil sprays, Cecil and Marvin press on, working together like a surgical team.

Through the windows, Joe checks Fifth Avenue, Tony keeps an eye on him, Joe nods again, WHINE-WHINE from the bit, Cecil pauses now, Marvin hands him a football pump, Cecil inserts the tube, the holes blow clean, Cecil wets a finger, tests the holes.

INT. FULLER BUILDING LOBBY - NIGHT

The Guard tortuously working his way, inch-by-inch back towards his desk, making glacial headway.

INT. VAN CLEEF & ARPELS - NIGHT

Tony hovers, sets a stopwatch now, checks again with Joe, the street normal, Cecil waits for a signal from Tony, Tony nods and Cecil reaches into a compartment of his Gladstone, snaps open a leather box, a velvet-lined compartment, resting inside a tube of nitro-glycerine, he extracts it lovingly.

Cecil turns again to Tony for a signal, Tony's eyes are on his stopwatch, Tony nods, Cecil sucks out the cork from the test tube, clenches it between his teeth, pulls a dropper from his breast pocket, fills the dropper from the test-tube, replaces the cork in the test-tube with his teeth, Marvin takes it from him and lays the empty tube back into the velvet-lined compartment in the Gladstone bag as Cecil fills the drilled holes with the nitro from the dropper.

INT. FULLER BUILDING LOBBY - NIGHT

The Guard is approaching his desk, stretching his heels out competitive-wheelchair style, he makes strides now, reaches the desk, blinks at his ALARM button but can't touch it because Joe's bowline hitches have tethered his hands. He struggles with the bonds, the ropes tighten.

INT. VAN CLEEF & ARPELS - NIGHT

Tony checks Joe on the street a last time, nods to Cecil, Marvin hands Cecil igniting wires, Cecil runs the pair of wires back from the vault to a simple store wall socket, all eyes on Tony now as he follows the second hand around on his stopwatch. He glances down at Joe at the store windows, Joe gives him the okay sign, Cecil and Marvin are crouched by the electric wall socket at a safe distance from the vault.

TONY

Go.

Cecil touches the wires to the socket, a BLAST, the vault door POPS, lazily swings open.

JOE AT THE GLASS FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Peering down the street, for the moment still empty.

JOE
 (calling out)
 3:30...3:15...

ON TONY, PRESIDING AT THE VAULT

Cecil is met unexpectedly by an inner door, Marvin right behind him already policing Cecil's tools, preparing for the getaway.

JOE (cont'd)
 (calling out)
 2:45 -- Fink's Rye -- Sheffield
 Farms -- Metropolitan News
 Service --

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - NIGHT

ALARMS going off down the street now.

INT. FULLER BUILDING LOBBY - NIGHT

The Guard gets a purchase in his chair, raises a toe, points it at the button, misses, tries again, HITS. The alarm SCREAMS, echoing through the building, across Van Cleef & Arpels, up and down Fifth Avenue.

INT. VAN CLEEF & ARPELS - NIGHT

Cecil POPS the inner door lock, straightens up, Tony reaches over him, he whips open the last Van Cleef & Arpels obstacle revealing...

Tray-upon-tray of SPARKLING stock which fill the Van Cleef showcases during the day. Cecil, squatting beside the door, is frozen with delight.

JOE
 (calling out)
 Two green-and-whites --
 plainclothes Chevy...

TONY
 (to Cecil)
 Move --!

Cecil slides aside, Tony's hands operate rapidly and expertly as he picks trays, passes others, tips the contents into Cecil's spacious old bag, Cecil working right behind him.

INT. FULLER BUILDING - NIGHT

Cops swarming the lobby, the Guard bombarded with questions, he doesn't know which way they went, but they were here and put him out like a light.

INT. VAN CLEEF & ARPELS, JOE'S POV, FIFTH AVENUE - NIGHT

Cars stream by searching for the source of the alarm, their light beams FLASH, more alarms SOUND down the Avenue.

JOE
One minute!

Marvin slams shut his tool box, Cecil pauses.

TONY
(to Cecil)
Keep going...

Cecil's dexterous hands follow Tony's down the shelves of the vault, beams FLASH, a pair of headlights find their mark, Cecil flinches, drops a tray, jewels spill, Cecil dives after them.

CECIL'S POV

In the spill is the Coeur Bleue ring Mrs. Brady passed on, unmistakable.

JOE
Leave them!

Cecil turns away but not before snatching the ring, pockets it.

JOE (cont'd)
Mayday!

Cars SCREECH to a stop outside, the front door rattling as Tony leads the way out the back.

INT. VAN CLEEF & ARPELS - NIGHT

Tony leading Joe, Cecil and Marvin back into the Fuller Building, spots a flashlight beam reflected by the brass lintel of this side door.

He reverses fields, leads the men back into the store to the downstairs men's rest room, they climb back through the hole broken to the BMT subway, Tony follows, pulls the men's room's waste basket in after him to mask the hole, follows his team down to the tracks and platforms.

INT. BMT - NIGHT

In this graveyard hour the platforms are deserted. Tony consults a folded piece of paper from his pocket, scribbled on the fold some times, checks his watch, motions Marvin and Cecil to the opposite platform. Joe takes Marvin's heavy tool case from him to lighten and divide their load, Tony reluctantly nods his approval. Cecil and Marvin cross the tracks, Cecil with the Gladstone in hand, Marvin leading the way over the third rail to the far platform as Tony and Joe pace the near, Tony re-checking his watch and his scribbled timetable. The sudden thunder of approaching trains breaks the underground silence, the cars pull in right on time to opposing platforms. Across the way, Cecil and Marvin disappear into a car and their train rattles away.

INT. 'N' TRAIN - NIGHT

With a flicker, Tony directs Joe into a different car from his, Joe takes a seat in the empty car, their train pulls away, a connecting door opens, a TRANSIT COP making his rounds, turns to close the door behind him, as he does, Joe slumps in his seat, feigns sleep, the Transit Cop makes his way down the aisle, pauses at Joe with Marvin's toolcase, shakes Joe awake, Joe stares up innocently. The Cop kicks the toolcase. The tools CLICK.

TRANSIT COP

What have we got in here, the Hope
Diamond?

The Transit Cop barely gets out the words when he is yoked from behind by Tony, a Ranger/MP move with the side of the hand to the esophagus and the Cop drops, out cold. Tony and Joe lift the Cop on to the seats, prop him in a corner, he looks sound asleep, like just another second level law enforcement taking his mid-beat break. The train pulls into the 57th Street/7th Avenue stop, Tony leads Joe out, they exit the station unhurriedly, Marvin's toolcase in Joe's hand.

EXT. HARLEM RIVER, 155TH STREET BRIDGE - NIGHT

Tony watches for non-existent traffic as Joe heaves the case over the rail. They wait, a gentle PLOP.

INT. MARVIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Marvin and Cecil perched like awkward teenagers on the living room sofa, the doorbell RINGS, Marvin opens the door and Tony and Joe walk in.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Centered on the bare kitchen table is a silk mound, a scarf of Ida's covering the contents of Cecil's Gladstone bag which now lies open and empty at his feet. Tony exchanges looks with each of the men, turns his attention to the silk mound.

CECIL

(to Tony)

You cut the birthday cake.

Tony reaches over their shoulders, plucks the scarf, the room is emblazoned with light as jewels spill and roll onto the kitchen table, rings and necklaces, watches and brooches, a breathtaking collection.

SILENCE, broken by an indecipherable and uncharacteristic GRUNT from Tony. Marvin WHIMPERS, a beatific look comes over Joe's face.

CECIL (cont'd)

Cowabunga, Dunzo...Whoahhh.

Cecil stands up agitatedly, Marvin stands with him, they embrace like long-lost lovers, Joe turns to Tony, can't resist hugging him, Tony says something in return but Joe can't hear as Cecil and Marvin YELP with pleasure. Joe still can't hear a thing, pulls Tony close.

JOE

-- What?!

TONY

At least twelve million and change.

The door opens to Marvin and Ida's bedroom, Ida appears in a see-through negligee. The jewels on the kitchen table are purposely masked by Cecil and Marvin posing in front of them, Tony looks sharply at Marvin, unhappy with Ida's intrusion.

IDA

Que pasa?

MARVIN

Not a thing, sweetheart. Just the boys in the band turning on between sets.

IDA

Can't I play?

A wink from Cecil catches Ida's eye, he is fascinated by her breasts. Tony notes the interchange.

TONY

Later, Ida. We'll all have breakfast.

MARVIN

(quickly)

Yeah, yeah, warm my side up, baby. That's going to be some breakfast.

Ida draws her sash tight. As Cecil's nostrils flare, Ida closes the bedroom door behind her.

Marvin pins a brooch on Cecil, Cecil clicks his heels and salutes, Joe tries on a watch, through Ida's bedroom door a radio SINGS:

FRANK SINATRA

'...Love is a many-splendored
thing
It's the April rose
that only grows in the
early Spring...'

Cecil and Marvin fall into each other's arms again, slow dance, Tony and Joe take seats now at the kitchen table, Joe dreamily builds the jewels into blocks as Tony's eyes coolly flicker over the haul, shifting from piece-to-piece. CLICK-CLICK-CLICK a lone emerald choker slides to the bottom of the pile as Cecil tries on a pair of earrings.

CECIL

See these. These are going on my Mom. They'll help her go back to her red hair. I'll move her into an efficiency, Las Vegas strip. Right next to The Nugget. She can play slots 'til she drops.

MARVIN

I'm closing the shop in August, me 'n Ida will take a real vacation. Forget Grossinger's.

(MORE)

MARVIN (cont'd)
 This year the San Juan Hilton. Ida
 in a bikini, she'll give Tito
 Puente a hard-on.

Tony looks at Joe, his turn.

JOE
 Tonio. Forget the scholarship,
 I'll pay retail at NYU.

A sudden SILENCE.

JOE (cont'd)
 What about you, Tony?

TONY
 I don't know.

CECIL
 You 'don't know'?!

TONY
 No --

CECIL
 What's the holdup?!

TONY
 I don't feel like spending it yet.

Tony stares Cecil down.

TONY (cont'd)
 And check out of the Edison,
 there's room for you here.

MARVIN
 You bet.

CECIL
 How much?

Cecil CACKLES, unconsciously takes off the earrings.

TONY
 And forget women.

CECIL
 -- Who, me?

JOE
 (to Cecil)
 What you need is a drink. And so
 do I.

MARVIN

In the cupboard.

Tony gives Marvin a flicker, Marvin folds the jewels back into the scarf, carrying them he follows Tony out of the kitchen and into the over-furnished living room.

TONY

What d'you got for us?

MARVIN

It's occupied, but these take precedent.

Marvin raises a cheap table lamp with an oversized base, the base separates, Marvin extracts a gun hidden in the base of the lamp, tosses it to Tony, then buries the scarf-wrapped stash inside the base, places the lamp over it.

MARVIN (cont'd)

How 'bout a steak? Some pie --?!

No reply from Tony, Marvin turns back into the kitchen, joins Cecil and Joe as Tony pockets the gun, exits.

INT. PATINA - DAY

Sandy Lavine BUZZES Tony into Billy's office.

INT. BILLY LAVINE'S OFFICE - DAY

Tony finds Billy at his desk, the morning's tabloids spread out in front of him. 'VAN CLEEF CLIPPED', 'Megamillion Haul', 'VAN THIEF COMPELS'.

Billy motions to a chair, Tony doesn't take it.

BILLY

-- Coffee?

A no-reply look from Tony.

BILLY (cont'd)

You not only took the Dodgers off the front page, Princess Margaret's sweetheart Group Captain Peter Townsend, as well. Hey, who do you like in the seventh game? As for the Princess, fucking her would be like fucking Abe Lastfogel.

Tony reaches in his pocket, removes the bulky silk kerchief, spills a sampling and a sampling only, onto Billy's desk. The GLITTER blinds Billy, he reaches for a pair of sunglasses.

TONY
Can you handle these?

BILLY
I don't understand the question.

TONY
Are you big enough?

Billy laughs, examines a piece through his loupe.

BILLY
'Graining' in this baby. What you call a brown diamond.

Billy removes the sunglasses, peers into the loupe again. He is trembling.

BILLY (cont'd)
Snowflake brooches, Ludo bracelets, a zip necklace -- the distinctive Van Cleef look. Tough to move.

TONY
-- Which translates to what?

BILLY
30%

TONY
We had a deal at 50%. There's 12 million in merchandise here.

BILLY
It's not your merchandise. It's stolen.

TONY
All diamonds are 'stolen', Billy, I don't have to tell you. For three billion years hasn't the Earth been working its wiles --? Heat and carbon making love to each other in the bowels of volcanoes -- and the progeny is nothing but these shiny dregs. Dregs.

(MORE)

TONY (cont'd)

No one 'owns' them, not even Cecil Rhodes even if he did know a good thing when he saw it, along with his cronies -- don't you love the names? -- Barney Barnato and Solly Joel and Ernie Oppenheimer -- poor Jewish boys commuting now from pads in Johannesburg to yachts on the Riviera. Those guys gave new meaning to 'syndicate'. They made the Cosa Nostra look like Sunnybrook Farm. And where do you fit in? I'll tell you where. Nowhere. You're nothing but a two-bit jobber who couldn't buy a 'sight' on 47th Street. Even if you wore curly sideburns and grew a black Borsalino.

Tony closes his hand over Billy's which is holding the ring, crushes it, blood seeps from under Billy's palm.

TONY (cont'd)

'A diamond is forever', Billy.

Billy stares down at his blood running over the 120 pt. Daily News headline.

BILLY

You've got a deal.

Tony scoops up his 'sampling', exits.

INT. PALM COURT, PLAZA HOTEL - DAY

Cecil and Vivian seated with a bucket of iced champagne, Vivian's arm extended, the better to reflect the Coeur Bleue she is wearing. A WAITER opens the champagne, decants a few drops in Cecil's glass, waits for a verdict.

CECIL

Just pour it, pal.

The Waiter pours two glasses of champagne, expertly wraps the bottle in a napkin, trying to avoid Vivian's extended arm.

WAITER

(to Vivian)

...Now that's a ring.

Cecil's head SNAPS as the Waiter saunters off.

CECIL
 (to Vivian)
 -- You know that guy?

VIVIAN
 Never saw him in my life.

Cecil's eyes track the Waiter's moves back to the bar.
 Vivian starts to say something, her VOICE catches.

CECIL
 You crying?

VIVIAN
 Like a baby.

CECIL
 What's the matter?

VIVIAN
 I feel like Billy Graham.

CECIL
 An old boyfriend?

VIVIAN
 I'm born again.

She turns the ring, reflecting it into Cecil's eyes. He
 GIGGLES at some unspoken joke.

CECIL
 I hear you, 'baby'.

VIVIAN
 -- Permanently, I hope. I'll
 powder you, l'il fella, pat your
 ass and spend the rest of my days
 inventing unspeakable things I'm
 going to do to your member.

CECIL
 'Member'? Of what club?

VIVIAN
 No name yet. But one thing's for
 sure. His dues are paid well in
 advance.

Cecil grabs the champagne from the bucket, drinks right from
 the bottle.

INT. SILVER SLIPPER - NIGHT

Early, the Club just warming up for the evening, Gruetter not himself, trying to keep his composure, in his usual place at the door but tonight nervously checking out the arrivals. With him, LT. HEALY, a veteran detective determinedly at ease in the show business surroundings.

GRUETTER

(to Lt. Healy)

...Of course, I'll let you know.

I'm more than interested myself.

(a moment)

Like everybody.

LT. HEALY

Keep those big ears open, Herman.

GRUETTER

Yes, they're big, and for you,

Lieutenant, they're extremely open.

That's a serious reward --

LT. HEALY

For a serious score. Did you ask me what I'm drinking? I'm drinking Irish.

GRUETTER

(to the Bartender)

Irish for the Lieutenant.

BARTENDER

We don't carry Irish.

LT. HEALY

That's okay, I'll wait right here until you do.

Gruetter SNAPS his fingers, the Bartender murmurs to a Busboy who runs out.

GRUETTER

(to Lt. Healy)

How about something to eat in the meantime, Lieutenant. Filet mignon, caviar, Maine lobster, what is your pleasure?

Lt. Healy grabs a handful of peanuts off the bar, juggles them in his hand until he has them just right, shoots one in the air and catches it in his mouth.

LT. HEALY
 ...Your boy is signalling.

Gruetter looks across the room to Louis, Gruetter nods, but remains with Lt. Healy, the latter has taken him past the point of irritation.

GRUETTER
 ..I was in Ireland for the Dublin
 flower show.

LT. HEALY
 Oh yeah? How was it?

GRUETTER
 Ireland?

LT. HEALY
 The mother country.

GRUETTER
 Pissing with rain. Like always.

Gruetter crosses to Louis.

LOUIS
 Maddi's back --

Gruetter is all alert.

LOUIS (cont'd)
 -- To get her things. She's in her
 dressing room. What's Healy really
 want?

GRUETTER
 The usual -- news. Plus a kickback
 on the reward.

LOUIS
 What's that number --?

GRUETTER
 A million.

Louis WHISTLES.

LOUIS
 Van Cleef must be nervous.

GRUETTER
 Oh, don't worry about Van Cleef.
 You won't have to take up a
 collection for them. Besides --

Gruetter's eyes are fastened on Lt. Healy, across the room,
 shooting peanuts into his mouth.

GRUETTER (cont'd)
 -- It was meant for us.

LOUIS
 The reward?

GRUETTER
 No, the trinkets themselves.

INT. MADDI'S 'DRESSING ROOM', SILVER SLIPPER - NIGHT

Maddi unhooking and packing up the last of her 'hostess'
 gowns, Gruetter walks in, silently observes the activity,
 Maddi ignores him.

GRUETTER
 ...Where do you think you're going?

MADDI
 Peoria.

GRUETTER
 Where's that --?

MADDI
 Near Cucamonga. South of Walla
 Walla.

GRUETTER
 Never heard of it.

MADDI
 Okay, Passaic.

Gruetter SLAPS her, blood spurts from her lip. Maddi closes
 the snaps on her suitcase.

GRUETTER
 You're fucking your old boy friend.

MADDI
 He's not 'old'. Seasoned, but not
 'old'.

Gruetter SLAPS her again. Blood flares from her cheek, an immediate swelling.

GRUETTER
I'm going to kill him.

MADDI
Ladies and gentlemen, I give you
Herman Gruetter, problem solved.

GRUETTER
And then I'm going to kill you.

Maddi, luggage in hand, faces him now.

MADDI
What are you waiting for?

Something in Maddi's look stops Gruetter. His fist hangs in the air.

Back in control, he mock-politely opens the door to the dressing room. Maddi picks up a second piece of luggage, negotiates her way out.

MADDI (cont'd)
Auf widersehn. Prosit. And fuck
you.

As she exits, one of her suitcases hits the door jamb, opens, a gown spills out. But Maddi continues on her way, the suitcase top flapping.

GRUETTER
Hey, tramp! You're forgetting
something?

MADDI
Just my old feather boas. Give
them to Dietrich.

GRUETTER
Go on -- sell your ass in the
street!

MADDI
That'd be 14th Street. One day
when I finish work, you could join
me at Luchow's. We could tear a
schnitzel. Or for you, Herman, a
Jew.

INT. GRUETTER'S OFFICE, THE SILVER SLIPPER - NIGHT

Remmy is attempting to jimmy Gruetter's desk with a razor, Gruetter walks in.

An impasse, the two brothers regard each other, now Gruetter walks right up to Remmy, grabs his ear and bends it grotesquely, Remmy tries to take his razor to Gruetter but SCREAMING in pain and despite his size, he is powerless. Gruetter removes the razor from him, Remmy falls in a chair.

Gruetter takes a seat behind his desk, unlocks the drawer, removes a packet of heroin, flips it to him. Unexpectedly, he flips another. Remmy, the whole bulk of him, rolls off the chair, sinks to his knees.

REMMY

I'll pay you back.

GRUETTER

Yes.

REMMY

What do you want me to do?

GRUETTER

Settle him.

Gruetter stands up, heads for the door.

REMMY

Where you going?!

GRUETTER

I'm going to buy myself a drink.
Calm my nerves. This Italian's
upset me.

Rapid-fire, he tosses Remmy a third and fourth packet of heroin.

REMMY

When --?

GRUETTER

-- do I want you to clean him up?
Soon.

Gruetter sheathes Remmy's razor, tosses it back to him, Remmy catches it. Unlocked, the blade falls out, cuts Remmy's finger.

GRUETTER (cont'd)
Razors. Heroin. Remmy, you're
just no damn good.

Gruetter exits, Remmy puts his finger in his mouth.

INT. BAR, THE SILVER SLIPPER - NIGHT

Gruetter drinking beer from a University of Heidelberg stein, Louis next to him, suddenly intent on Vivian's performance. Louis blinks at Vivian's ring, the Coeur Bleue which is catching her spotlight, it dazzles.

LOUIS
(to Gruetter)
Vivian must have a new boyfriend.

Gruetter ignores him, Louis nudges Gruetter, Gruetter now turns around to observe Vivian's performance. Vivian's ring catches the light again, Gruetter shields his eyes.

LOUIS (cont'd)
Has our star gotten herself
engaged?

Gruetter, rapt with attention, slides off the bar stool.

GRUETTER
I want to see her.

Gruetter heads for his office, Louis heads straight for the stage, Vivian sees him coming, she goes for a finish.

VIVIAN
'She started a heat wave
By letting her seat wave...'

But Vivian doesn't finish, Louis gives her a CUT.

INT. GRUETTER'S OFFICE, THE SILVER SLIPPER - NIGHT

Vivian appears before Gruetter who is seated behind his desk, Remmy in his usual position, slouched in an armchair, Louis, the equerry, stands by.

GRUETTER
Who gave you the ring?

Vivian makes an attempt to summon up her courage, but no words emerge.

GRUETTER (cont'd)
 You've got a nice voice, Vivian.
 You can put a song across. They
 say you've got a future --

Vivian is already removing the ring.

VIVIAN
 ...Can I have it back?

Gruetter holds out his hand.

GRUETTER
 Why don't I hold on to it for a
 while?

Vivian drops the ring in Gruetter's palm, he examines it
 immediately, tries it out on his little finger, reaches into
 his desk for a loupe, scrutinizes the stones.

LOUIS
 -- Vivian worked at the Orpheum
 with Ida. You remember Ida Marie.

REMMY
 The senorita with Marvin Asher.

LOUIS
 The TV aerial guy from the Bronx?

GRUETTER
 -- An alarm man.

LOUIS
 Marvin's buddies with Joe Berntsen.

GRUETTER
 Who he?

REMMY
 A Golden Glover. Light-heavy out
 of Bay Ridge.

LOUIS
 They've got a kid.

GRUETTER
 -- The mother?

LOUIS
 Some civilian.

VIVIAN
Ida wouldn't get mixed up in --

GRUETTER
You were excused, Vivian.

Vivian hesitates.

GRUETTER (cont'd)
You'll want to touch up your make-
up, get ready for your next set.

Louis opens the door and Vivian goes. Gruetter waits for Louis to continue.

LOUIS
Joe Berntsen's the guy Tony did
time for.

GRUETTER
Yeah, yeah, I heard all about it.
Very touching.

LOUIS
They came in with a stranger.

GRUETTER
When?

LOUIS
Couple nights ago.

GRUETTER
What stranger?

REMMY
A specimen from California.

GRUETTER
Who is he, what's he done?

Neither Louis nor Remmy have an answer. In the silence, Gruetter tilts the ring between his thumb and forefinger, it catches the light again, dazzles.

GRUETTER (cont'd)
A peterman, no known deals.
(a moment)
Well, he's done something now.

LOUIS
An unknown mechanic --

REMMY

-- From the West Coast.

GRUETTER

And a very, very good one. They must be using safes in Modesto.

Gruetter displays the ring again, Louis nods in admiration.

LOUIS

Brainy. Has a head on him.

GRUETTER

Make that two heads. And the little one's in charge of the big one.

INT. THE SILVER SLIPPER - NIGHT - LATER

Cecil enters the club, a bouquet of flowers on his arm, Vivian is just winding up her number, across the floor their eyes meet as Vivian goes for a finish, at the same time she steps down to intercept Cecil but he doesn't see her, confidently continues right on through a side door to backstage, Vivian hurries to cut him off but she doesn't get there, Louis is in the way.

INT. BACKSTAGE, VIVIAN'S DRESSING ROOM, THE SILVER SLIPPER - NIGHT

Cecil enters with his flowers, Remmy is seated at Vivian's dressing-table. Cecil reflexively reaches behind the bouquet, draws a gun. But before he can fire, Louis surfaces in back of Cecil, has a .45 to his head.

LOUIS

Put it down.

Cecil lays his gun on the dressing-table, turns around, Gruetter is standing in the doorway. Closes the door.

INT. LE BISTRO - NIGHT

A neighborhood restaurant, Marvin throws down bills to cover a check.

IDA

Hey, Big Spender --

MARVIN

If you tip good, luck gets on your side. It'll impress him, the Waiter's a Marxist.

IDA

Marx Brothers?

MARVIN

Naw, just kidding, he just looks like my sainted father, he was one. For the Masses.

IDA

6:00 or 9:00 AM?

MARVIN

Forget about Church, honey, we got our own. And it's time we got into it.

They wobble upright, head for the door, empty wine bottles behind.

MAITRE D'

What's the occasion, folks?

MARVIN

Our fifteenth anniversary.

IDA

And would you believe it, Clyde, he can still get it up.

The Maitre d' blinks, Marvin and Ida laugh like hell.

INT. FRONT DOOR, MARVIN AND IDA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Marvin has some trouble inserting the key, Ida covers his hand, steadies it but before they can turn the key, the door is opened, Marvin and Ida jerked inside.

INT. MARVIN AND IDA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Remmy's huge hands choke Marvin, Louis's arm around Ida's neck, Gruetter closes the front door.

Marvin is tied to a chair, Ida's SCREAM is stifled by Gruetter putting his hand over her mouth, she sputters, chokes, Gruetter pitches Ida back to Louis as Remmy shows his razor to Marvin.

GRUETTER
 (to Ida)
 Quiet, please. Take a seat.

Ida doesn't move.

GRUETTER (cont'd)
 (to Louis)
 Show the lady to a chair.

Louis forces Ida down, Gruetter glances around the apartment,
 steps up to Marvin.

GRUETTER (cont'd)
 Congratulations. Where's the
 material?

Marvin shrugs.

GRUETTER (cont'd)
 Cecil says you know.

MARVIN
 -- About what?

GRUETTER
 Please, Marvin...you're not
 installing a color Philco here.

MARVIN
 Cecil's fulla shit.

GRUETTER
 No, Cecil passed his examination.
 Moreover, if you saw him right now,
 you'd know he was required to do it
 with honors.

REMMY
 (to Marvin)
 Maybe the felon knows.

MARVIN
 What felon?

GRUETTER
 'The Maestro'.

MARVIN
 What Maestro? I don't know no
 Maestro.

GRUETTER

Good, here's your opportunity. You can introduce yourself over the phone.

REMMY

Who knows, maybe he goes the other way.

GRUETTER

You're chattering, Remmy, time to get to work.

Remmy puts his razor to Marvin's throat. When Louis straps Ida to a chair, she struggles, turns desperately to Marvin, Remmy registers the look.

REMMY

(to Marvin)
Call him.

MARVIN

Who?

REMMY

You know who.

MARVIN

Tony changed his number --

REMMY

Don't say that. That's no good.

Remmy cuts Marvin, blood trickles down his neck.

IDA

I'll do it!

Louis releases her, she moves to the phone.

MARVIN

(to Ida)
Don't! They'll kill him!

IDA

-- Tony will never talk.

MARVIN

Please, Ida, don't do it!

Ida picks up the phone, dials.

IDA
 -- Tony?...could you come over?
 Marvin needs you -- yeah, right
 away.

Gruetter is watching, his eyes and Ida's meet. Ida stiffens - then explodes.

IDA (cont'd)
 DON'T COME! NO! GRUETTER!

Remmy slashes Ida's throat, blood spirals to the ceiling.

INT. TONY'S ROOM, GREYSTONE HOTEL - NIGHT

Tony on the phone.

TONY
 Ida?..

Room tone.

INT. MARVIN AND IDA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tony enters through the open front door.

TONY'S POV

Marvin, interrupted by death. Ida, gripping the phone, staring into nothingness.

CLOSE-UP TONY

Studying the scene.

Separates the lamp from its base, recovers the kerchief of jewels, exits.

EXT. THE SILVER SLIPPER - DAWN

A wildly agitated Tony tries the lock on the front door, bolted. Runs around to the stage door, locked. Hurries to the ground floor of a neighboring loft, smashes a window, climbs in, shards of glass flaking into his hair and over his shoulders.

EXT. CATWALK, THE SILVER SLIPPER - DAWN

Tony crawls across the ironwork bridging the loft to the Silver Slipper, drops into a stairwell, pries open the inner window, parts the 'legs' of a curtain, finds himself on the stage, the place all empty, an echoing hall. Spontaneously, he SCREAMS, uttering the name that has haunted him the last five years, abandoning all caution, a cagey survivor suddenly prey to his passion, abandoning all caring about his own life.

TONY
GRUETTER!!!

The response is a terrible, lonesome SILENCE.

INT. VIVIAN'S DRESSING ROOM. THE SILVER SLIPPER - DAWN

Tony enters, the lights are still on, the blazing rectangle of bulbs around the mirror reflect a pair of hip, expensive sunglasses resting on Vivian's dressing table -- Cecil's.

INT. BACKSTAGE, THE SILVER SLIPPER - DAWN

Tony steps out into the hallway, peers down it, picks up a trail of blood, follows the drips through corridors and passageways, past props and costumes to the Storage Area, old pieces of set, a flat depicting Tuscany, seated in an upholstered prop chair is Cecil, bound with stage ropes and counterweights, blood oozing from his wrists and ankles, the life draining out of him.

Tony cuts Cecil loose. A SILENCE, an unspoken exchange between them:

CECIL
Aloha, Maestro.

TONY
How're you doing, Cecil?

CECIL
I'm soup. And Ida and spouse, all noodled, aren't they?

Tony's silence is understood.

CECIL (cont'd)
 And I was getting used to Marvin.
 I liked him. No Eastern waxboy.
 He had a natural foot.

Cecil tries to draw a breath.

CECIL (cont'd)
 As for Ida, wasn't she some Salty
 Sister? I felt like I'd grown up
 with them squids.

TONY
 You almost did.

Tony shifts, unbinds Cecil, he struggles to his feet, draws himself up.

TONY (cont'd)
 Cecil --

CECIL
 -- Don't go spearing for words.
 I know the rules. It's just my
 number came up a little early.
 Must be the time zone.

Another silence.

TONY
 Okay --?

CECIL
 Quantum. Totally stoked.

Tony hesitates, Cecil translates:

CECIL (cont'd)
 More than okay.

Tony turns his back on Cecil, walks a respectful distance away, draws the gun Marvin originally tossed him, spins, faces Cecil, unhesitatingly SHOOTs.

EXT. PHONE BOOTH - 8TH AVENUE - DAWN

TONY
 (phone)
 ...8th Avenue and 19th Street.
 Over the Dominican Bakery.
 Apartment 2A. Two bodies, a man
 and a woman...yeah, you got it --

Tony leaves the receiver dangling, exits the phone booth, walks rapidly east to Broadway. Rain. Tony keeps his hand on the bulging kerchief in his pocket.

INT. MADDI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The bell RINGS, Maddi opens the door to Tony, all disturbed, jumping out of his skin with rage. Maddi, although a practiced expert on his moods is startled, on the edge of fear, the look in his eye one she has never seen.

MADDI

What do you want?

Tony looks past her outstretched arms, she pulls the door tighter.

TONY

Gruetter.

MADDI

He's not here.

Tony pushes her out of the way, his practiced eyes scan the tiny rooms, her furnishings reflect a tired woman's striving for respect, the result a weird, shabby gentility.

TONY

Where is he?

MADDI

History. Abusive history. I file them in my forgettery.

Tony's head snaps.

TONY

Your 'what'?

MADDI

You heard me. And you belong right there with him. I could arrange a playdate for you two, maybe handball -- or Hearts.

Tony is trying to sit on his anger, fire from his ears, teeth clenched.

TONY

They killed my friends.

MADDI
 You don't have any friends.
 (a moment)
 -- Who?

Tony stares Maddi down, he knows she intuits the answer and he is too sick with vengeance to utter their names.

MADDI (cont'd)
 Ida and Marvin.

His silence is an assent.

MADDI (cont'd)
 A funny girl.

TONY
 -- And a funny guy.

MADDI
 Some joke, huh?

The sense Maddi is teetering, almost ready to fall into his arms.

MADDI (cont'd)
 Look at this, they're dead and
 we're still here.

TONY
 (bridling)
 Please --

MADDI
 You! What a noble asshole. Walked
 out on me to do time and what am I
 supposed to do meanwhile, knit a
 fuzzy quilt? We're 'in the life',
 Tony, and not only is life too
 short but there's always guys like
 Herman around to trim it further.
 (to herself)
 Aah, what're you going to do about
 it?

TONY
 Kill him.

MADDI
 Why bother with Herman? He's
 already dead. So are you. You're
 just walking around.

She holds the door open for Tony to exit, he hesitates, turns back to her.

MADDI (cont'd)
Don't kiss me, I might love it.

She nudges him out, closes the door, locks it.

EXT. LONG ISLAND EXPRESSWAY, QUEENS, NEW YORK CITY - DAY

An overpass with a view of the overpopulated cemetery east of a Manhattan gateway. Standing beside their parked car, Tony and Joe observe Mario and Ida's burial below.

TONY AND JOE'S POV

Mario's and Ida's coffins being lowered into matching holes dug into their tiny plot, a handful of mourners. Frank, the owner of the Rialto Bar & Grill, his wife, SELMA, Roy, the Rialto porter, George and Edgar, poker players from the Rialto's back room, on the fringe Plainclothesmen and Lt. Healy loitering behind parked cars, beside a turn-of-the century mausoleum.

AT THE GRAVE SITE

A PRIEST concludes the service, his 'Amens' echoed by the mourners. Gravediggers, their boots anchored in muddy Astroturf, lower the coffins simultaneously.

GREENE, a Reporter, approaches Lt. Healy.

GREENE
Good morning, Lieutenant.

LT. HEALY
-- What are you doing here?

GREENE
Likewise.

LT. HEALY
You're blocking my view.

GREENE
I had a thought --

LT. HEALY
Since when were Copy Boys paid to think?

GREENE

I was wondering, given limited space, why don't I mention Marvin Asher and Van Cleef & Arpels in the same breath --?

LT. HEALY

'Breath'? Are we talking 'breath'? Tell y'what, Scoop, take a real deep breath - and get lost.

Lt. Healy nods to one of his men and the Detective shoulders Greene away.

GREENE

Hey, I'm Long Island Press --

LT. HEALY

(to the Detective)
But he's really Queens Midtown Tunnel.

The SOUND of gravel hitting wood, the Police turn to see Frank, Selma, George and Edgar throwing dirt on the coffins.

OVERPASS, ON TONY AND JOE - DAY

JOE

...Well, we came.

Tony pivots, grabs Joe by the shirt, yanks him close.

TONY

Of course we did.

He tosses Joe away, peers back down at the scene below, the mourners dispersing. Tony covertly crosses himself, jerks his head towards the car, gets Joe's attention.

They jump into the vehicle and disappear.

INT. LUXOR BATHS, WEST 47TH STREET - DAY

A pair of lockers lead to a private steam and massage room, the steam is turned OFF.

Billy nude, a towel around his neck, removes a valise from one of the lockers, walks the valise into the steam room, Tony and Joe in their overcoats, are waiting, Billy snaps open the valise, wrapped stacks of hundred dollar bills, Tony assesses the piles like a Chief Teller.

BILLY
Three point five.

TONY
Our deal was for six.

The steam is off, but under his overcoat Joe is sweating. He edges closer.

BILLY
You'll have the balance when I move them.

TONY
Never mind 'balance'!

Joe moves very close now, Tony holds up a restraining hand.

BILLY
You've got a problem, Tony. You can't get yourself out of the headlines. You're bigger than Marilyn Monroe.

JOE
Tits or ink?

TONY
Back off, Joe.

Joe steps back, Tony takes a deep breath.

TONY (cont'd)
I'm upset, Billy.

BILLY
Of course you are, so am I. I'm getting calls daily from Timmy Healy.

TONY
'Healy', the Pickpocket and Confidence guy?

BILLY
Promoted to Burglary. A very ambitious cop. And the Commissioner loves him. Plus the Mayor's involved, his wife 'adores' Van Cleef & Arpels. Why do I come to a steam room, you might ask? There's so much heat on this deal already.

JOE
Your balls are sweating. They look
funny besides.

BILLY
An undescended testicle.

JOE
A who?

TONY
(to Joe)
-- Means he's only got one. What
is known as a ridgling. Could
still qualify in a maiden race for
New York state thoroughbreds.

Tony SLAMS the valise shut.

TONY (cont'd)
(to Joe)
But down deep, Billy has no
breeding.

Joe moves in tight again.

TONY (cont'd)
(to Joe)
Stay by the door.

Joe backtracks to the door as Tony removes the kerchief from
his overcoat, lays it on the massage table, unknots it.
Jewels SPILL OUT.

A HUSH covers the SILENCE, suddenly Billy makes a nearly-
inaudible SQUEAL. He picks up one piece of jewelry, then
another, pins a ruby brooch to the towel around his neck,
hangs an emerald bracelet on his penis. SQUEALS again with
incomprehensible delight.

JOE
Look, Tony, he's all hard.

TONY
If he doesn't come up with the
balance by tomorrow, I'm going to
snap a cuff on that thing and lead
it down the Upper East Side.

Tony picks up the valise full of money, as he and Joe exit,
Billy buries his face in the gleaming mound splayed on the
massage table.

BILLY
 My babies...all my babies...come-on-
 a-my-house --

Before Tony can shut the door behind them, Joe turns the STEAM back on.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK CAROUSEL - DAY

Mid-morning, a quiet weekday, Tonio riding the carousel, each time his horse comes around, he waves to Louise sitting on a park bench, a Daily Mirror in her lap.

ON THE CAROUSEL

Tonio leaning dangerously off his horse, trying to reach the brass ring at the end of a wooden arm extending from the carousel's wall. He comes close, misses, laughs, waves to Louise as he rides by, she laughs with him. A BALLOON MAN politely hustling souvenirs, approaches Louise.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Tonio riding by again, leans out off his horse, SNATCHES the brass ring this time. HOWLS with delight, Louise sees his triumph, turns to the Balloon Man.

ON THE CAROUSEL

Sparsely populated, Tonio's horse coming around once more.

ON LOUISE

Buying a balloon, the Balloon Man makes change, hands Louise the balloon. She approaches the carousel, ready to hand the balloon to Tonio as he rides by.

ON TONIO'S HORSE

The saddle empty, Louise perplexed, jumps on the moving carousel, peers in every direction, turns around, the Park Drive comes into view.

LOUISE'S POV

Tonio being hustled into a stopped car, he is scrapping, his little arms flailing, Gruetter's hand over his mouth.

ON LOUISE

Running towards the car, catches up as Tonio is tossed inside.

TONIO
Mommy! Mommy!

As Louise opens her mouth to SCREAM, Remmy gags her.

REMMY
-- Be good. Go home. Stay by the
phone. If you want to see your kid
again.

He jumps in the car, the door SLAMS as Louise is flung away.

INT. GRUETTER'S CAR - DAY

TONIO
-- Wait for Mommy!

LOUIS
Shut up.

Tonio jumps up in his seat, peers out the rear window. Louise, receding in the distance, unconsciously releases the balloon, it WHISKS skyward.

GRUETTER
(to Tonio)
Sit down, sonny.

Tonio kicks Gruetter in the shin, before Gruetter can retaliate, Louis grabs Tonio.

LOUIS
(to Tonio)
Don't be rude. Be nice. Yes,
behave and we'll buy you an ice
cream soda. What flavor would you
like?

TONIO
Ca-ca with pee-pee ice cream. Momm-
ee!

Tonio jumps up, peers back out the rear window, the car's occupants ignore him, now Tonio begins to cry, closes his little fist, squeezes the brass ring.

EXT. WEST 45TH STREET - DAY

A taxi pulls up, Tony and Joe emerge, Tony tightly gripping the valise full of money.

LOUISE
Nothing. Just a baby --

 TONY
A baby with eyes and ears and a
head screwed on real tight.

 JOE
He's five years old.

 TONY
A five-year-old live witness.
Tonio is Gruetter's route to what's
in that bag. Give Gruetter any
part of what's in the bag and
Tonio's dead.

 LOUISE
So sane, so logical -- A classic
Con.

Joe is all quiet, painful indecision.

 JOE
...Tony did five years for me.

 LOUISE
Hooray -- for what?! Steals some
gems, but gives up our baby in the
bargain. Tonio!

She EXPLODES, goes for Tony's throat, he wraps his arms
around her, pulls her in close, Louise's fists bounce off
Tony's chest now, he takes the pounding, hugs her head
closer, Tony wrapped around her, Louise gives in,
inconsolable, her head buries into Tony's chest, it bumps
into something, she jerks back.

Tony opens his suitcoat, touches the .45 tucked in his belt.

 TONY
This is what gets him back. Stall
Gruetter when he calls. I'll check
in with you every hour.

Tony reaches for Louise a last time, she pushes him away.

 LOUISE
Why wasn't I born a tough guy?

 TONY
Do you think Tonio has a chance
after he's been with Gruetter?
(MORE)

TONY (cont'd)
 He'll recite his height, his weight, describe every pit of acne in Gruetter's face. And report he talks like Hitler.

JOE
 Tonio doesn't know from Hitler.

TONY
 He loves the old newsreels, we watch them together. Crazy for Lindbergh.

Tony, in sudden gear, sits Joe down by the phone.

TONY (cont'd)
 This is your post.

JOE
 And yours --?

TONY
 Tonio.

Tony, about to exit, glances down at the floor, sees the locomotive he gave Tonio, stoops to pick it up, turn it on, send it around the room. Hesitates, then steps over it as if it were an alarm.

Hurries out.

MONTAGE:

INT. RIALTO BAR & GRILL - DAY

Frank inserting quanticles into bottles of liquor, his wife at the cash register, doing books, the Porter mopping the floor. Tony enters, immediately they stop what they are doing, listen carefully to Tony's information. When Tony goes, Frank's wife hugs him.

INT. BACK ROOM, RIALTO BAR & GRILL - DAY

George and Edgar playing two-handed solitaire, not a dollar in sight. Tony interrupts them, they are respectful, but they are no help.

INT. JESSE'S 'LA PRIMADORA' - DAY

A Broadway cigar store, Jesse booking a bet, puts his hand over the mouthpiece on Tony's appearance, murmurs into the phone, hangs up, hears out Tony.

EXT. SHUBERT ALLEY - DAY

Matinee day, the audience smoking and mingling at the intermission, at the stage door pit musicians in their tuxedos blink in the sudden daylight, Tony buttonholes the Contractor, a trombonist with a shop steward's expression, he listens, in response blows silently through a clenched fist.

EXT. 52ND ST. AND BROADWAY - DAY

Night approaching, afternoon dance partners filing down the Roseland stairway, a BOUNCER presides over their exit, Tony takes him aside.

EXT. 52ND ST. AND SIXTH AVENUE - DAY

The Onyx Club, a DOORMAN getting ready for the evening, sets out a sandwich board with the names of the night's headliners. Stops mid-work on Tony's approach, listens, nods.

EXT. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

Tony drops a dime and dials.

INT. JOE AND LOUISE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Joe seated by the phone, Louise all attention at the dinner table, the phone RINGS, Louise jumps up but Joe grabs the receiver while holding on to Louise.

JOE
 ...No, nothing...no one... you'll
 call when?..okay, okay, we're right
 here...

He hangs up, Louise stares at Joe.

JOE (cont'd)
 I hear you, baby. You've got to
 hold on.

Joe sits back down, Louise folds into his lap.

INT. RIALTO BAR & GRILL - DAY

Frank motions Tony towards Maddi at a booth, he blinks in surprise.

Walks rapidly to her.

MADDI

Sit down.

Tony sits, a drink is waiting on the table in front of him.

MADDI (cont'd)

Drink it.

TONY

What is it?

MADDI

Drain-O, triple Chivas back.

He regards the drink. Throws it back.

MADDI (cont'd)

Did Gruetter call?

TONY

No.

MADDI

He's got a clock in his head.
Knows just how to pace everybody.
He should've been a long distance
runner -- Louise?

TONY

No good.

MADDI

Joe --?

TONY

Worse. What are you doing here?

MADDI

Same thing you are.

TONY

Tonio Berntsen's my godson --

MADDI

Leave God out of it. If we're 'in the life', Tonio belongs to all of us.

TONY

Gruetter's real cagey. He's gone and holed up somewhere.

MADDI

-- He's building a place in Ulster County.

TONY

Where in Ulster County?

MADDI

Saugerties.

TONY

What are they?

MADDI

It's a place. Gruetter likes strange names. Maybe because he's got one --

TONY

-- Let's go.

MADDI

But I don't know where the house is.

Tony measures her.

MADDI (cont'd)

Remmy's connection does.

TONY

Which connection?

MADDI

Charley, the nudnick, his mother runs a cleaners on Amsterdam Avenue.

Maddi stands, Tony hesitates.

MADDI (cont'd)

You coming?

TONY
This is where we used to sit.

MADDI
Yeah --?

TONY
-- I got a picture of it.,

MADDI
Frame it and sell it. I warned you
it'd end up all faded, won't be
worth anything...C'm'on now -- and
shut up.

INT. JOE AND LOUISE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Joe grabs a RINGING phone.

JOE
Yeah --?!

INT. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

Gruetter on the phone.

GRUETTER
...The boy's all right, where's the
money?

JOE
We're waiting for the fence --

GRUETTER
What fence?

JOE
Tony's guy, I don't know him. The
fence says the stuff's beautiful
but big, he's got to break them up,
lay it off.

GRUETTER
You're lying.

JOE
Truth!

GRUETTER
-- Stalling.

JOE
I swear to you, any minute now --

GRUETTER
'Minute'? You got an hour. If you
don't make a delivery by then, you
won't be making one.

Gruetter hangs up.

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Joe crosses to the bedroom, Louise on the bed, Joe pulls a
blanket over her.

LOUISE
Don't say anything.

EXT. IRT, WEST 72ND STREET - DAY

'Needle Park', Tony and Maddi jump out of a cab at the
junction of Amsterdam Ave. and Broadway beside the subway
kiosk, they look across the street to storefronts: a
Nedick's, a cigar store; a dry cleaner's.

MADDI
That's it.

Tony steps off the curb, Maddi stops him.

MADDI (cont'd)
I better go, he knows me. I need
cash.

Tony digs in his pocket, hands her the money in his pocket.

MADDI (cont'd)
...From the 'thing'?

TONY
No.

MADDI
Herman would know if it were.
Sniffs dollar bills to figure out
from where they come.

Maddi returns Tony one large bill.

MADDI (cont'd)
-- For that rainy day.

She steps out into the traffic.

TONY'S POV

Glued to Maddi, watches as she crosses busy Amsterdam, dodging traffic, enters the cleaners.

INT. PHONE BOOTH, SUBWAY KIOSK - DAY

Tony dials.

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Joe grabs the RINGING phone, Louise stands beside him, tracking his conversation.

TONY
(phone)
-- I'm close.

JOE
I can't wait.

TONY
-- Hold on.

JOE
He's going to snuff Tonio.

TONY
No chance, Gruetter will be dead
because I'm going to kill him.
You've got to hang in there.

JOE
I can't!

TONY
I'll call you back in a few minutes
-- sit on Louise.

Louise snatches the phone from Joe, screams into it:

LOUISE
WHERE'S MY BABY?!

But Joe wrangles the phone back, hangs up, Louise struggling, Joe gets control of her.

JOE
Tony's close.

LOUISE

He's nowhere! Give them the money!
That money's our baby! Give them
the whole thing!

JOE

Tony says --

LOUISE

'Tony says' what?! Tony's just
another 'tough guy'. Like you.
You know what's tough? Forget
stealing a dollar, how about
earning one. Is every guy who grew
up west of 8th Avenue a thief?
Y'know what? They got houses in
Lynbrook and Elizabeth now -- they
even ride the bus and take the
tunnel. But they're schmucks, not
geniuses like you and Tony. Well,
y'know something, you were a
schmuck once, that's why I loved
you. Just another working stiff
who'd stand up for his wife and
kids. Until you fell for him.
Tony twists you around his little
finger.

Joe, all provoked, shakes Louise, too hard.

LOUISE (cont'd)

The truth hurts, don't it, Champ?
Hey, where's your Golden Gloves
trophy, let's go shine it up.

Before Louise can crumple to the floor, Joe catches her but
then he, too, sinks down.

INT. DRY CLEANERS - DAY

The last in a line of customers departs the store. Maddi,
patiently waiting her turn, steps up.

CHARLEY'S MOTHER

Thanks for waiting. You got your
slip?

Maddi waits to be recognized, Charley's Mother wakes up,
makes a face.

CHARLEY'S MOTHER (cont'd)

Come back later, he's not in --

Maddi ignores her, heads for the back of the shop, Charley's Mother tries to stop her but a customer enters.

INT. BACK ROOM, DRY CLEANERS - DAY

A dark place, a cot, a table, CHARLEY, a degenerate low level drug dealer, is playing chess with himself on a pocket board with matchsticks.

Maddi enters, he looks up.

CHARLEY
Maddi, my man!

MADDI
How're you doin', Charley.

CHARLEY
How's Herman?

MADDI
Sends you his regards. I'm here for Remmy.

A moment.

CHARLEY
Why don't Remmy come himself? The big shot.

MADDI
He's working today. Herman told me to tell you to take care of him.

Another moment.

CHARLEY
As long as Herman takes care of me.

MADDI
Deliver to Remmy at the new house --

CHARLEY
Can't do. The car's in the shop.

MADDI
The new house, you've got to -- Herman's busy and Remmy's getting to be a distraction.

CHARLEY

I don't 'got to' do anything. That bus ride's a killer.

MADDI

Charley, I don't think you understand. I'm not here for Remmy. I'm here for Herman.

Charley registers this now, stands up. Maddi presses money into his hand, he counts it. A smile.

CHARLEY

I'd like to say it's too much -- but it never is.

Maddi pats Charley's cheek, immediately exits as Charley reaches for his coat.

EXT. SUBWAY KIOSK, 72ND ST. AND BROADWAY - DAY - DRIZZLE

Maddi crosses back to Tony, leads him away.

MADDI

He's coming.

Maddi presses money into Tony's hand.

TONY

What's this?

MADDI

When I took it from you, I wanted to be sure I had enough. I had 'more than --'.

TONY

(carefully)
Come on.

MADDI

It's your money. You need it. And don't pretend you don't.

Tony takes a breath, peers across the street.

TONY

Where is this guy?

MADDI
That mother of his. Probably
handed him an umbrella, now he has
to put on his galoshes.

A moment.

MADDI (cont'd)
What're you smiling about?

TONY
What I miss.

MADDI
'Miss -- ' About what?

TONY
About you. What d'you call it, the
sense of humor.

MADDI
Oh yeah? -- As for you, I don't
miss a thing. Not a bad kisser.
For a crook.

He tries to kiss her.

MADDI (cont'd)
Not now.

TONY
Then when --?

MADDI
You did time, don't you know how to
wait?

TONY
That was Hard Time.

Now he kisses her and she melts, they are lovers alone in the
midday maelstrom of the West Side.

MADDI
We came close --

TONY
Aren't we still coming? -- And
won't you be there when I come
back?

But Maddi has instantly drifted, into the future, examining
it and not liking what she sees.

MADDI

Where am I going to go?

TONY

The Olympic pool at the Biltmore
Hotel in Coral Gables. Remember
how the cabana girls loved you?

She smiles at the memory, reflexively peers across the
street, Charley emerges from the cleaning shop.

MADDI

How old is the little boy?

TONY

Five.

MADDI

Stay close, Charley's slippery.

And Maddi is gone, disappearing into the traffic, Tony
follows Charley but he is moving fast.

INT. WEST SIDE IRT - DAY

Tony jumps into a phone booth but the phone vandalized, a
dangling receiver.

UPTOWN IRT, STAIRWAY - DAY

Charley hustling down the steps, Tony tailing him.

INT. EXPRESS PLATFORM - DAY

A train waiting, doors open, Charley steps inside, doors
close, Tony squeezing into the last car.

INT. UPTOWN EXPRESS - DAY

Tony striding down the aisle of the subway car, opens a
vestibule door.

TONY'S POV

Charley straphanging, reading ads above the car windows.

INT. UPTOWN EXPRESS - DAY

181st Street, Washington Heights, Charley steps off, Tony a car length away, jumps off, runs for a phone booth, sees one, but it is occupied, backtracks to the change booth.

TONY
(to the ATTENDANT)
-- Need to use your phone.

ATTENDANT
My 'what'?

TONY
Emergency --

ATTENDANT
What kind of emergency?

TONY
-- Lemme use your phone!

ATTENDANT
Get outta here, pal!

TONY'S POV

Turns around, catches sight of Charley climbing the exit steps.

ON TONY

Hurries after Charley.

EXT. WASHINGTON HEIGHTS TERMINAL - DAY

Ranks of buses, Charley disappears behind one. Tony runs to catch up then stops in his tracks, Charley in line to board a bus, its destination lit over the windshield, 'Kingston'. The line moves quickly, Tony looks around frantically for a telephone, sees one but the bus has fired up, its exhaust fuming, Tony jumps in at the end of the line, the last passenger on board.

INT. ULSTER COUNTY 'EXPRESS' - DAY

Charley has seated himself, like a sightseeing child, opposite the Driver. Tony files past him,, takes a seat in the rear.

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Joe staring at a silent phone, Louise staring at Joe. Joe stands now, crosses to the bedroom, pulls out the hide-a-bed, extracts Tony's valise full of money from under the springs.

EXT. ULSTER COUNTY 'EXPRESS' - DAY

Crosses the Mid-Hudson Bridge at Poughkeepsie.

INT. BUS - DAY

Tony seated in the rear, his eyes glued to Charley.

EXT. BUS STOP, SAUGERTIES. N.Y. - DAY

A village in the outer reaches of Ulster County, a few passengers step off, Charley in the lead. The last to descend is Tony.

EXT. SAUGERTIES - DAY

Charley walks rapidly through the village, turns up a hill, immediate grass and trees and isolation. Behind Charley, in the distance -- Tony.

EXT. GRUETTER'S HOUSE, ULSTER COUNTY - DAY

Charley makes his way up a rise to a construction site, foundation blocks, stacks of lumber, drywall, the skeleton of a hideaway.

CHARLEY'S POV - HOUSE

As the unfinished house comes into view, Charley passes Louis's parked car, a convertible. Louis steps out from behind a stack of lumber, blocks Charley's path.

LOUIS

-- What're you doing here?

CHARLEY

Delivering to Remmy.

LOUIS

Who called you?

CHARLEY
Herman called Maddi.

Louis reaches into his pocket to pay Charley.

CHARLEY (cont'd)
-- Maddi took care of it.

Another moment.

LOUIS
Oh, yeah, that's right.

Louis takes the bag of heroin from Charley.

LOUIS (cont'd)
See you.

Charley, dispatched, shrugs.

CHARLEY
Okay, okay.

Louis waits for Charley to disappear, turns back up to the house.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Louis surfaces around a pile of wood chips, Tony steps up, levels him with a 2 x 4. Louis curls upwards, for a moment face-to-face with Tony, Tony smashes him again, Louis crumples, finished.

ON TONY

Steps over Louis, using the stacks of lumber and foundation blocks for cover, he dodges from staging area to staging area, getting closer, a VOICE booms out from the house.

UNDERDOG (V.O.)
'...You will never fear
Because Underdog is here'

An agile Tony, moving from cover-to-cover approaches the unfinished building, crawls up a mound, peers down.

TONY'S POV - GRUETTER'S HOUSE

A half-level below ground, an incomplete 'playroom' but its bar finished and in place, a TV set rigged, Remmy asleep in a Barcalounger, in a chair Tonio watches cartoons.

TV (V.O.)
'...I'm Simon Bar Sinister!'

TONY (O.S.)
(a whisper)
-- And I'm Uncle Tony.

Tonio pivots, Tony puts his finger to his lips, Tonio slides down from the chair, tiptoes to the window. Stretching out, anchoring his feet to a foundation block, Tony extends his arm through the window to Tonio. With no leverage, only his arm strength, Tony pulls Tonio up.

TV (V.O.)
'...I'm Miss Polly Purebred!'

Inch-by-inch, Tony lifts Tonio up, Tonio smartly aiding Tony by bracing his feet against the drywall. Together, they extract Tonio.

EXT. 'PLAYROOM' - DAY

Tony lifts Tonio into his arms, a WHIMPER.

TONY
...Ssh.

Tony carries Tonio towards Louis's car, they pass Louis's body.

TONIO'S POV

An inert Louis.

TONIO
-- Is he asleep?

TONY
He's dead.

Tony lifts Tonio into Louis's convertible.

TONIO
-- Where's Mommy?

TONY
Waiting for you.

TONIO
I want Mommy now --

TONY

You'll have her -- but first you've got to stay here and be quiet, I'll be right back.

Tonio begins to cry, Tony gently covers his mouth.

TONY (cont'd)

Be good and I'll buy you a Pullman car and a caboose. That's a promise.

Tonio obediently purses his lips, Tony leaves him, moving quickly now, back up the hill.

INT. 'PLAYROOM' - DAY

UNDERDOG (V.O.)

'...It's hip, hip, hip
And away we go!'

Tony draws his .45, calls through the open window.

TONY

Wake up, Punk!

Remmy stirs.

TONY (cont'd)

On your feet, you worthless sack of shit!

Remmy wakes, tries to get his bearings, locates Tony through the window, reaches for his gun on a table beside him. Tony SHOOTs, Remmy rolls off the Barcalounger. Tony FIRES again, Remmy rises, struggles to the window, reaches through with both hands for Tony's neck, Tony RAPID-FIRES into Remmy's belly, he falls.

TV (V.O.)

'...It's a plane
-- A boid
-- A fish
Underdog!'

ON LOUIS'S CAR

Tonio, standing on the seat, is waiting for Tony.

TONIO

-- You shot him?

TONY
I killed him.

Tony pitches Tonio into the passenger seat, fires up Louis's car, picks Tonio up, secures him behind the wheel and between his legs, drives away.

INT. JOE AND LOUISE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Joe on the phone, Louise right beside him.

JOE
-- No. The money's here!

GRUETTER
(phone)
You're lying.

JOE
Two million just arrived -- I'm on my way. Where do I take it?!

GRUETTER
Thruway. Exit 42A. Up 9W. Two lefts -- another right -- over a hill - the construction site, half mile from the village.

JOE
Two lefts -- another right --

GRUETTER
You heard me. You got 'til 5 o'clock.

JOE
I'll be there.

GRUETTER
Alone.

JOE
Of course.

GRUETTER
And not carrying.

Gruetter has already hung up, Louise reaches out to hold on to Joe but he's past her, rips open a closet door. On the highest shelf stuffed in with a child's cheap carryall, vinyl printed with dinosaurs, is Billy's valise. Joe yanks it down, flips open the snaps, checks the stacks of cash.

Hesitates, spontaneously dumps the money into Tonio's dinosaur bag.

EXT. DINER, POUGHKEEPSIE - DAY

Tony drives in, jumps out, enters the place, empty late afternoon, the lady Proprietor an upstate local, is checking the contents of the cash register, a telephone beside her.

TONY

Could I borrow your phone, ma'am?

The Diner Lady hesitates, Tony indicates Tonio waiting in the parked convertible.

TONY (cont'd)

-- My little nephew. Little tired and a little lonely. Wants to talk to his Mommy.

The Diner Lady looks out at Tonio, his eyes fastened on the door of the Diner into which Tony has disappeared.

DINER LADY

Sure.

Tony waves Tonio in, he jumps out of the car, joins Tony as Tony dials, Tony confidently hands Tonio the phone.

INT. JOE AND LOUISE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Louise answers the RINGING phone.

LOUISE

-- Hello?

TONIO

Mommy!

Louise SCREAMS.

INT. DINER - DAY

Tony grabs the phone from Tonio.

TONY

Quiet, I've got him! -- Where's Joe?!

LOUISE

...He took off with the money.

TONY
Gruetter?

LOUISE
It was him.

Tony hangs up.

TONY
(to the Diner Lady)
This is Tonio. What's your name,
ma'am?

DINER LADY
Wilma.

TONY
Wilma, could you make Tonio a
sandwich. A nice sandwich. And
for dessert, give him a big plate
of chocolate ice cream. Three
scoops. I'll be back --

DINER LADY
When?

TONY
Soon.

He kisses Tonio, hands the Diner Lady a hundred dollar bill.

TONY (cont'd)
(to Tonio)
Be good, my man.

Runs out.

EXT. GRUETTER'S HOUSE, ULSTER COUNTY - DAY

Gruetter, at the wheel of his car, approaches the house up
the rear driveway.

EXT. ROUTE 9W, ULSTER COUNTY - DAY

Tony speeding back up the obsolescent highway in Louis's
convertible.

EXT. GRUETTER'S HOUSE, ULSTER COUNTY - DAY

Gruetter jumps out of his car.

BETTY FURNESS (V.O.)
 -- Spread the Skippy evenly over
 the marshmallow, add your top piece
 of bread, I like to cut mine in
 half to make it last -- take a
 bite. Um-yum. A fluffernutter!

Gruetter peers inside the 'Playroom'.

GRUETTER'S POV - 'PLAYROOM'

Remmy sprawled underneath the window, rivulets of blood
 running back to the Barcalounger.

The SOUND of a car.

BETTY FURNESS (V.O.) (cont'd)
 -- Now back to The Terrible Tickle
 Machine -- and Underdog!

EXT. GRUETTER'S MAIN DRIVEWAY

Joe, at the wheel of his car, approaching.

EXT. SAUGERTIES, ULSTER COUNTY - DAY

Tony drives back cautiously through the village.

EXT. GRUETTER'S HOUSE, ULSTER COUNTY - DAY

As Gruetter shields himself behind his own car, Joe appears,
 carrying Tonio's dinosaur bag.

GRUETTER
 You're almost on time.

JOE
 Where's my boy?

GRUETTER
 Let me see the money.

JOE
 You see the money when I have my
 boy.

Gruetter turns and Joe follows him into the unfinished house.
 Halfway up the unrailed cement steps, Gruetter stops, faces
 Joe.

GRUETTER
 ...Your boss took him.

JOE
 Who --?

GRUETTER
 You know who.

As Joe turns to go back down the steps Gruetter draws a Luger, SHOTS Joe, Joe drops, Gruetter trots down the steps, stands over Joe and shoots again, grabs Tonio's carryall, FREEZES as he hears Tony return in Louis's car.

EXT. GRUETTER'S HOUSE, ULSTER COUNTY - DAY

Tony parks, using Louis's car as a shield, peers up.

TONY'S POV - GRUETTER

Hurrying across a workmens' catwalk, Luger in one hand, Tonio's dinosaur bag in the other, Gruetter suddenly pivots, SHOTS, Tony ducks for cover behind a stack of paint cans.

ON GRUETTER AND TONY

Cat-and-mouse, each seeking to gain a vantage point over the other, Gruetter knowing the location, has the edge.

ON GRUETTER

Wheeling as Tony circles the house, Gruetter SHOTS, Tony is HIT.

Tony staggers, regains his feet, doubles up, grabs a clean paint cloth, tears it with his teeth, stuffs it under his belt, finds a position.

ON GRUETTER

Hurrying down back steps, confidently strides to his car, swinging the dinosaur bag, a SHOT.

Gruetter is HIT.

ON TONY

Steps out in plain sight, fires and fires again, Gruetter falls into construction scraps, a refuse pit.

Tony picks up the child's carryall with the dinosaur imprint.

ON JOE

Laying dead on the steps of the bare stairwell. Tony approaches, bends over Joe, kisses him, strokes his cheek, smooths his hair, lifts him upright, hugs him.

EXT. GRUETTER'S HOUSE, ULSTER COUNTY - DAY

Tony, Tonio's carryall in hand, passes Gruetter's body sprawled in the refuse pit, he draws his gun, FIRES into Gruetter's body, FIRES again. And again.

EXT. GRUETTER'S HOUSE, DRIVEWAY, ULSTER COUNTY - DAY

Tony speeding down the unfinished road, the carryall underneath his seat, Gruetter's house disappearing in the b.g. as the car's dust obscures it.

EXT. DINER, POUGHKEEPSIE - DAY

Tony drives up, Tonio runs out of the diner, Tony swings the passenger door open, Tonio jumps in and Tony speeds away. The Diner Lady runs out of the Diner, calling out after them:

DINER LADY
Hey, Mister, your change! You
forgot your change!

But Tony and Tonio and the car have disappeared.

EXT. MID-HUDSON BRIDGE, POUGHKEEPSIE - DAY

The sun setting over the Hudson River, Tony at the wheel of the car with Tonio beside him, speeding across the bridge.

ON THE CAR

Tony trying to maintain his balance at the wheel, Tonio presses close to him trying to keep him upright.

TONIO'S POV

Blood sluicing out from under Tony's pants' leg.

ON TONIO

Looking up into Tony's face, Tonio edges closer, Tony puts his arm around him, but he can't maintain his balance at the wheel.

ON THE CAR

Sliding off the Thruway.

ON TONY

Trying to correct, the car reacts wildly, then rights itself, Tonio tugs at the blood-soaked paint cloth bunched up inside Tony's belt.

ON THE CAR

Approaching the Westchester County line toll plaza, Tony aims the car into a machine collection lane.

ON TONY

Can't extract the change from his pocket, Tonio helps out, ferrets the coins from Tony's pocket, rises from his seat and steps up onto Tony's thighs, pitches the coins into the box as the car glides through, way too many coins, they rattle into the box, extras CHINK onto the toll plaza pavement, the light flashes green.

EXT. JOE'S APARTMENT - DAY

A curtain parts, Louise appears at the window, peers up the street.

ON TONY'S CAR, RIVERDALE - DAY

Crossing Spuyten Duyvil, gunning onto the West Side Highway, headed downtown as the sun sets over the Hudson River.

INT. CAR - DAY

Tonio pulls his shirt off, yanks the blood-soaked paint cloth out from under Tony's belt, presses his own little shirt into Tony's belly wound. In response, Tony puts his arm around Tonio, SHIVERS involuntarily.

TONY

I'm the bakehead, you're the brass hat. And when we get highballing, we're looking at nothing but --

Tony is glassy-eyed.

TONIO

But what?!

TONY
 (a rasp)
 "Green eyes".

Tonio hugs him.

TONIO
 Stay on 'the advertised'. We're
 carrying the mail.

ON JOE AND LOUISE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Louise raises the window, leans out, peers down the street, 46th crowding with evening theatergoers, pedestrians mingle with taxis and limousines.

EXT. RAMP, WEST SIDE HIGHWAY - DAY

Tony careening down it, trying to keep control of the car. A TRAFFIC COP squints as they pass, Tony straightens the car out, a light changes and the intersection fills, the Cop returns to directing traffic.

ANOTHER ANGLE - CAR

Swinging across the intersection at 57th Street and 9th Avenue, ignoring red lights, in response traffic SCREECHES to a stop.

EXT. WEST 46TH STREET - DAY

The car is driven up onto the sidewalk, the door swings open, Tony pulls Tonio out with him. Somehow hoists him up. Dangling from Tony's neck, Tonio shifts around to make himself lighter as Louise runs out to meet them.

ON TONY, TONIO AND LOUISE

Louise snatches Tonio from Tony, runs back with him into her apartment.

TONIO
 Put me down! Put me down!

Tonio tries to jump out of her arms but she holds on tight.

TONIO (cont'd)
 He's bleeding! He's bleeding!

Louise can't put it together.

TONIO (cont'd)
Uncle Tony -- he's dying!

Louise sets Tonio down, runs back to the front door of the apartment, no one there.

LOUISE'S POV

The sidewalk bare but for one object, Tonio's dinosaur carryall, blood running down the shiny sides of the vinyl. Louise searches in both directions, only traffic and pedestrians, calls out:

LOUISE
(a HOWL)
TONY --!

AROUND THE CORNER

Out of sight of Louise, Tony wills himself on, staggers, feels sudden dim sunlight hit his face, comes to a halt at the entrance to a sidewalk-level dentist's office, a clean stoop, washed granite steps. Tony, wobbling, arranges himself on one of them. SHIVERS, but then gathers himself and faces west to catch the last rays of the sun. Involuntarily, he settles onto the stoop. Motionless now, quiet. Over.

THE END