

Rev. 6/6/95 (Blue)
Rev. 7/31/95 (Pink)
Rev. 8/14/95 (Yellow)
Rev. 8/18/95 (Green)
Rev. 8/29/95 (Goldenrod)
Rev. 8/30/95 (Buff)

SLEEPERS



screenplay by

Barry Levinson

based on the book

by

Lorenzo Carcaterra



April 14, 1995

SCREEN IS BLACK

LORENZO'S NARRATION

I sat across the table from the man who
had battered and tortured and
brutalized me nearly thirty years ago.

Al FADE IN

Al

TIGHT SHOT of a MAN's face in shadow. The room is dimly-lit
and we can't make out where we are.

MAN

I don't know what you want me to say.
I didn't mean all those things. None
of us did.

ADULT SHAKES O/C

I don't need you to be sorry. It
doesn't do me any good.

MAN

I'm begging you...try to forgive me.
Please...try.

ADULT SHAKES O/C

Learn to live with it.

MAN

I can't. Not any more.

ADULT SHAKES O/C

Then die with it, just like the rest of
us.

FADE TO BLACK

LORENZO'S NARRATION

This is a true story about friendship
that runs deeper than blood.

FADE UP

1 INT. GYM - EVENING

1 *

The gym is full of BOYS and GIRLS between the ages of 9 and 13.
They're dancing in a 'twist' competition while a DJ plays records.
However, there is no sound, and the film is slightly slowed down,
making the movements a little exaggerated.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

This is my story, and that of the only
three friends in my life who truly
mattered.

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CAMERA moves among the children and TIGHTENS on FOUR BOYS - JOHN,
TOMMY, MICHAEL AND SHAKES. They're happy and enjoying themselves as

they dance to music we cannot hear.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Two of them were killers who never made it past the age of thirty. The other is a non-practicing attorney living with the pain of his past, too afraid to let it go, never confronting its horror. I'm the only one who can speak for them and the children we were.

THE SOUND OF DRUMS EXPLODES.

TITLE CARD READS: HELL'S KITCHEN, SUMMER 1966

*

2 EXT. ROOFTOPS - DAY

2

*

TIGHT SHOT of Shakes, hot and sweaty, eyes closed. CAMERA PULLS BACK to* include Tommy, to include John, to include Michael. They are all* sunning themselves on the rooftops. CAMERA starts to move by them and* suddenly we are off the roof, looking at the street where kids are* running through fire hydrants. CAMERA moves down to explore the street* activity. Frankie Valli's "Walk Like A Man" plays loudly over the* scene.*

LORENZO'S NARRATION

My three friends and I were inseparable, happy and content to live in the closed world of Hell's Kitchen. The West Side streets of Manhattan were our private playground, a cement kingdom where we felt ourselves to be nothing less than absolute rulers. Hell's Kitchen was populated by an uneasy blend of Irish, Italian, Puerto Rican and Eastern European laborers, hard men living hard lives.

CAMERA MOVES toward a tenement building as Frankie Valli's "Walk Like A Man" continues. WE HEAR a MAN and WOMAN yelling at each other inside the building.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

We lived in railroad apartments inside red brick tenements. Few mothers worked and all had trouble with the men they married. We had no control over the daily violence that took place behind our apartment doors. We saw our mothers being beaten and could do little more than tend to their wounds.

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3 INT. TENEMENT BUILDING - DAY

3

CAMERA moves along the hallway of the building towards an apartment. WE HEAR the sounds of screaming and yelling coming from inside, accompanied by hard slapping.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Domestic violence was a cottage industry in Hell's Kitchen, yet there was no divorce and few separations. The will of the church was forceful. For a marriage to end, someone usually had to die.

Suddenly all is silent in the apartment. Then the door explodes open and Shake's FATHER storms out.

4 INT. APARTMENT - DAY

4

As Frankie Valli's "Walk Like A Man" continues, the CAMERA moves through the apartment. In the dimly lit area of the bedroom, WE SEE Shakes' MOTHER sitting on the edge of the bed, her trembling hands holding her face. After a beat, young SHAKES enters the scene with a wet towel and tries to comfort his mother. *

5 EXT. HELL'S KITCHEN - STREET - DAY

5

Our FOUR BOYS are playing stickball with a sawed off broomstick. We still hear Frankie Valli's "Walk Like A Man" over the scene.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Yet despite the harshness of life, Hell's Kitchen offered the kids on its streets a safety net enjoyed by few other neighborhoods.

Michael swings his broomstick and drives the ball across a building roof top. Triumph! Celebration!

6 EXT. PIER - DAY

6

It's a hot afternoon as the FOUR BOYS dive into the Hudson River.

7 OMITTED

7

8 EXT. STREET - HELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

8

Heavy rain falls as the CAMERA moves down the street.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Hell's Kitchen was a neighborhood with a structured code of behavior, and an unwritten set of rules that could be physically enforced.

CAMERA catches up with Shakes and his father.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Crimes against people of the neighborhood were not permitted.

They approach a street light and look up into the hard rain. CAMERA settles on the face of a DEAD MAN hanging from a rope, his face swollen and his hands bound.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

When they did occur, the punishment doled out was severe, and in some cases, final.

The dead man swings slightly from the rope.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

A drug dealer from an uptown neighborhood moved heroin into Hell's Kitchen. A packet killed the twelve year old son of a Puerto Rican numbers runner. It was the last packet the dealer ever sold.

*
*

Shakes and his father move on in the rain.

CAMERA holds on the dead man hanging from the lamp-post.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Hell's Kitchen was a place of innocence ruled by corruption.

Frankie Valli's "Walk Like A Man" comes to an end.

FADE TO BLACK

9 EXT. SACRED HEART CHURCH - DAY

9

The centre of the Hell's Kitchen neighborhood, this Catholic Church sees a lot of activity.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

My friends and I spent lots of time inside Sacred Heart. We each served as altar boys.

10 INT. SACRED HEART CHURCH - DAY

10

The PRIEST is holding a funeral mass.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Everyone wanted to work funeral masses, since the funeral included a three dollar fee, and more if you looked sufficiently sombre.

ANGLE on the FOUR BOYS looking very sombre.

11 INT. SACRED HEART CHURCH - ANOTHER TIME

11

The church is quiet. Shakes and John sit alone.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

I liked the feel and smell of the empty church. I didn't go so much to pray but to relax, and pull away from the outside events. John and I went more than the others. We were the only two of the group to give any thought to entering the priesthood. We found the idea appealing because of its guaranteed ticket out of the neighborhood. The Catholic version of the lottery.

Shakes and John look over at the two confessional booths. Their eyes study the situation carefully.

SHAKES

(conspiratorally)

Let's go.

John reluctantly follows Shakes as he heads toward the confessional booths.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

John and I were intrigued by the powers a priest was given...a secret world of betrayal and deceit, where people openly admitted dark misdeeds and vile indiscretions. Confession was better than any book we could get our hands on or any movie we could see, because the sins were real, committed by people we knew. The temptation to be part of that was too great to resist.

They reach the exterior of the confessional booths.

JOHN

Man, if we get caught, they'll burn us.

SHAKES

What if our mothers are out there?
What if we end up hearing their
confessions?

JOHN

What if we hear something worse?

SHAKES

Like what?

JOHN

Like a murder. What if somebody cops
to a murder?

SHAKES

Relax. All we've gotta do is sit back,
listen and remember not to laugh.

They slip inside the booth. Then the light goes on.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Seconds later, our booth comes to life.

12 INT. CONFESSIONAL BOOTH

12

Shakes whispers to John.

SHAKES

Here we go.

JOHN

God help us.

He makes the sign of the cross. A MAN's voice is heard.

MAN V/O

Bless me, Father, for I have sinned.
It's been two years since my last
confession.

John starts to shake nervously. The man continues.

MAN V/O

I done bad things, Father. I gamble
and lose my rent money, lie to my wife,
hit her sometimes...the kids too.
Gotta get myself out of this hole.
What can I do?

Shakes gets up the nerve to speak, and in his deepest voice:

SHAKES

Prav.

MAN V/O
I have been praying. Ain't helped. I
owe money to loan sharks...a lot of it.
Father, you gotta help me.

John and Shakes are too nervous to speak.

MAN V/O
Father, are you there?

SHAKES
Yes.

MAN V/O
So, what's it going to be?

The two boys look to one another. John holds up four fingers. Shakes disagrees.

SHAKES
(to Man)
Three Hail Mary's, one Our Father, and
may the Lord bless you.

MAN V/O
(angry)
Three Hail Mary's?! What the hell's
that gonna do?

SHAKES
It's for your soul.

MAN V/O
Fuck my soul! And fuck you too, you
freeloading bastard!

The Man storms out of the booth.

SHAKES
(whispering to John)
That went well.

A WOMAN coughs as she sits at the confessional booth.

JOHN
(quickly)
Don't do this woman. I beg you. Let's
get out of here.

SHAKES
Let's do one more.

JOHN
No.

SHAKES
Only one more.

JOHN

Okay. One and we're out of here.

SHAKES

You got it.

13 INT. SACRED HEART CHURCH

13

WE SEE FATHER BOBBY, someone we will come to know more about later on. In his late 30's, he is athletic and has a street sensibility about him. He's talking to a couple of young boys at the far side of the Church, away from the confessional booth.

14 INT. CONFESSIONAL BOOTH

14

John and Shakes see the Woman silhouetted against the dividing panel.

WOMAN

I sleep with married men...

The two boys look at one another intrigued as the Woman continues.

WOMAN

...men with families. In the morning I tell myself it's the last time, but it never is.

SHAKES

Yes.

He can see that she's holding rosary beads in her hands. She seems very upset.

WOMAN

I'm pregnant.

The boys are unsure of the situation.

SHAKES

The father?

WOMAN

Take a number.

SHAKES

What are you going to do?

WOMAN

I know what you want me to do, and I know what I should do. I just don't know what I'm going to do.

The boys are affected by this. There's a sadness to the Woman. Shakes doesn't know what to say.

WOMAN

I gotta go. Thanks for listening,
fellas. I appreciate it and I know
you'll keep it to yourselves.

The Woman exits the booth.

JOHN

(very shaken)

She knew.

SHAKES

Yes, she knew.

JOHN

Why did she tell us all that?

SHAKES

I guess she had to tell somebody.

14A EXT. MIMI'S PIZZERIA - DAY

14A *

Shakes is standing in the doorway licking an Italian ice. Father Bobby approaches.

FATHER BOBBY

You know what crap like that does to
your body?

SHAKES

Beats smoking. Cheaper too.

Father Bobby takes a puff of his cigarette and tosses it away.

FATHER BOBBY

Maybe. So, what do you hear?
Anything?

SHAKES

Nothing.

FATHER BOBBY

I hear you been thinking about becoming
a priest?

SHAKES

Who says?

FATHER BOBBY

Word is, you've been getting the feel
of a confessional booth.

SHAKES

I don't know what you're talking about.

FATHER BOBBY
Maybe I got wind of the wrong
information.

SHAKES
Sounds like you did.

FATHER BOBBY
I'll see you later tonight.

SHAKES
What's tonight?

FATHER BOBBY
I'm going to drop off some books and
magazines around the neighborhood...
for the elderly and the disabled. Your
mother said you'd love to help.

SHAKES
I bet she did.

FATHER BOBBY
Stay out of trouble, Shakes.

SHAKES
Always do.

FATHER BOBBY
It's all I wish - for you and your
friends.

SHAKES
Nothing else?

FATHER BOBBY
Nothing else, I swear.

SHAKES
Priests shouldn't swear.

Father Bobby walks on down the street.

15 EXT. STREET NEAR THE STABLES - NIGHT

15

Michael is walking with CAROL, age 11, holding her hand.

LORENZO'S NARRATION
Michael was the most sexually
experienced of our group, which meant
that he had kissed a girl on more than
one occasion. But his real love was
Carol.

They see a horse and carriage slowly moving down the street, and
quickly run over and clamber on the backboard. Michael puts his arm
around Carol and they sit, unbeknownst to the driver, on the back of
the carriage.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

While the other kids in Hell's Kitchen discovered sex on rooftops or in parked cars, Michael preferred a more traditional and romantic setting.

16 EXT. STREET - NEAR MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - NIGHT

16

The FOUR BOYS and Carol walk down the street towards Madison Square Garden.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Carol was always comfortable in our company as well.

The five kids approach the side of the Garden and go up to a wall of windows. The windows are thick and difficult to see through, with a wire mesh covering to prevent anyone from entering. Michael pulls out a screwdriver and bores a small hole into one of the windows. In time, he has made four holes and the boys peer through the window.

Carol stands watch.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

We could always count on Carol to stand sentry on the first night of the Ice Capades.

From the boys POV through the window WE SEE ICE SKATERS in various stages of dress and undress.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

While crowds of families lined the front of the Garden waiting to see the skaters perform, we each had one eye in a hole watching two dozen beautiful, nearly naked women get into their skater's outfits.

TOMMY

This is what heaven must be about.

MICHAEL

In heaven, they let you in.

JOHN

(turning around to Carol)

Hey, Carol...you wanna take a little look?

CAROL

Like it's something I haven't seen?

JOHN

(turning back to look
through hole)

You're so lucky!

17 OMITTED

17 *

18 INT. SACRED HEART CHURCH - DAY

18 *

A Priest is lecturing the class on the sacrament of confirmation. Girls sit on the left side, boys sit on the right side.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

There was an active competition between the four of us to come up with the best and boldest prank. For the longest time, my pranks never measured up to my friends. But two weeks into the new school year, I found the nuns' clacker in the school hallway and I was ready for the big leagues.

ANGLE on Shakes, fingers wrapped around the clacker. He's amused.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

To a nun, a clacker was the equivalent of a starter's pistol or a police whistle. In church, it was used to alert the girls as to when they should stand, sit, kneel, and genuflect, all based on the number of times the clacker was pressed. In my pocket, it was cause for havoc.

Then suddenly, Shakes squeezes the clacker twice. All the girls immediately stand.

ANGLE on SISTER TIMOTHY MORRIS, shocked by what has happened. Quickly, she hits the clacker once, and the girls sit down.

Shakes is pleasantly amused.

Michael, John, and Tommy glance toward Shakes, very proudly.

Shakes hits the clacker three times, watching the girls drop to their knees in prayer.

Sister Timothy clacks the girls back to their seats. She seems visibly confused.

The Priest at the altar doesn't understand what's happening.

Father Bobby looks the boys over, trying to find the culprit.

CLICK, CLICK - the girls stand. And CLICK - the girls sit down. CLICK, CLICK, CLICK - the girls kneel. And CLICK - the girls sit back down.

Father Bobby slides in next to Shakes.

FATHER BOBBY

Let me have the clacker.

SHAKES

What clacker?

FATHER BOBBY

Now.

Shakes hands it to him.

PRIEST

Will everyone rise.

Sister Timothy snaps the clacker three times, and the girls rise in unison.

PRIEST

Let us pray.

Father Bobby, looking towards the altar, gives the clacker one soft squeeze - CLICK - and the girls in unison all sit. Sister Timothy collapses in frustration. Shakes looks to Father Bobby, shocked.

FATHER BOBBY

Nuns are such easy targets.

He smiles softly, as he stares at the priest.

MICHAEL

(quietly, under his breath)
She's almost there. Couple more steps.

Miss Pippin's fingers wrap around "Moby Dick", and as she gives a light tug to pull the book loose, it releases the pressure on the other books on the shelf causing them to fall in her direction. The first two land on the side of Miss Pippin's head, undoing the red ribbon in her hair and slamming her glasses to the ground. A flurry of other books collapse around her. She starts to loose her grip on the ladder.

TOMMY

Oh, shit! She's going to fall.

Miss Pippin falls from the ladder and lands on her back. Her eyes are closed, her legs are spread apart at angles, and a copy of "Moby Dick" is clutched in her right hand. The boys are stunned.

JOHN

You think she's dead? She can't be dead.

TOMMY

Let's get out of here.

MICHAEL

Not until we find out if she's okay.

Other LIBRARIANS run across the library to Miss Pippin and try to revive her. The boys still stand around, looking concerned. John is extremely distressed, Tommy is sweating through his tee-shirt and Shakes is upset that his prank has gone so wrong. Miss Pippin opens her eyes, and the Librarians help her to her feet.

MICHAEL

Looks like she's going to be okay.

SHAKES

Let's go then.

TOMMY

In a minute. There's something I gotta do first.

He walks over to Miss Pippin.

TOMMY

Thanks for finding the book. Didn't mean for you to go to all that trouble.

MISS PIPPIN

You're welcome.

She hands the book to Tommy.

19 EXT. MIMI'S PIZZERIA - DAY

19

Shakes is standing in the doorway licking an Italian ice. Father Bobby approaches.

FATHER BOBBY

You know what crap like that does to
your body?

SHAKES

Beats smoking. Cheaper too.

Father Bobby takes a puff of his cigarette and tosses it away.

FATHER BOBBY

Maybe. So, what do you hear?
Anything?

SHAKES

Nothing.

FATHER BOBBY

What about what happened at the library
the other day?

SHAKES

You mean, Miss Pippin?

Father Bobby nods.

SHAKES

That was rough...all those books
falling on her. Scary.

FATHER BOBBY

I heard you were there...the other guys
too. Looking for something good to
read I suppose.

SHAKES

Something like that.

FATHER BOBBY

Strange business. A whole shelf of
books falling on top of somebody's
head.

SHAKES

Accident, I guess.

FATHER BOBBY

Must be it. What else could it be?

He pulls out a stick of Juicy Fruit and has a smile on his face.

FATHER BOBBY

It's got a name.

SHAKES

What?

FATHER BOBBY

The shelf trick you and your buddies pulled. It's called 'keepers'. I played it when I was your age. Never could get the whole shelf down. You must be pretty good at it.

SHAKES

I don't know what you're talking about.

FATHER BOBBY

Maybe I got wind of the wrong information.

SHAKES

Sounds like you did.

FATHER BOBBY

I'll see you later tonight.

SHAKES

What's tonight?

FATHER BOBBY

I'm going to drop off some books and magazines around the neighborhood... for the elderly and the disabled. Your mother said you'd love to help.

SHAKES

I bet she did.

FATHER BOBBY

She wants you to be a priest you know.

SHAKES

Do you?

FATHER BOBBY

I just want you to stay out of trouble, Shakes. It's my only wish. For you and your friends.

SHAKES

Nothing else?

FATHER BOBBY

Nothing else, I swear.

SHAKES

Priests shouldn't swear.

Father Bobby walks on down the street.

20 EXT. KING BENNY'S PLACE - A SMALL CLUB - DAY 20

LORENZO'S NARRATION

When my friends and I were young,
Hell's Kitchen was run by a man named,
King Benny.

21 INT. KING BENNY'S PLACE - DAY 21

KING BENNY sits sipping an espresso looking over a racing
form in his club - a large dimly lit room.

SHAKES FATHER V/O

In his youth King Benny had been a
hit-man for Charles "Lucky" Luciano and
was said to have been the shooter of
"Mad Dog" Coll on West 23rd Street. He
ran bootleg with "Dutch" Schultz, and
opened a couple of clubs with "Tough
Tony" Anastasia.

22 INT. MIMI'S PIZZERIA - DAY 22

TIGHT SHOT of Shakes' Father talking to Shakes, Michael, John and
Tommy.

SHAKES' FATHER

He was fourteen when I first met him.
He wasn't much of anything back then.

CAMERA PANS to our FOUR BOYS listening intently.

SHAKES' FATHER

He was always getting the shit kicked
out of him in street fights. Then one
day, for who knows what reason, an
Irish guy, about twenty five years old,
takes him and throws him down a flight
of stairs. King Benny breaks all his
front teeth in the fall. He waits
eight years to get that Irish guy. He
walks into a public bath house...the
guy's soaking in the tub.

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

23 INT. PUBLIC BATH HOUSE 23

A RED-HEADED MAN in his 30's soaks in a tub. An early-20's King Benny
stands looking into a mirror. ACTION FOLLOWS NARRATION.

SHAKES FATHER V/O

He takes out his front teeth and lays
them on the sink. Then he looks over
at the guy in the tub and says:

KING BENNY

When I look in the mirror I see your
face...

ACTION FOLLOWS NARRATION

SHAKES' FATHER V/O

King Benny pulls out a gun and shoots
the guy twice in each leg. Then he
says to him:

KING BENNY

Now when you take a bath, you see mine.

24 INT. MIMI'S PIZZERIA - DAY

24

Our FOUR BOYS are fascinated by the story Shakes' Father is telling
them about King Benny.

SHAKES' FATHER

No-one ever fucked with King Benny
after that.

25 INT. KING BENNY'S PLACE - DAY

25

*

WE SEE a silhouette of Shakes entering the club. THREE MEN, dressed in
black, sit at a table by an open window, smoking. A juke box plays a
Doris Day love song. None of the men speak. Shakes walks over to King
Benny who is cooking sauteed eel in a skillet.

SHAKES

Can I talk to you for a minute.

King Benny glances up at him.

SHAKES

I would like to work for you. Help you
out...whatever you need.

King Benny continues sauteing his eel.

KING BENNY

You the butcher's kid...am I right?

SHAKES

Yeah.

KING BENNY

Well, what kind of work you looking
for?

SHAKES

Whatever, it doesn't matter.

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KING BENNY

Somebody must have steered you wrong
info.

SHAKES

Everybody says this is the place to
come for jobs.

KING BENNY

Who's everybody?

SHAKES

People from the neighborhood.

KING BENNY

Oh, them. Well, let me ask you, what
the fuck do they know?

SHAKES

They know you got jobs.

King Benny just looks at him, says nothing, and walks his plate of food*
over to his table. *

SHAKES

Sorry I wasted your time.

He starts for the door.

KING BENNY

Hold on a minute.

SHAKES

Yeah...

KING BENNY

Come back tomorrow if you want to work.

SHAKES

What time tomorrow?

KING BENNY

Any time.

SHAKES

You'll be here? *

KING BENNY *

I'm always here. *

Then he looks down at his racing form and takes a bite of the eel. *

26 EXT. STREET - HELL'S KITCHEN - DAY

26

Shakes walks down the street with a brown paper bag under his arm.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

My first job for King Benny paid twenty
five dollars a week, and ate up only
forty minutes of my time.

(MORE)

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LORENZO'S NARRATION (cont'd)

In the dark club room, one of the guys
would hand me a crumpled paper bag and
direct me to one of the two local
police precincts for delivery. It was
a perfect way to handle payouts.

Shakes walks by TWO MEN hanging out at a doorway. MAN #1 sticks out his*
leg like a gate. *

MAN #1 *

Wo! Wo! Wo! Where we going - we've
gotta toll booth here. *

Man #2 grabs his elbows and pulls Shakes close to him. *

MAN #1
Keep walking. You make a sound, you
die.

The Two Men walk Shakes down 47th Street, past a car wash and towards a tenement building. The men push Shakes to the door of the building.

MAN #1
Get in there...stop stalling and give
us the bag.

SHAKES
You've got to be nuts. Do you know who
you're taking off?

MAN #2
Yeah, we know, and we're scared
shitless.

They push Shakes into the building.

27 INT. TENEMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY

27

While Man #2 holds Shakes, Man #1 grabs the paper bag from under his arm.

MAN #1
This is a lot of money for a kid.

MAN #2
(to Shakes)
What do you get out of this? What's
your cut?

SHAKES
Don't get a cut.

MAN #1
Then you're not nearly as smart as you
think.

The Men look inside the bag at the money.

Suddenly, a door opens at the far end of the hallway. It's the SUPERINTENDENT, an old man with a strong Italian accent. He comes towards Shakes and the Two Men.

SUPERINTENDENT
What you do? Answer me. What you do
here?

MAN #1
Relax.

SUPERINTENDENT
What you do to the boy?

SHAKES

They took my money. They followed me
and took my money.

SUPERINTENDENT

(to Men)

You take money?

MAN #1

Kid's talking trouble. Don't listen to
him.

SHAKES

The money they took is in the bag.

SUPERINTENDENT

Lemme see the bag.

MAN #2

Fuck you!

The Superintendent puts his hand behind his back, and calmly pulls a
.38 caliber pistol out of his pants.

SUPERINTENDENT

Lemme see the bag.

Man #1 hands the bag to the Superintendent.

SUPERINTENDENT

(giving the bag to Shakes)

Get out. Use the back door.

SHAKES

What about them?

SUPERINTENDENT

You care?

SHAKES

No.

SUPERINTENDENT

Then go.

Shakes runs out of the building with the paper bag full of money.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

I shoved the bag under my arm and ran.
I never looked back, not even when I
heard the four shots that were fired.

28 INT. KING BENNY'S PLACE

28

Shakes sits with King Benny and one of his Men, TONY. Two other Men
sit in the b.g.

SHAKES

I need somebody with me. What if the
old guy hadn't showed.

KING BENNY

But he did, and he took care of it.

SHAKES

Maybe next time we don't walk into the
wrong building.

KING BENNY

There ain't no next time.

TONY

Maybe you just ain't up for the work.

SHAKES

I'm up to it.

TONY

(puffs on a cigar)

Then there's no problem.

King Benny brushes a stream of cigar smoke away from his eyes.

KING BENNY

(to Shakes)

What do you need?

SHAKES

My friends.

KING BENNY

Your friends? What do you think, this
is camp?

SHAKES

It won't cost you extra. You can take
the money out of my end.

KING BENNY

Who are these friends?

SHAKES

These kids you can trust. I've known
them half my life.

King Benny nods his head.

KING BENNY

Get your friends.

Then he walks to the rear of the room.

KING BENNY

And Tony...

TONY
(puffing on his cigar)
Yeah, King?

KING BENNY
Never smoke in here again.

29 EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY

29

TIGHT SHOT of a basketball as it bangs hard against a backboard. Father Bobby is playing basketball with the boys. They're going all out, sweating in the hot afternoon sun.

LORENZO'S NARRATION
Father Bobby was raised in Hell's Kitchen and had toyed with a life of petty crime before finding his religious calling.

FATHER BOBBY
You think running for King Benny is a good idea?

TOMMY
It pays.

FATHER BOBBY
A lot of things pay.

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LORENZO'S NARRATION
Most priests liked to preach from the pulpit. Father Bobby liked to talk during the bump and shove of a pick-up game.

The ball hits off the backboard, and goes out of bounds.

FATHER BOBBY
(retrieving ball)
I found an art class for you to take.

JOHN
I can't afford to take any art classes.

FATHER BOBBY
You don't have to pay anything.
Teacher's an old friend.

JOHN
I don't know, Father. Could be nothin' but a waste of time.

FATHER BOBBY
Maybe, or could be a first step.

JOHN
To what?

FATHER BOBBY

To doing something with your life.

SHAKES

May help you get outta here.

FATHER BOBBY

You can all get outta here.

He throws the ball into play.

SHAKES

Where am I goin'? My father owes out to three loan sharks and a credit union. I'll be an old man before I can crawl out of the hole he dug for us.

FATHER BOBBY

I got a story to tell you.

TOMMY

It ain't the one about the lepers is it? That gives me nightmares.

FATHER BOBBY

No lepers. Michelangelo. Born poor, like you guys. Sculpted, painted. Takes this job from the Pope, good money, important work.

Shakes scores.

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JOHN

Why the Pope call him?

FATHER BOBBY

He asked around. Needed the best man he could find to paint the ceiling of his church in Rome.

TOMMY

It don't sound like that big a job.

FATHER BOBBY

It was a big ceiling and Michelangelo needed the job because it paid more money than he'd ever seen. Enough to pay off the loan sharks chasing down his father.

JOHN

What was his father?

FATHER BOBBY

Low-level guy. Conned people outta money, goats, whatever he could get his hands on. Anyway, he takes the job, closes his eyes to everything. Forgets about his father, the loans, where he came from. He only thought about the job. And you know what?

SHAKES

What?

FATHER BOBBY

He painted a ceiling that no one will ever forget. Painted it like he was touched by the hand of god.

SHAKES

He pay off the loans?

FATHER BOBBY

Every single one.

JOHN

How long it take? Him painting the ceiling?

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FATHER BOBBY

Twenty-six years.

JOHN

Twenty-six years. A Puerto Rican guy just painted my whole apartment in two days. And he had a bum leg.

FATHER BOBBY

Every day. Never a vacation, never a break.

TOMMY

Twenty-six years. He milked one job into a pension.

FATHER BOBBY

What am I gonna do with you guys?

JOHN

Get us a job paintin' a ceiling. Leave the rest to us.

30 EXT. STREET - HELL'S KITCHEN - DAY

30

Our FOUR BOYS are heading down the street. Shakes carries a paper bag under his arm, making another run for King Benny.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Father Bobby knew my friends and I worked for King Benny and wasn't pleased. He wasn't worried about the pocket money...but the next step...

The BOYS walk past a police squad car. Shakes throws the bag of money onto the front seat of the car. He winks at the police officer on the beat, and the FOUR BOYS move on.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

...when they ask you to pick up a gun.
He didn't want that to happen to us.

31 EXT. MIMI'S PIZZERIA - DAY - ESTABLISHING

31

TITLE CARD READS: WINTER, 1967

32 INT. MIMI'S PIZZERIA - DAY

32

MIMI (the owner) is busy behind the counter. The place is empty except for our FOUR BOYS who sit in the back. JOEY, a 12 year old mentally deficient boy, sits at the counter slowly shaking pepper on a pizza slice. He is well-dressed and seems to have a very gentle manner. WE *
HEAR the song, "I Want Candy", by the Strangeloves playing. *

SHAKES

I'm getting another slice.

JOHN

Me too.

TOMMY

Get me a soda, orange, lots of ice.

Shakes gets up to walk toward the counter.

SHAKES

(to Tommy)

You lose your legs in the war?

TOMMY

I got no money, neither.

SHAKES

(to Michael)

Want anything?

MICHAEL

(smiling)

Half of Tommy's soda.

Shakes approaches the counter.

SHAKES

What's doin', Joey?

JOEY

Good. I'm good.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Our lives were about protecting ourselves and our turf. The isolated circle that was life in Hell's Kitchen, closed tighter as we grew older. Strangers, never welcome, were now viewed as outsiders bent on trouble.

ANGLE on door as a BURLY MAN enters the Pizzeria.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

My friends and I could no longer afford to let others do our fighting. It was our turn to step up, and we were led, as always, by Michael.

Joey continues sprinkling black pepper all over his pizza slice.

BURLY MAN

(to Joey)

That's not too smart. That's going to taste like shit.

JOEY

I like pepper. I like pepper a lot.

BURLY MAN

It's enough on it.

The Burly Man pulls the pepper shaker away from Joey. The Boys watch. Joey reaches for the shaker.

BURLY MAN

Leave the pepper alone, you fucking retard.

JOEY

My pizza...my pizza. I like pepper a lot.

There's a feeling of tension in the Pizzeria. Joey is very agitated. The Burly Man unscrews the top off the pepper shaker.

BURLY MAN

You want pepper, retard? Here.

He pours the entire bottle of pepper over Joey's pizza. Joey starts to cry. Michael gets up from the table. Tommy and John follow.

BURLY MAN

What's your problem now, retard?

Michael walks past Joey and steps to the counter next to the Burly Man.

MICHAEL

You can leave now.

BURLY MAN

A tough little punk. Is that what I'm looking at?

MICHAEL

A dick with lips. Is that what I'm looking at?

Tommy puts an arm around Joey and moves him away from the counter. John and Shakes stand behind Michael.

BURLY MAN

Four tough little punks and a crying retard.

MICHAEL

That's us.

The Burly Man lifts a hand and slaps Michael across the face. Michael just stares at the man and smiles.

MICHAEL

Your first shot should always be your best, and your best sucks.

BURLY MAN

I'll show you my best, punk.

He takes a full swing at Michael. He ducks and punches the Burly Man in his stomach. Tommy and John jump on the Burly Man from behind.

Shakes grabs the pizza slice with the pepper on it and rubs it in the Burly Man's eyes. Mimi starts yelling from behind the counter.

MIMI

Take it outside!

BURLY MAN

(screaming)

My eyes! My fucking eyes!

The FOUR BOYS are all over the Burly Man. Shakes hits him with the red pepper shaker, and the Burly Man starts to bleed as he falls to his knees. Michael kicks him in the face.

MICHAEL

Never come in here again. You hear me?
Never!

Mimi runs from behind the counter and grabs Michael as he continues to kick the Burly Man.

MIMI

You no want to kill him.

MICHAEL

Don't be sure.

A33 INT. SHAKES' LIVING ROOM

A33

Shakes sits on the floor watching the television.

ON THE TELEVISION - images of Vietnam war PROTESTERS flash before us.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Outside events meant little. In a society changing radically by the hour, we watched the images scatter nightly across the TV screens. Young protesters spoke about how they were going to change our lives and fix the world.

B33 EXT. CHURCH

B33

A group of MOURNERS carry a casket out the church door.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

But while they shouted their slogans, my friends and I went to funeral services for the young men of Hell's Kitchen who came back from Vietnam in body bags. We viewed with skepticism the faces on television - those protected by money and upper-middle class standing.

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C33 INT. SHAKES' LIVING ROOM

C33

ON THE TELEVISION -- FEMINIST PROTESTERS march with picket signs.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

A growing army of feminists marched across the country, demanding equality...

WE HEAR yelling and screaming coming from the next room.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Yet our mothers still cooked and cared for men who abused them mentally and physically.

TIGHT SHOT OF SHAKES sadly staring towards the argument.

D33 EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

D33

LORENZO'S NARRATION

For me and my friends, these developments carried no weight. They might as well have occurred in another country, in another century.

E33 INT. HOSPITAL WARD

E33

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Our attention was elsewhere.

CAMERA MOVES past a row of beds.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

We sat with Father Bobby in a third floor hospital ward visiting John, hoping he recovered from a punctured lung, a gift from one of his mother's overzealous boyfriends.

Father Bobby takes some things out of a brown paper bag.

FATHER BOBBY

Brought you some drawing paper and pencils. And some comics too.

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33 EXT. STREET - DAY

F33

Father Bobby walks up to a man on the street. This is the BOYFRIEND of John's mother.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Father Bobby didn't let that situation rest. He caught up with the boyfriend later that day.

BOYFRIEND

I gave on Sunday. I'm in a rush, okay?

FATHER BOBBY

John Reilly.

BOYFRIEND

The little punk? He got outta line, so I put him back in line. No big deal.

FATHER BOBBY

You put him in the hospital.

BOYFRIEND

He's alive, ain't he? If he's smart, he learned himself a lesson.

FATHER BOBBY

What are you...about 150, 160?

BOYFRIEND

Yeah.

FATHER BOBBY

That makes you like a middleweight. How much you think John weighs...80, 85? That's not even a featherweight. So you'd be fighting way out of your division.

BOYFRIEND

It was a slap, it was nothing.

FATHER BOBBY

Next time, you'll be meeting me...and you and me are in the same division. And you won't need a doctor when I'm done. You'll need a priest. To pray over your body.

(beat)

I'll see you in church.

G33 EXT. STREET

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G33

TIGHT SHOT OF KING BENNY

KING BENNY

Father Bobby would've made a good hit man - it's a shame we lost him to the other side.

33 EXT. STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

33

A sewer-to-sewer stickball game is taking place in the middle of the street. Our FOUR BOYS are playing with Puerto Rican kids from the neighborhood. Michael holds a shaved-down broom handle in his hands and is taking practice swings, getting ready for the PITCHER.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

We were down 7-6 in the last inning of a sewer-to-sewer stickball game against Hector Maldonado and three of his friends. Michael already had two home runs, and the game was on the line.

PITCHER (DAVY)

(yelling to Michael)

You're the one I want.

MICHAEL

Good thing... 'cause I'm the one you got.

The Pitcher throws the ball. Michael swings and misses.

Then a FEMALE VOICE yells out to the Pitcher.

YOUNG WOMAN

Come on, Davy. Strike this chump out.
He's got nothing.

Michael turns and sees a YOUNG WOMAN in a wheelchair. Her arms are limp by her sides and both her legs are cut off at the knee.

MICHAEL

(to Shakes)

Who's that?

SHAKES

His sister.

MICHAEL

What happened to her?

SHAKES

Not sure. Some kind of cancer got her
in the legs.

YOUNG WOMAN

Strike the scumbag out. He can't touch
you, Davy. He can't touch you!

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FAT MANCHO, the overweight Candy Store Owner, steps forward. We'll know more about him later.

FAT MANCHO
(to Young Woman)
Swallow your tongue, crip.

Michael waits for the next pitch, looking over at the Young Woman. He swings and misses the ball.

SHAKES
Easy, Mike.

MICHAEL
She's really goodlooking.

YOUNG WOMAN
What the fuck you looking at, little dick?

SHAKES
She's nothing but charm.

TOMMY
You can take him, Mike. You can take him.

SHAKES
Forget the girl, Mike. Worry about her brother.

Michael swings and misses. He drops the broom handle. The Pitcher pumps his fist in the air and waves to his team mates. Then he blows a kiss across the street to the Young Woman in the wheelchair.

YOUNG WOMAN
Told you he ain't shit, baby.

SHAKES
(to Michael)
You could have helped her across the street, or bought her an ice cream. You didn't have to blow the game.

Michael just looks over at the Young Woman.

SHAKES
Now we're the fucking Salvation Army.

JOHN
(steps forward)
You ever wonder why there ain't a Salvation Navy?

PITCHER (DAVY)
Game's over, losers. Cough up the cash. A buck each.

MICHAEL

Nice game.

He stares over at the Pitcher's sister in the wheelchair.

34 INT. FAT MANCHO'S CANDY STORE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

34

Our FOUR BOYS are sitting at the counter drinking Pepsi from bottles. Fat Mancho sits across from them.

FAT MANCHO

He ain't better than you.

MICHAEL

He was today.

FAT MANCHO

You let him be, all because Irish here got a thing for crips.

MICHAEL

Stay away from this.

FAT MANCHO

You boys are soft, like bread. It's gonna catch up, and when it does, it's gonna hurt bad.

JOHN

Hold the talk, Fat Man. What happens is our business.

FAT MANCHO

You gotta stay tough to be tough. Guys smell it when you're weak. Eat you like a salad.

SHAKES

Take it easy. It's just a stickball game.

FAT MANCHO

Going soft is a habit. You gotta keep yourself mean, and cut your life around it. It's the only way for you guys.

JOHN

It's like hanging out with fucking Confucius.

FAT MANCHO

Be funny, limp dick. This is just free advice from me to you. Take it or throw it.

MICHAEL

Thanks a lot, Fat Man. We'll think about it.

The FOUR BOYS leave the Candy Store.

FAT MANCHO

You do that, Irish. You fucking do that.

35 EXT. STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

35

The FOUR BOYS walk down the street away from the Candy Store.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

In truth we were all surprised by Michael's actions. It was not his way to show vulnerability, especially to someone he didn't know. Whether it was to do with his mother dying of cancer earlier in the year, we never knew. But in his mind, losing that game and handing a feeling of victory to a girl in a wheelchair was more than the right thing to do.

TITLE CARD READS: SUMMER, 1967

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36 EXT. ROOF OF TENEMENT BUILDING - DAY

36

OVERHEAD SHOT of a black tarred roof. It's a very hot day and the FOUR BOYS lie on bath towels with a cooler filled with chunks of ice and bottles of 7-Up next to them. Clotheslines, criss-crossing rooftops and bent under the weight of laundry, supply the only shade.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

The temperature topped out at ninety eight degrees on the day our lives were forever altered.

SHAKES

Let's go swimming.

JOHN

(a couple of ice cubes melt on his chest)

We just got here.

*
*
*
*

SHAKES

So?

TOMMY

I feel like an egg up here. We can get us some buttered rolls, a few more sodas and head down to the docks.

JOHN
I'm still on my burn.

*
*

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JOHN

I'm still on my burn.

*
*

MICHAEL looks down the street. From his POV WE SEE the lonely figure of a HOT DOG VENDOR coming down the street very slowly. He positions his cart at the corner of 57th and 10th Streets.

MICHAEL O/C

We haven't hit the Hot Dog Vendor in a couple of weeks.

ANGLE on the FOUR BOYS looking down at the Vendor.

TOMMY

I don't know, Mikey, the cart guy ain't like the others. He gets pretty crazy when you take him off.

SHAKES

Last week he chased Ramos and two of his friends all the way to the piers. Almost cut one of 'em.

JOHN

A hot dog ain't worth bleeding over.

MICHAEL

We can eat hot dogs, or we can eat air. You choose.

TOMMY

Air's probably safer.

SHAKES

Who's turn is it?

MICHAEL

(staring at Shakes)

Yours.

37 EXT. STREET - LATER

37

ANGLE on Shakes walking down the street. Michael, John and Tommy hang back, waiting conspiratorally.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

The scam was simple. I was to walk up to the Hot Dog Vendor and order what I wanted. The Vendor would then hand me my hot dog and watch while I ran off without paying. This left the Vendor with two choices, neither very appealing. He could stand his ground and swallow his loss, or he could give chase. The second forces him to abandon the cart where my friends could feast in his absence.

TIGHT SHOT of Shakes.

SHAKES
Mustard and onions. No soda.

ANGLE on the Vendor.

VENDOR
I know you.

Shakes just shrugs and smiles.

SHAKES
Can I have two napkins.

The Vendor pulls a couple of napkins from its canister and wraps them under the hot dog bun. He begins to extend the hot dog to Shakes.

LORENZO'S NARRATION
I took it from him and ran.

CAMERA moves very quickly with Shakes as he races down the street. Almost a blur of action is taking place.

LORENZO'S NARRATION
I scooted past Tommy Mug's dry cleaners and Armond's shoe repair.

CAMERA SWISH PANS to the Hot Dog Vendor.

LORENZO'S NARRATION
The Vendor gave chase, a wooden handled pronged fork in one hand.

VENDOR
Pay my money, thief!

ANOTHER cutting blur of arms and legs racing through the city streets.

38 EXT. HOT DOG STAND - DAY

38

Michael, John and Tommy are fixing themselves hot dogs, putting on mustard and relish.

JOHN
(casually)
How long do you think he'll be?

MICHAEL
Shakes, or the Hot Dog Vendor?

TOMMY
You got one, you got the other. That guy looked pissed enough to kill.

JOHN
Gotta catch him to kill him.

Michael examines the hot dog cart and stand.

MICHAEL

These things are heavier than they look.

TOMMY

It's the gas tanks that keep the food hot...they're heavier than shit.

MICHAEL

Think we can push it, the three of us?

JOHN

Push it where?

MICHAEL

Coupla blocks. Be a nice surprise for the guy when he comes back from chasing Shakes...not to find his cart.

39 EXT. 52ND AND 12TH AVENUE - DAY

39

TIGHT SHOT of the Vendor, breathing heavily.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

The Vendor tired at fifty-second and twelfth. I was on the other side of the street, against a tenement doorway.

Shakes looks at the Vendor, the Vendor eyes him back.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

He was beat, but not beaten. He could go ten minutes more, just on hate alone.

Shakes takes off, running again. The Vendor starts after him.

40 EXT. STREET - CLOSE TO 50TH AND NINTH AVENUE - DAY

40

ANGLE on Michael, John and Tommy moving the hot dog cart down the street

41 EXT. STREET - DAY

41

Shakes continues to run, with the Vendor still giving chase.

*

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Shakes stops and looks back, out of breath.

*

SHAKES
(quietly)
Give it up. Let it go.

42 EXT. 50TH STREET AND NINTH AVENUE - DAY

42

John slides open the aluminum door on the cart.

JOHN
Let's have a soda...
(pulling a soda out of
cart)
A Dr. Brown sounds about right.

TOMMY
I'll take a Cream.

MICHAEL
I don't want anything.

Tommy takes a slurp from his soda, then looks at Michael.

TOMMY
What's wrong?

MICHAEL
Shakes is taking too long. He should
have been back by now.

Suddenly, Shakes rounds the corner and heads over to the three other boys, yelling as he moves towards them.

SHAKES
You were only supposed to take the hot
dogs, not the wagon!

JOHN
Now you tell us.

TOMMY
The guy's coming fast, Mikey.

MICHAEL
I got a plan.

*

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MICHAEL

Over by the subway station.

The boys start to push the cart in the direction of the subway station.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

The plan, as it turned out, was as simple and as dumb as anything we had ever done. We were to hold the cart on the top edge of the stairwell, leaning it downward, and wait for the Vendor. We were to let it go the second he grabbed the handles. Then we'd leave the scene as he struggled to ease the cart back onto the sidewalk.

43 EXT. SUBWAY STATION - DAY

43

TIGHT SHOT of wheels of the hot dog cart right on the edge of the stairs leading down to the tracks.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

To this day, I don't know why we did it, but we would all pay a price. It only took a minute, but in that minute, everything changed.

The cart begins to head down the first step leading to the subway station. The boys hang onto it for dear life.

TOMMY

I can't hold it.

The wheels head down another step. Michael strains to pull the cart back.

TIGHT SHOT of Shakes' feet sliding as he tries to hold onto the cart.

ANGLE on the cart as hot water starts splashing out of the containers. Then the cart gets free of the boys.

The Vendor runs toward his cart, shocked and out of breath. The cart picks up momentum as the hot dogs, onions, sauerkraut and sodas splatter against the sides of the stairwell.

44 INT. SUBWAY STATION

44

At the bottom of the stairs, JAMES CALDWELL, a 67 year old man, is about to buy a newspaper. He looks up in horror as the hot dog cart careens toward him.

ANGLE on the FOUR BOYS at the top of the subway stairs who are helpless to do anything. The cart crashes into James Caldwell, slamming him against the white tiled subway wall. Blood mixes with dirty hot dog water.

45 EXT. SUBWAY STATION - DAY

45

A crowd of people has gathered around the boys, looking down into the subway station. A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN pushes her way forward.

MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN

My sweet Jesus! What have you boys done?! What in God's name have you boys done?

MICHAEL

(fighting back tears)

I think we just killed a man.

46 INT. ST. CLARE'S HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - DAY

46

James Caldwell is on a respirator, fighting for his life.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

While James Caldwell was clinging to life on a respirator, we were remanded into our parents' custody.

47 INT. SHAKES' APARTMENT - DAY

47

TIGHT SHOT of Shakes' father slapping Shakes across the face. He slaps him again.

SHOT WIDENS. Shakes' father, his face red and his eyes full of tears, lets go of his son and sits down at the kitchen table.

SHAKES

I'm sorry, dad.

SHAKES' FATHER

Sorry ain't gonna do you much good. You got to face up to what you did...the four of you.

Tears roll down Shakes' face.

SHAKES

What's going to happen to us?

SHAKES' FATHER

The old man lives, you might catch a break. Do a few months in a juvenile home.

SHAKES

(hardly able to ask the question)

If he doesn't?

His father reaches out and grabs Shakes, holding him. Both of them are crying.

48 OMMITTED

48

9 EXT. CHURCH - DAY

A49

Light rain is falling.

B49 INT. CHURCH

B49

Shakes stands in the doorway leading to the sacristy, watching Father Bobby hang purple vestments over his long, white clerical gown. A lit cigarette in his mouth. The room is dark.

SHAKES

I hear you're short an altar boy.

FATHER BOBBY

Still remember what to do?

SHAKES

Easy on the water, heavy on the wine.
And ring the bells whenever I see
somebody start to nod off.

Father Bobby smiles.

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FATHER BOBBY

Get dressed. We got about five minutes
to show time.

Shakes enters the room.

SHAKES

I'm gonna miss this.

He picks up the white altar boy vestment.

SHAKES

I'm gonna miss all of this.

Shakes starts to put on the altar boy vestment and looks to Father Bobby.

FATHER BOBBY

I'm doing all I can, but so far every
door I touch is locked.

SHAKES

I could run. We all could run.
Disappear for awhile. Nobody's gonna
come lookin'. Nobody's gonna care about
us. About where we go.

FATHER BOBBY

You run now, you run till you die.
Hiding won't make it go away. Won't
make people forget. You have to face
this.

SHAKES

I can't, Father. I don't want to face it. I'm too scared to face it.

Father Bobby puts his arms around Shakes and holds him.

FATHER BOBBY

Not as scared as I am. None of you are as scared as I am.

A long beat. Then...

FATHER BOBBY

We got an audience waiting.

Father Bobby steps back from the boy, and wipes tears from Shakes' eyes. And then Shakes goes back to finishing getting dressed.

SHAKES

I counted three rummies and four widows on my way in. And Fat Ralphie sleeping one off in the last row.

FATHER BOBBY

It's the rain. Bad weather always brings in the crowds.

Father Bobby puts out his cigarette and picks up his sermon. *

FATHER BOBBY

It's one of my favorites.

SHAKES

What is it?

FATHER BOBBY

"Whatever you do to the least of me, you do to me."

Father Bobby and Shakes hold a long look between them. Shakes leads the way out into the quiet of the small church.

49 EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

49

The FOUR BOYS, dressed in the only good clothes they own, walk into the courthouse with their family members. Shakes stops as something catches his eye. He sees the Hot Dog Vendor on the far side of the street coming towards the courthouse.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

We never saw the Vendor as a man, not the way we saw the other men of the neighborhood, and we didn't care enough about him to grant him any respect.

(MORE)

LORENZO'S NARRATION (cont'd)

We gave little notice to how hard he worked, or that he had a wife and two kids in Greece and hoped to bring them to this country. We didn't pay attention to the long hours he worked. We didn't see any of that. We only saw a free lunch.

50 INT. MUNICIPAL BUILDING OFFICE - LATER

50

There's a hard summer rain falling outside the window. Our FOUR BOYS are in the office with Father Bobby, the Lawyer and family members.

LAWYER

It's the best I can do. You have to admit, it's better than being hit with attempted murder, which is what the other side wanted.

JOHN

You're a regular Perry Mason.

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OMMITTED

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John's mother slaps the back of her son's head.

FATHER BOBBY

What does it mean for the boys?

LAWYER

They'll do a year. Minimum. Lorenzo may get a few more months tacked on since he initiated the action.

MICHAEL

It wasn't his idea, it was mine.

LAWYER

Anyway, I should be able to convince the judge not to tack on extra time, given how young Lorenzo is.

FATHER BOBBY

They're all young.

LAWYER

And they're all guilty.

FATHER BOBBY

Where?

LAWYER

(lights a cigarette)

Where what?

FATHER BOBBY

Where will they be sent? Which home? Which prison? Which hole are they going to drop them in?

LAWYER

Wilkinson's. It's a home for boys in Upstate New York.

FATHER BOBBY

I know where it is.

LAWYER

Then you know what it's like.

FATHER BOBBY

Yes.

There's a look of concern on his face.

FATHER BOBBY

I know what it's like.

LAWYER

It won't be so bad. After all, it's not like everybody who spends time at Wilkinson ends up a criminal.

The Lawyer looks over at Father Bobby.

LAWYER

Some of them even find God and become priests. Don't they?

FATHER BOBBY

Go to hell.

51 INT. COURTROOM - DAY

51

The Judge is sentencing our FOUR BOYS, beginning with John.

JUDGE

John Reilly. The court hereby sentences you to be remanded for a period of no more than eighteen months, and no less than one year to the Wilkinson Home for Boys.

ANGLE on John reacting to the sentence.

JUDGE

Thomas Marciano...

ANGLE on Tommy.

JUDGE O/C

...The court hereby sentences you to be remanded for a period of no more than eighteen months, and no less than one year to the Wilkinson Home for Boys.

ANGLE on Michael.

JUDGE O/C

(his tone harsher)

Michael Sullivan. The court hereby sentences you to be remanded for a period of no more than eighteen months, and no less than one year to the Wilkinson Home for Boys.

ANGLE on Judge.

JUDGE

I might add, were it not for the intervention of Father Robert Carillo who spoke in glowing terms on your behalf, I would have sentenced you to a much stiffer punishment.

(MORE)

JUDGE (cont'd)

I still have my doubts as to your
inherent goodness. Only time will
serve to prove me wrong.

The Judge then turns to look at Shakes.

ANGLE on Shakes.

JUDGE O/C

Lorenzo Carcaterra. We have taken into
account that you arrived at the scene
after the theft of the cart had already
occurred. With that in mind, the court
hereby sentences you to serve no more
than one year and no less than six
months at the Wilkinson Home for Boys.

*
*

Shakes' father grabs his son's shoulder from behind.

52 EXT. COURTHOUSE - EARLY MORNING

52

An old dirty slate bus is being loaded with the young BOYS to be sent
off to Wilkinson Home for Boys.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Early in the morning, on September the
first, we said goodbye to our relatives
and friends.

Shakes' father hugs Shakes, as one of the GUARDS approaches.

SHAKES' FATHER

(to Guard)

Treat him right.

GUARD

Don't worry, he'll be okay. Now please
step away.

Shakes walks over and enters the line forming near the bus. John's
MOTHER lays a strand of rosary beads over her son's head. She's
emotionally distraught. Michael stands in line next to Tommy who is
staring into empty space. Michael glances over and sees Carol Martinez
nearby. They exchange a warm look, then Michael enters the bus. Tommy
follows him inside.

ANGLE on Father Bobby leaning against a light pole in the open parking
lot. He flicks his cigarette and walks towards the bus. He approaches
Shakes.

FATHER BOBBY

Will you write to me?

SHAKES
 (struggling to reply)
 Don't worry. You'll hear from me.

FATHER BOBBY
 It'll mean a lot.

SHAKES
 Would you do me a favor?

FATHER BOBBY
 Name it.

SHAKES
 Check on my mother and father. The
 last few weeks, they look ready to kill
 each other.

FATHER BOBBY
 I will.

SHAKES
 And no matter what you hear, tell 'em
 I'm doing okay.

A slight smile breaks through Father Bobby's sadness.

FATHER BOBBY
 You want me to lie?

SHAKES
 It's a good lie, Father. You can do
 it.

Father Bobby moves from the bus and Shakes steps inside, followed by John. They take their seats on the bus. The Guard runs a chain along the seats and locks the boys in. The door to the bus closes and it pulls away.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE UP

53 INT. WILKINSON HOME FOR BOYS - DAY

53

It seems to be a very picturesque group of buildings.

LORENZO'S NARRATION
 The Wilkinson Home for Boys held three
 hundred and seventy five youthful
 offenders, housed in five separate
 units. From the outside, the facility
 resembled what those who ran it wanted
 it to resemble - a secluded private
 school.

54 INT. SHAKES' ROOM - GROUP "C"

54

LONG SHOT of Shakes sitting in his room. CAMERA moves slowly toward him.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Michael, Tommy, John and I were assigned to the second floor of Group "C". We each had a private twelve-foot room. I'd been in my room less than an hour, when the panic set in.

CAMERA slowly tightens on the fearful and lonely Shakes.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

It doesn't take very long to know how tough a person you are, or how strong you can be. I knew from my first day at Wilkinson that I was neither tough nor strong. It only takes a moment for the fear to find it's way...to seep through the carefully constructed armor. Once it does, it finds a permanent place.

55 INT. PRISON HALLWAY

55

A GUARD, SEAN NOKES, who appears to be in his mid-20's, heads down the hallway towards Shakes' room. He opens the door.

56 INT. SHAKES' ROOM

56

Shakes is concerned as Nokes enters the room. The Guard looks at him, then quickly and quietly says:

NOKES

Toss your clothes to the floor.

SHAKES

Here?

NOKES

If you're expecting a dressing room, forget it. We don't have any. Lose the clothes.

SHAKES

In front of you?

Nokes just smiles. Shakes starts taking off his clothes, and stands there in his white cotton briefs and his white socks.

NOKES

Everything.

000001700000

SHAKES

You want me to stand here naked?

NOKES

Now you're catching on. I knew you
Hell's Kitchen boys couldn't be as dumb
as people say.

SHAKES

Are my friends on this floor?

NOKES

Friends? You got a lot to learn,
little boy. Nobody's got friends in
this place. That's something you best
not forget.

Shakes slips off his socks and his underwear. He stands naked before
Nokes.

SHAKES

Now what?

NOKES

Get dressed.

He nods toward some prison issue clothes on a cot in the corner.

57 INT. GUARD'S STATION - DAY

00170000

57

A television is on. FOUR GUARDS are smoking and seem to be on a break.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

There were four Guards assigned to each
floor, with one - in our case Nokes -
designated group leader.

ANGLE ON FERGUSON

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Ferguson was the only son of a slain
New York State trooper and was on the
waiting list for both the New York City
and Suffolk County police departments.

ANGLE ON STYLER

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Styler was using his job at Wilkinson's
to finance his way through law school.

ANGLE ON ADDISON

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Addison was a graduate of a local high
school who wanted nothing more than a
steady job that paid well.

58 EXT. WILKINSON - EXERCISE AREA - DAY

58

WE SEE the young inmates in their green shirts and white pants milling about.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

It was not a group of innocent young boys at Wilkinson. Most, if not all, of the inmates belonged there. A number of them were riding out their second and third convictions. All were violent offenders. Few seemed sorry about what he had done, or appeared on the brink of any rehabilitation.

ANGLE ON John and Shakes leaning against a bleacher area. Nokes approaches them.

NOKES

Why don't you get over there and run around the track a dozen times.

SHAKES

How come? Nobody else is running.

NOKES

Now!

JOHN

(to Shakes)

Come on.

As they start to move, Shakes brushes past Nokes. The two boys continue on towards the field, and suddenly Nokes lifts his baton and brings it down hard against Shakes' lower back. He moans with pain and falls to one knee. John turns around towards the sound as Nokes hits Shakes again with the baton. Shakes falls flat on his face.

JOHN

What are you doing? He didn't do nothing.

NOKES

He touched my uniform. That's against institute rules.

JOHN

You didn't have to hit him.

NOKES

Okay. Help him up.

John hesitates for a moment, anticipating Nokes might hit him.

NOKES

Go ahead, pick him up. Don't be afraid.

JOHN

I'm not afraid.

He helps Shakes to his feet.

NOKES

Walk it off and let me see you do those laps.

The two boys walk over to the track, Shakes obviously in pain..

JOHN

I can't believe he hit you like that.

SHAKES

He's hit before.

JOHN

How do you know?

SHAKES

Nobody looked surprised.

58A INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

58A

WE SEE Shakes and other boys attending class.

58B EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

58B

WE SEE our four boys playing a game.

58C INT. LIBRARY - DAY

58C

Boys sit at desks, reading, studying.

58D INT. CAFETERIA

58D

The boys watch a movie projected on a screen.

ANGLE on the WARDEN watching over the boys.

59 INT. PRISON CAFETERIA - DAY

59

The Cafeteria is now crowded. Young inmates sit at long rows of wooden tables and eat from tin trays. OUR BOYS are in a line waiting to be served.

MICHAEL

Can you see what we're having?

JOHN

Whatever it is, it's covered with brown gravy.

MICHAEL

All our meals are covered with brown gravy.

*

The BOYS move through the line getting their food, then head through the narrow spaces between tables looking for empty seats in the rear of the room. Michael moves the edge of his tray, barely brushing the arm of one of the inmates.

The INMATE's arm shoots up and sends Michael's tray crashing to the floor.

MICHAEL

(to inmate)

What the fuck you do that for?

The INMATE, K.C., stands up. He seems to be around 18 years old, with bulked arms and a short crewcut.

K.C.

You brushed me.

MICHAEL

So?

K.C.

Nobody touches me. I ain't like you
and the rest of your pussy friends.

Michael swings hard and hits K.C. in the jaw, but it has little effect. K.C. rushes Michael and they both fall to the floor, sliding against the spilled food. K.C. hits Michael hard in the face.

Shakes, Tommy, John and other inmates form a circle around K.C. and Michael.

K.C. grabs some meat and smears it into Michael's face.

K.C.

Your fucking life's over. You're gonna
die here today, punk. Right on this
floor.

He starts to strangle Michael. Michael tries to break free but he's gasping for air, and can't. Shakes sees Michael's in trouble, drops his tray and jumps on K.C. Then Tommy and John do the same. There's an intensity to this fighting. Then other inmates jump in.

The shrill sound of police whistles brings the fight to an end. The crowd parts as Nokes approaches with a can of mace in one hand and a baton in the other. The FOUR BOYS get up from the floor covered in food and blood.

NOKES

Your time here hasn't taught you shit.
You're still the same fucking clowns
you were when you walked in. Everybody
back to your seats, and finish your
lunch. Nothing more to see.

K.C.

That go for me, too?

NOKES

No, it don't go for you. I want you
back in your room. You're done with
lunch.

K.C.

(to Michael)

Me and you gonna finish this some time
real soon.

MICHAEL

Maybe at dinner.

K.C. walks out of the lunch room.

NOKES

Any of you Kitchen boys get any lunch?

MICHAEL

I got to smell it.

NOKES

(looking at Michael with
intense anger)

How about you finish it now.

MICHAEL

I'm not hungry.

NOKES

I don't give a fuck you're hungry or
not. You eat because I'm telling you
to eat.

Shakes, Tommy and John start to walk towards the food line.

NOKES

Where do you think you're going?

SHAKES

You said to get lunch.

NOKES

You boys don't need to get back in line
for food, there's plenty right where
you're standing.

The boys look down at all of the food on the floor. Some of the
inmates at the other tables watch, a few of them are smirking.

NOKES

Let's go, boys. Ain't much time in the
lunch period.

MICHAEL

I'm still not hungry.

Nokes immediately brings the end of his baton down along the side of Michael's head. He quickly follows it with a level blast across his face. The force of the shot sends blood out of Michael's nose.

NOKES

I tell you when you're hungry.

Michael is struggling from the blows. Nokes swings again with a sharp blow to Michael's neck. Michael drops to one knee. Nokes hits him again.

NOKES

Eat!

With a shaky hand, Michael reaches for the fork, his eyes glassy, the front of his face dripping with blood. He picks up the fork and jabs at a piece of meat on the floor.

NOKES

(to the other THREE BOYS)

What the fuck you waiting for? Down on your knees. Finish your goddamn lunch!

Shakes, Tommy and John go down on their knees and reluctantly start to eat. Michael seems almost unconscious as he tries to eat. Nokes swings hard with his baton hitting Shakes, Tommy and John against the spine.

NOKES

Eat faster. Don't think you got all fucking day.

He watches as the BOYS eat. Then he kicks Michael in the ribs.

An OLDER BLACK GUARD, MARLBORO, enters the Cafeteria and stands observing Nokes and the boys.

NOKES

Nobody leaves here until you clowns are finished with your meal.

The rest of the inmates watch silently. Nokes sits on the edge of a table. He kicks a slice of bread on the floor with his boot.

NOKES

There's some bread over here. Can't have a good lunch without a slice of bread.

Michael, bleeding from his nose, looks over at the bread, but doesn't move. Nokes walks over and hits him with his baton again. Michael starts to crawl towards the bread.

NOKES

That's it. Now you're starting to listen.

(prodding him with his baton)

Show all the boys here how to do a good crawl. Show them how you follow my rules.

ANGLE ON MARLBORO as he steps forward.

MARLBORO

It's one o'clock, Nokes. Your lunch shift is over.

NOKES

I'm not through here yet. Got a few more things that need cleaning up before I can leave.

MARLBORO

It's my tour now. I'll clean what needs cleaning.

NOKES

Stay out of this one. It ain't got nothing to do with you.

MARLBORO

This one I'm staying in.

Nokes walks over to Marlboro and stands inches away from his face.

NOKES

Don't fuck with me, boy.

MARLBORO

(a calm voice)

Fuck with me, Nokes. I'm asking you.

There's a stare-down between them.

MARLBORO

You're eating into my shift.

Nokes backs down.

NOKES

I'll get out of your way...for now.

He starts to head towards the door.

MARLBORO

I'll take what I can get.

The BOYS, covered with blood and food, look surprised that anyone would actually stand up for them.

60 INT. TUNNEL - NIGHT

60

Nokes leads Michael, Shakes, Tommy and John down the tunnel.

NOKES

You boys just don't ever listen. Got yourselves a very serious discipline problem. You boys need to be taught some discipline...you need to learn.

61 INT. CAGE - NIGHT

61

As Nokes and the FOUR BOYS enter, they see Ferguson, Styler and Addison.

WE HEAR the cage slam shut.

NOKES

It's a simple thing. I ask you to do something, and you do it. It's a very simple thing.

Michael stands before him.

NOKES

You understand?

Michael doesn't say anything.

ADDISON

(to John, Tommy and Shakes)
Turn and face the wall.

FERGUSON

(to John)
Face to the wall.

Michael stands very nervously, starting to sweat.

MICHAEL

What do you want?

NOKES

A blow job.

Shakes looks around and Ferguson hits him on the back with his baton. Shakes flinches and turns away.

NOKES

(to Michael)
Get on your knees.

Michael doesn't do anything.

Shakes turns around once more. Ferguson hits him on the back again with his baton. John starts to turn and as he does so Addison's baton hits him. He moans from the pain.

52 INT. TUNNEL

62

CAMERA moves away from the cage down the now empty tunnel.

NOKES O/C

On your knees!

WE HEAR a baton hitting flesh and moans from the blows.

NOKES O/C

You Hell's Kitchen boys have a real discipline problem.

FERGUSON O/C

Face the wall!

Once again, WE HEAR the sound of a baton hitting flesh, and moans from the pain inflicted, as the camera comes down the tunnel.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

None of us ever spoke about what happened.

CAMERA keeps moving further and further from the distant scene.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

There are no clear pictures of the sexual abuse we endured, I've buried it as deep as it can possibly go. What I remember most clearly from that chilly October night, was that it was my fourteenth birthday...and the end of my childhood.

63 OMITTED

63

64 OMITTED

64

65 OMITTED

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66 OMITTED

66

67 EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - UPSTATE NEW YORK - DAY

67

A Greyhound bus makes its way along a narrow country road.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Early in my stay, I'd written and asked my father not to come. I couldn't look at my father and have him see on my face all that had happened to me. Michael had done the same with the interested members of his family. Tommy's mother couldn't get it together to visit. John's mother came up once a month.

The bus pulls up at the bus stop near The Wilkinson Home for Boys. The door opens and Father Bobby steps out.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

But no-one could stop Father Bobby from visiting.

68 EXT. PRISON STAIRCASE - DAY

68

Shakes walks towards the Visiting Area with Nokes.

NOKES

Keep the conversation on a happy note.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Nokes warned us not to say anything to Father Bobby. If we did, reprisals would be severe.

69 INT. PRISON VISITING AREA - DAY

69

The large visitors' room has fold-out chairs and tables. Father Bobby sits waiting, his black jacket over the back of a chair. Shakes approaches.

FATHER BOBBY

You lost a few pounds.

SHAKES

It's not exactly home cooking.

There's a long pause.

FATHER BOBBY

I get a chance to see all four of you today.

Shakes looks off.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

I loved Father Bobby, but right now I couldn't stand to look at him. I was afraid he'd look right through me, past the fear and the shame...right through to the truth.

Father Bobby moves his chair closer to the table.

FATHER BOBBY

Shakes, is there anything you want to tell me? Anything at all?

SHAKES

You shouldn't come here any more. I appreciate it, but it's not a good thing for you to do.

Father Bobby pulls out a cigarette and lights it.

FATHER BOBBY

I stopped over at Attica on my way up here, to see an old friend of mine.

SHAKES

You have any friends not in jail?

FATHER BOBBY

Not as many as I'd like.

SHAKES

What's he in for?

FATHER BOBBY

Triple murder. He killed three men fifteen years ago.

SHAKES

He's a good friend?

FATHER BOBBY

He's my best friend. We grew up together. We were close, like you and the guys.

He glances around the room.

FATHER BOBBY

We were both sent up here.

(looking at Shakes)

It wasn't easy, just like it's not easy for you and the guys. This place killed my friend. Made him not care. Don't let this place do that to you, Shakes.

There's a long pause between the Father and the boy, then Father Bobby stands up.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

I didn't want to let him go. I never felt as close to anyone as I felt to him that moment.

Father Bobby holds Shakes' hand.

FATHER BOBBY

I'll see you in the Kitchen.

He slips on his jacket and puts a Yankee hat on his head.

FATHER BOBBY

I'm counting on it, Shakes.

Shakes turns, nodding to the Guard to open the iron door leading him out.

A70 EXT. WILKINSON HOME FOR BOYS - NIGHT

A70

A light snow is falling.

70 INT. WILKINSON HOME FOR BOYS - NIGHT

70

A series of shots of the Home at night. WE HEAR cries and moans coming from rooms.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

A number of the inmates, as tough as they acted during the day, would often cry themselves to sleep at night. There were other cries too. These differed from those filled with fear and loneliness. They were lower and muffled...the sounds of pained anguish ...raw cries that begged for escape, or a freedom that never came.

71 INT. SHAKES' ROOM - NIGHT

71

Shakes is lying on his bed, his hands folded behind his head.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Those cries can change the course of a life...can cut through concrete and skin, and reach deep into the dark parts of a lost boy's soul. They are cries that once heard, can never be erased from memory. On this one night, those cries belonged to my friend, John.

Suddenly, a dark figure crosses the camera. The door opens and Ferguson steps into the doorway.

FERGUSON

I just fucked your little friend, Johnny.

Ferguson seems a little drunk. He holds a beer bottle in his hand.

Shakes sits up in his bed.

FERGUSON

Take your clothes off. I'm gonna play with you for a while.

SHAKES

No.

FERGUSON

What did you say to me?

SHAKES

No.

FERGUSON

You know what you need? You need a
drink...loosen you up a little.

He walks over to Shakes, grabs his head and pours the bottle of beer
over his head and down his throat. Shakes chokes on it.

SHAKES

(spitting out the beer)

Please, Ferguson, don't do this.

FERGUSON

Don't do what, sweet thing? I thought
all you boys liked it.

SHAKES

We don't.

FERGUSON

That's too bad, because I like it.

ANGLE on John standing in the open doorway. He has a makeshift knife
in his hand. He's naked except for a pair of briefs and one sock. He
comes up behind Ferguson, who is sitting on Shakes' bed with his back
to the door and doesn't see John.

FERGUSON

(starting to touch Shakes)

Let's stop fucking around, sweet thing.
It's time for fun...and remember I like
it nice and slow.

Suddenly, Ferguson reacts as he feels the edge of John's knife on the
back of his neck.

JOHN

That's how I'm gonna let you die, dip
shit, nice and slow.

FERGUSON

(surprised)

What the hell are you trying to do?

JOHN

I just wanted to tell you, you forgot
to lock my door.

FERGUSON

I can have you killed for this.

JOHN

Then I've got nothing to lose.

Shakes quickly slides out from the bed and grabs Ferguson's baton.

SHAKES

You can't cut him, Johnny.

JOHN

Watch me, Shakes. He's not gonna get away with it. He's not gonna walk away from what he did to me...what he's doing to all of us.

SHAKES

He has to get away with it.

JOHN

Who says? Who the fuck says?

SHAKES

We're gonna get out of here in a few months. If you stick him, we ain't going nowhere.

FERGUSON

Listen to your friend, Irish. He's talking sense here.

Shakes slams the end of the baton into the center of Ferguson's stomach. He flinches and gasps for air.

SHAKES

Stay out of this, scumbag.

John moves the knife away from Ferguson's neck and steps back.

SHAKES

He's a piece of shit and he's not worth it.

FERGUSON

I'll go easy on my report.

SHAKES

There won't be a report.

FERGUSON

You two assaulted a guard. There's got to be a report.

John just stands there, his mind seems to be off somewhere else. He's trembling as he holds onto the knife.

SHAKES

Just go, Ferguson.

FERGUSON

I ain't leaving before Irish hands me the knife.

SHAKES

There ain't no knife.

Shakes goes over to John.

SHAKES

It's okay, Johnny, you can let it go now. It's okay.

JOHN

(very quietly)

He's not gonna touch me again. You hear me, Shakes? He's not gonna touch me again.

SHAKES

I hear you.

He takes the knife from John.

SHAKES

(to Ferguson)

Like I said. There's no knife.

Ferguson stands and looks at the two boys.

FERGUSON

I ain't gonna forget you two did this, you hear me? I ain't gonna forget this.

SHAKES

It's the devil's deal, then.

FERGUSON

What the fuck's that mean?

JOHN

First one to forget, dies.

72 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

72

FRED CARLSON, the English teacher, stands before a class of inmates, his tie open and his glasses resting on the top of his head.

CARLSON

I was expecting to read thirty book reports over the weekend. There were only six for me to read, which means I'm missing how many?

A YOUNG INMATE yells from the back of the class.

INMATE #1

This here's English class...math's down the hall.

A few inmates laugh out loud.

CARLSON

I want to help you. You may not believe that, or you may not care, but it's the truth.

The young inmates jeer.

CARLSON

Then I'm just wasting my time, is that what you're saying to me?

INMATE #2

You're wasting everybody's time.

There's a long beat, then a whistle sounds. The inmates get out of their seats and leave the classroom. Shakes also makes his way to the door.

CARLSON

You got a second?

SHAKES

I do something wrong?

CARLSON

No. You did a great job on your book report.

Shakes nods his head.

CARLSON

You really seem to like the book.
(looking at report)
"The Count of Monte Cristo".

SHAKES

It's my favorite. I like it more since I've been in here.

CARLSON

Why's that?

SHAKES

I told you that in the report.

CARLSON

Tell me again.

SHAKES

He wouldn't let anybody beat him. "The Count" took what he had to take... beatings, insults and whatever, and learned from it. Then, when the time came for him to do something, he made his move.

Carlson leans across his desk for a brown leather bag.

CARLSON

You admire that?

SHAKES

I respect that.

CARLSON

You have a copy of the book at home?

SHAKES

I got the Classics Illustrated comic.

CARLSON

It's not the same thing.

Shakes starts to move on.

SHAKES

I gotta go. I'm gonna miss morning
roll call.

CARLSON

One more minute. I've got something
for you.

He takes out a hardbound copy of "The Count of Monte Cristo" from his
bag.

CARLSON

I thought you might like to have it.

SHAKES

Are you serious?

CARLSON

You love the book that much, you should
have a copy of your own.

SHAKES

I can't pay you.

CARLSON

It's a gift. You've received gifts
before, haven't you?

SHAKES

(flipping through the
pages)

It's been a while.

CARLSON

My way of saying "thanks".

SHAKES

Thanks for what?

CARLSON

That someone listens. Even if it's one student.

SHAKES

You're a good teacher, Mr. Carlson.
You're just stuck with a bad bunch.

CARLSON

(walking Shakes to the door)

We can discuss the book in class on Friday, if you think "The Count" can hold their attention.

SHAKES

He's got a shot.

CARLSON

Any special section I should read from?

SHAKES

That's easy. The part where he escapes from prison.

Shakes walks out, slapping the book against his side.

/3 EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

73

The inmates are engaged in a touch football game.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Once a year in the weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas, the Wilkinson Home for Boys sponsored a touch football game at a price of two dollars a ticket, with the money going to the town. Children under ten were allowed in free.

TIGHT SHOT of a huge, BLACK KID, smashing into Shakes and knocking him to the ground.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

We were twenty minutes into practice, when I was tackled hard from behind.

SHAKES

(to Black Kid)

It's touch football.

BLACK KID

I touch hard.

SHAKES

(slowly getting up)

Save it for the guards.

ANGLE on Nokes, Ferguson, Styler and Addison.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Nokes was captain of the guards' team, and my friends and I knew, before waiting for a roster sheet, that we had been chosen for the inmates team.

ANGLE on Tommy, limping badly, as he moves toward the huddle.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Tommy was on the team, even though he was suffering from a badly swollen ankle, the result of a recent battering from Styler.

Shakes moves to the huddle and stands next to Michael.

SHAKES

It's not bad enough that the guards are gonna hand us our ass, we've got these losers thinking they're the Green Bay Packers.

JOHN

What's the point of even having a practice?

Tommy limps over, and nods to the guards who are ringing the field.

TOMMY

For them. We're like a coming attraction.

Michael looks over at the inmates on the other side of the field.

MICHAEL

Shakes, who's the toughest guy out here?

SHAKES

How do you mean, tough?

MICHAEL

Who can talk and have everyone listening.

TOMMY

Rizzo.

(indicating guy across the field)

Tall black guy with the shaved head, holding the ball.

JOHN

(looking over at Rizzo)

A black Italian?

TOMMY

I don't know what he is. I just know his name's Rizzo and he's the main guy down in "B" group.

MICHAEL

What's he in for?

TOMMY

He killed a guy.

SHAKES

Killed a guy?

TOMMY

Manslaughter. His mother's boyfriend got a little too friendly with Rizzo's kid sister.

MICHAEL

He's our guy then.

SHAKES

A guy for what?

MICHAEL

I'll tell you after practice.

74 INT. SINK AREA - DAY

74

RIZZO, no more than 15, is washing up.

MICHAEL

Okay with you if I use the soap?

RIZZO

Okay with me if you set yourself on fire. Okay with me if you die. I don't give a fuck.

MICHAEL

(taking the soap)

Thanks.

He sits down.

MICHAEL

(very quietly)

I need to talk to you. It won't take long.

Rizzo just looks at him.

MICHAEL

You're the guy everybody points to, and stays away from.

RIZZO

That was true, until today.

MICHAEL

We're wasting time.

Rizzo looks over at Shakes, who's trying to look as if he's interested in something in the hallway.

RIZZO

Tell your friend over there to come in.
He ain't smart enough to look cool.

Michael smiles at Rizzo, then nods for Shakes to come over.

MICHAEL

You been in here longer than a year?

RIZZO

Closer to three. Should be out come spring.

MICHAEL

How many of these football games you play in?

RIZZO

This one be my second. Why?

MICHAEL

The guards win the first?

RIZZO

The guards ain't ever lost one.

MICHAEL

What if they did?

RIZZO

Look, white boy, don't know what you play on the street, don't care, but in here the guards call the play, and the play calls for them to win the game.

MICHAEL

Why?

RIZZO

You think they fuck with you now. Beat them Saturday and see what happens. Won't be just you either.

(beat)

Tell me, white boy, we all supposed to get our ass split open just so you can look good in a football game?

MICHAEL

I'm not saying we gotta win. I just don't want to take a beating.

RIZZO

You do every day. Why's Saturday special?

MICHAEL

On Saturday we can hit back.

RIZZO

Guards steer clear of me. They stay back and let me do my time. I play the game...put a hurt on one of them, it might change my cushion.

MICHAEL

You're still nothing but a nigger to them.

RIZZO

Just 'cause we're talking don't mean we're on the same side.

MICHAEL

They don't hit you or fuck with you like they do with us. They fuck with you another way. You're just an animal to them.

RIZZO

I don't give a fuck.

MICHAEL

Yeah, you do. Beating them ain't gonna change a thing.

Rizzo looks at him, interested.

RIZZO

Then why, white boy?

MICHAEL

To make them feel what we feel, just for a couple of hours.

Rizzo thinks it over. Then he looks at Michael and then at Shakes.

RIZZO

Hope you play as good as you talk.

MICHAEL

I hope so, too.

75 EXT. PRISON FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

75

TIGHT SHOT of a VENDOR selling peanuts and hot chocolate. PULL BACK to reveal the stands full of SPECTATORS of all ages, wearing heavy coats, furry hats and woollen gloves. It's a rather festive atmosphere, apart from the fact that armed guards circle the perimeter of the field.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

It was the first Saturday in December.

ANGLE ON GUARDS wearing shoulder and elbow pads, shiny football shoes with cleats and thick sweaters.

ANGLE ON THE INMATES, INCLUDING OUR FOUR BOYS, wearing sneakers and prison issue clothing.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

I looked at the crowd with a fair amount of envy, knowing that once the game was over, they were free to return to their safe homes, dinner waiting, our game reduced to nothing more than dinner conversation.

ON FOOTBALL FIELD

Nokes and Rizzo meet in the center of the field for the coin toss.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Rizzo had insisted on being named captain, feeling it would send the guards an early signal that this was not just going to be another football game.

Neither one attempted a handshake.

NOKES

I'll go easy on you and your crew, if you lay down and stay out of the game.

RIZZO

I call heads.

The COIN floats through the air in slow motion and lands heads up in the grass. Michael takes the snap, drops three steps back and hands the ball off to Shakes.

JUANITO, a 15 year old in a tee-shirt and torn pants, leads a block in front of Shakes. Nokes leads the charge.

Just as he's about to hit Shakes, an elbow comes into the screen and hits Nokes flush on the side of his face, and he falls to the ground. WE SEE the elbow belongs to Rizzo. He smiles. Addison grabs Shakes around the waist and knocks him to the ground.

JUANITO

(excited, helping Shakes
up)

Alright! We got ourselves a game now,
motherfuckers. We got ourselves a
game!

MICHAEL

(smiling over at Rizzo)

We got ourselves a game.

MONTAGE of an incredibly brutal touch football game.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

For ninety minutes, we played the
guards in the toughest and bloodiest
game ever seen on the playing fields of
the Wilkinson Home for Boys. For those
ninety minutes, we took the game out of
the prison, moved it miles beyond the
locked gates and the sloping hills of
the surrounding countryside, and
brought it back down to the streets of
the neighborhoods we had come from.
For those ninety minutes, we were once
again free.

WE SEE Tommy spewing blood from a split lip. John sandwiched between
two vicious blocks from Nokes and Ferguson.

Michael's arm being trampled on by cleats. Brutal tactics are employed
by the guards in an all-out effort to emerge with a victory, but the
boys give back what they receive.

Michael takes a snap and drops back to pass. Rizzo races down the
sideline and Styler runs with him, side by side.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

We were down by one touchdown, late in
the fourth quarter. We needed one more
play...a big play, one the guards
wouldn't expect us to be able to carry
out...the kind that ends in a touchdown
and a knock out. All the inmates had
played in games that ended in blood,
but for the guards this was a new
experience, and they didn't much care
for it.

Michael is looking down field for Rizzo. Nokes, bloody and bruised,
comes in from the left side, leaping over one inmate and reaching for
Michael. Shakes throws a low block, taking Nokes off his feet.
Michael lets the ball go.

The ball sails through the cold December sky and Rizzo reaches out for
it. He pulls it in as he falls into the end zone. The inmates go
crazy in triumph.

NOKES
(to Michael)
You fucker. I'm gonna kill you.

ANGLE ON RIZZO as the players rush around him. WE HEAR inmates screaming from open windows: "Rizzo! Rizzo! Rizzo!" Rizzo takes in the moment of glory.

Tommy and John show the faintest look of happiness. Nokes starts to walk off the field. Michael walks toward him.

MICHAEL
Hey, Nokes.

Nokes turns back and looks at Michael.

NOKES
What?

MICHAEL
Good game.

ANGLE on Shakes. He has a big grin on his face.

SCREEN IS BLACK

LORENZO'S NARRATION
It was my second day in the Isolation Ward. I was brought down to the place the inmates called "the hole" immediately after the game. There was no bed, no toilet, no food or water. There was only darkness and large hungry rats.

76 INT. ISOLATION WARD - "THE HOLE"

76

We can begin to see in the darkness now. In the faint light, a rat moves along the wall.

LORENZO'S NARRATION
I was not alone in the hole. I knew my friends were down in the depths with me, each in his own cell, each in his own pain...suffering his own demons. Rizzo was there too.

CAMERA PANS and we can just barely see Shakes. His face is badly beaten and one eye is bruised and swollen shut. His lips are dry and puffy.

CAMERA continues down Shakes' body to his leg. His pants are torn and he's not wearing socks or shoes. A rat is moving over a dry blooded gash on his ankle.

LORENZO'S NARRATION
I had lost any sense of time.

*

ANGLE on Shakes' good eye which is staring at a small pin of light on a far wall. From his POV, the dot of light opens up to show a hazy projection of an open fire hydrant, and boys running in and out of the cascading water.

EXTREME TIGHT SHOT of Shakes as he lives this moment.

Suddenly, we hear the click of a lock. Rats scurry into the corner as sharp light filters into the cell. Nokes stands silhouetted in the doorway.

NOKES

I thought you might be hungry, football star. Brought you some oatmeal.

He places the bowl at Shakes' feet on the concrete floor. The light is blinding to Shakes. He's unable to see any image clearly.

NOKES

Looks a little dry though. Nobody likes dry oatmeal. Tastes like shit.

In the darkness, WE HEAR a zipper sliding down, then peeing into the bowl of oatmeal.

NOKES

There. That's better. That should help it go down easier.

He walks toward the door, a dark silhouette.

NOKES

Enjoy your meal, football star.

Everything goes BLACK again.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

The minute I heard the lock turn and the bolt shut down, I rushed for the bowl, and ate my first meal in the hole.

"THE HOLE" - LATER

Through the dim light, we begin to focus on Shakes' face again. He's looking at the fine crack of light on the far wall.

ANGLE on the light as it opens up to a blurry vision of Fat Mancho's Candy Store.

JOHN V/O

I gotta pee. Hey, Fat Man, can I use your bathroom?

FAT MANCHO V/O

Fuck you, punk. Pee in your pants.

JOHN V/O

Is that a no?

TIGHT SHOT of Shakes' eye, blinking and half unconscious. In his eye WE SEE the blurred vision of Fat Mancho's Candy Store become clearer.

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE:

76A INT. FAT MANCHO'S CANDY STORE - DAY

76A

Shakes, John, Tommy and Michael are hanging out at the Candy Store with Fat Mancho.

SHAKES

You can go at my place. I've got to pick up something anyway.

JOHN

You sure?

SHAKES

Yeah. You can pee there, or in the back of Fat Mancho's car.

He smiles at Fat Mancho, and they head out the door.

76B INT. SHAKES' APARTMENT - DAY

76B

The front door bursts open and John runs through the apartment, followed by Shakes.

JOHN

I don't think I'm going to make it.

He swings the bathroom door open, and suddenly both he and Shakes freeze.

76C INT. SHAKES' BATHROOM - DAY

76C

There sitting on the toilet in full white habit is SISTER CAROLYN SAUNDERS. She's holding a wad of toilet paper in one hand.

JOHN

Holy shit!

SISTER CAROLYN

Oh, my God!

77 EXT. STREET - DAY

77

Shakes and John are racing back down the street towards Fat Mancho's Candy Store, with Michael and Tommy.

MICHAEL

That was quick.

JOHN

We saw a nun.

MICHAEL

Where?

JOHN

On the toilet. She was sitting on
Shakes' toilet taking a piss.

TOMMY

You never think of nuns doing that
stuff.

MICHAEL

Which nun?

SHAKES

Sister Carolyn.

TOMMY

Good choice.

MICHAEL

Did you see her snatch?

JOHN

A nun's snatch? We're gonna burn like
twigs for this, Shakes.

PRESENT:

78 INT. "THE HOLE"

78

Shakes is delirious.

SHAKES

We're gonna burn in hell...we're gonna
burn in hell...

His good eye closes and he drifts into unconsciousness.

79 INT. PRISON INFIRMARY - CORRIDOR

79

Shakes is on a gurney being wheeled towards the Infirmary Ward. An
OLDER DOCTOR walks along the side of Shakes.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

I was released from the hole after two
weeks, and sent to the prison
infirmary.

PRISON DOCTOR

You're lucky.. A couple more days in
there, we wouldn't have been able to
help you.

SHAKES

(barely conscious)

Where are all the guys?

PRISON DOCTOR

They took everyone out.

SHAKES

Were we all lucky?

PRISON DOCTOR

No, not all.

80 INT. PRISON INFIRMARY - WARD

80

Rays of sunlight come through an open window and across Shakes' face, as he lies in the hospital bed. His left eye is still sealed shut, and an I.V. bag drips fluid into his arms. He turns his head and sees Michael sitting on the edge of his own bed, staring at Shakes.

Michael's right arm and left leg are in soft casts, his face is puffy and bruised.

MICHAEL

I thought you'd never wake up.

SHAKES

I never thought I'd want to.

MICHAEL

John and Tommy are at the other end of the hall.

SHAKES

How are they?

MICHAEL

Alive.

SHAKES

Who isn't?

MICHAEL

Rizzo.

SHAKES

They killed him?

MICHAEL

They took turns beating him until there was nothing left to beat.

The two boys look at one another.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Rizzo was dead because of us. We made him think that going up against the guards in a meaningless football game had some value...that it would give us a reason to go on. Once again, we were wrong.

Michael lays back on his bed. Shakes turns away from Michael, resting his head against the pillow, staring at the white wall. A voice on a radio in the background talks about threats of snow and holiday sales.

81 EXT. PRISON INFIRMARY GROUNDS - DAY

81

From an open window looking out onto the Infirmary grounds, WE SEE Tommy sitting on a wooden bench, staring ahead, with his back to the camera. His hospital gown is slightly open, and WE SEE deep gashes and bruises on his back.

82 INT. PRISON INFIRMARY WARD - DAY

82

WE HEAR footsteps. Nokes enters the ward. He walks over to where Michael and Shakes are resting.

NOKES

How we feeling today?

Neither boy responds.

NOKES

You should be out of here in no time. It's gonna be good having you back. We miss you and your friends, especially at night.

MICHAEL

(whispers to Nokes)

Kill me now.

NOKES

What?

He moves closer to Michael.

NOKES

What did you say?

MICHAEL

Kill me now. Kill us all now.

NOKES

You're fucking crazy.

MICHAEL

You have to kill us. You can't let us out of here alive.

Nokes is slightly uneasy about this.

NOKES
And why's that, tough guy?

MICHAEL
You can't run the risk.

NOKES
What risk are you talking about?

MICHAEL
The risk of meeting up in a place that
ain't here.

NOKES
That supposed to scare me? That street
shit of yours supposed to scare me?
Your friend Rizzo was tough too, but
now he's buried tough.

Michael just looks at Nokes very calmly.

MICHAEL
Kill us all.

NOKES
You Hell's Kitchen motherfuckers are
really crazy.

MICHAEL
Think about it. It's the only way out
for you. Don't take a chance, you
can't afford it. Kill us.

Nokes turns and walks away.

83	OMITTED	83
84	OMITTED	84
85	OMITTED	85
86	OMITTED	86
87	EXT. PRISON GROUNDS - DAY	87
	SCREEN READS: SPRING 1968	

THE FOUR BOYS are playing basketball against a cement wall.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

The basketball court was seldom free. The black inmates had co-opted the area as part of their domain, but for now they were out of the picture, joined together in organized protest, a reflection of their outrage over the murder earlier in the month of Martin Luther King, Jr. They stayed in their rooms and refused to engage in any prison activity. Initially, the guards reacted with intimidation and force, but the warden, fearing outside attention, ordered the guards to back off and allow the protest to flame itself out.

THE BOYS take a break from playing.

SHAKES

I'm not used to getting this much sun.

TOMMY

They give you your release date yet?

SHAKES

Nokes had the letter from the warden. He waved it in front of me then tore it up.

Michael is sitting down, leaning against the wall.

MICHAEL

When do you figure?

SHAKES

End of June, maybe early July.

JOHN

Wish we were going with you. Would have been nice for all of us to walk out together.

MICHAEL

No use thinking about it. We're gonna do a full year, not an hour less.

SHAKES

I could talk to Father Bobby after I get out. Maybe he can make some calls, shave a month or two off.

JOHN

There's nothing to talk about.

SHAKES

There's a lot to talk about. Maybe if people knew what goes on in here they'd make a move.

JOHN

I don't want anybody to know, Shakes.

Tears well up in his eyes.

JOHN

Not Father Bobby, or King Benny or Fat Mancho. Not my mother...not anybody.

TOMMY

I don't either. I wouldn't know what to say to anybody that did know.

SHAKES

(to Michael)

What about you? You gonna stay quiet?

MICHAEL

I can't think of anybody who needs to hear about it. Either they won't believe it or they won't give a shit.

JOHN

I don't even think we should talk about it, once it's over.

MICHAEL

We've got to live with it, and talking makes living it harder.

(after a beat)

The truth stays with us.

The boys look at one another. Michael is right.

JOHN

What's the first thing you're gonna do when you get back?

SHAKES

Go to the library. Sit there for as long as I want. Look through any book I want. Not to have to get up when somebody blows a whistle. Just sit there and listen to the quiet.

TOMMY

You know what I miss the most?

JOHN

What?

TOMMY

Stoops filled with people eating
pretzels and drinking beers out of
paper bags. Music coming out of open
windows and parked cars. Girls smiling
at us from inside their doorways.

SHAKES

Two slices of hot pizza and an Italian
ice at Mimi's.

MICHAEL

Walking with Carol down by the pier,
holding her hand. Kissing her on a
corner. That's hard to beat.

SHAKES

What about you, Johnny?

JOHN

I don't want to be afraid of the dark
again, or hear an open door in the
middle of the night...and I don't want
to be touched. I want to be able to
sleep and not worry about what's gonna
happen or who's coming in my room. If
I can get that, I'll be happy.

MICHAEL

Some day, John. I promise that.

A guard's whistle blows. The boys all start to move off.

88 INT. SHAKES' ROOM - NIGHT

88

TIGHT SHOT OF: PRISON RELEASE FORM

ANOTHER ANGLE on Shakes reading the Release Form.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

I was in my last hours as an inmate at
the Wilkinson Home for Boys. I was
given four copies of my release form.
One was to be handed to the guard at
the end of the hall, the second to be
given to the guard at the main gate, a
third was for the driver of the bus
that would take me back to Manhattan.
The last copy was to be mine, the final
reminder of my time at Wilkinson.

(beat)

I never heard the key turn in the lock,
and I never heard the snap of the
bolt...I only saw a large shadow wash
across the floor of my room.

Nokes enters.

NOKES

You should be asleep. Need all your
rest for the big trip home.

Addison is right behind Nokes. They both appear drunk.

ADDISON

I told you he'd be up.

SHAKES

What do you want?

NOKES

I just want to say goodbye. We all do.
Let you know how much we're gonna miss
having you around here.

88A INT. TUNNEL

88A

As Nokes and Styler lead them through this dark tunnel, John looks over
at Shakes with dead eyes. Tommy has tears running down the side of his
face.

Ferguson follows behind with Michael.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

A part of all of us was left there that night. A night that will never be removed from my mind. The night of July the twenty-fourth, nineteen sixty eight. The summer of love. My last night at The Wilkinson Home for Boys.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO THE EMPTY TUNNEL

88B OMITTED

88B

SCREEN IS BLACK

TITLE CARD READS: FALL 1981

89 EXT. WEST 48TH STREET, HELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

89

SHOT of midtown Manhattan street. TWO YOUNG MEN with black leather jackets enter the SHOT and head toward "McHales".

90 INT. McHALES - NIGHT

90

There's a medium size crowd inside. CAMERA pans the restaurant and comes to rest on the front door.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

At eight twenty five p.m., two men walked through the doors.

ANGLE on the TWO MEN as they approach the bartender, JERRY. He nods in their direction.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

The bartender knew their faces, as most of the neighborhood knew their names. They were two of the founding members of the West Side Boys. They were also its deadliest.

BLOND-HAIRED MAN

(to bartender)

Jerry, two Wild Turkeys with beer chasers.

LORENZO'S NARRATION`

The Blond-haired man had been in and out of jail since he was a teenager. He robbed and killed at will or on command. He was presently a suspect in four unsolved homicides. He was an alcoholic and a cocaine abuser with a fast temper and faster trigger. He once shot a mechanic dead for moving ahead of him on a movie line.

The Two Men sit at the bar. The Dark-haired Man lights a cigarette.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

The Dark-haired Man was equally deadly and had committed his first murder at the age of seventeen. In return he was paid fifty dollars. He drank and did drugs and had a wife he never saw living somewhere in Queens.

Jerry places the drinks before the Two Men on top of the bar. The Blond-haired Man leans his ear towards a COUPLE OF BUSINESSMEN at the other end of the bar.

BLOND-HAIRED MAN

Jerry...

(indicating men at end of bar)

...what are they talking about?

JERRY

Talking about Reagan's speech.

*

BLOND-HAIRED MAN

Bring those two men a drink and run it on my tab. And Jerry....tell them Republicans are not welcome in Hell's Kitchen, and either a political conversion or a change of conversation is in order.

JERRY

Sure thing.

He walks down to the end of the bar, and we can hear him relaying this conversation to the two businessmen. The Blond-haired Man looks at the menu and then hands it to his friend.

BLOND-HAIRED MAN

Order something for me. I'm going to the bathroom.

0000717

He stands up and walks down the narrow strip of floor separating the booths from the bar. A MAN IN A SECURITY UNIFORM sits alone in the last booth, eating meatloaf. As the Blond-haired Man passes, he looks at the Man.

The Man looks up and they both stare at one another for a few seconds.

MAN IN BOOTH

Can I help you with something, chief?

BLOND-HAIRED MAN

Not right now. Enjoy the rest of your meal.

Then the Blond-haired Man enters the men's room.

91 INT. MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

91

The Blond-haired Man takes off his gloves, turns on the cold water and splashes water on his face. Then he looks at himself in the mirror and smiles.

92 INT. BAR - NIGHT

92

The Dark-haired Man sits at the bar, pouring himself a beer. The Blond-haired Man comes back, sits next to him and lights a cigarette.

DARK-HAIRED MAN

I ordered brisket on a roll with fries and two baskets of soda bread. I know you like that shit. That okay by you?

The Blond-haired Man is looking into the mirror, his eyes riveted on the Man in the booth finishing his meatloaf.

BLOND-HAIRED MAN

Look in the last booth. Take a good look.

The Dark-haired Man turns on the stool and stares at the Man in the security uniform. Then he turns back.

DARK-HAIRED MAN

No? Is this possible? You sure it's really him?

BLOND-HAIRED MAN

You know me. I never forget a friend.

They pull their guns out from underneath their jackets and rake the slides, loading a round in the chambers. They slip the guns into their pockets. *

DARK-HAIRED MAN

This is amazing.

BLOND-HAIRED MAN

Hello. It's been a long time.

MAN IN BOOTH

Who the fuck are you guys?

The Two Men sit down in the booth.

MAN IN BOOTH

And who the fuck asked you to sit down?

DARK-HAIRED MAN

I thought you'd be happy to see us. I guess I was wrong.

BLOND-HAIRED MAN

I always thought you'd do better. All that training, all that time you put in...just to guard somebody else's money. Seems like a waste.

MAN IN BOOTH

I'm asking you for the last time. What the fuck do you want?

The Blond-haired Man takes off his gloves and puts them in the front pocket of his leather jacket.

BLOND-HAIRED MAN

Take your time. It'll come to you.

The Man in the booth stares at him for a long beat.

BLOND-HAIRED MAN

I can see how you would forget us. We were just something for you and your friends to play with.

DARK-HAIRED MAN

It's a little harder for us to forget. You gave us so much more to remember.

BLOND-HAIRED MAN

You're not quite placing us are you, chief? Let me help you. You're looking at John Reilly and Tommy Marcano.

MAN IN BOOTH

That was a long time ago.

JOHN (BLOND-HAIRED MAN)

We're not kids now.

MAN IN BOOTH

So what do you want?

JOHN

What I've always wanted, Nokes. To watch you die.

0000717

John and Tommy get to their feet, a gun in each hand. All movement in the pub ceases.

TOMMY (DARK-HAIRED MAN)

Too bad you ordered the meatloaf. The brisket's really good here, only you'll never know it.

NOKES

You were scared little pricks, both of you...all of you. Scared shitless. I tried to make you tough, make you hard, but it was a waste of time.

TOMMY

I had you all wrong then. All this time I figured you just liked fucking and beating up little boys.

NOKES

You're gonna burn in hell! You two motherfuckers are gonna burn in hell!

JOHN

After you.

He points his gun under the table and shoots Nokes right in the crotch. Nokes screams in pain.

TOMMY

Did that hurt, Nokes?

Tommy shoots Nokes in each arm. Then John steps around and shoots him in each leg. Tommy shoots him three times in the chest, and finally John aims at Nokes' head and shoots him once between the eyes.

ANGLE on Jerry, the bartender, his eyes turned away, and the Two Buinessmen looking at the scene, terrified.

A MIDDLE-AGED MAN AND WOMAN sit in their booth, frozen in fear, while other patrons duck for cover under tables.

John and Tommy put their guns back in their pockets, take one final look at Nokes and then turn to leave.

*
*

TOMMY

(to bartender)

Hey, Jerry, be a pal, would you?

Jerry is shaken, and not wanting to look over at the dead man.

JERRY

Name it.

TOMMY

Make those brisket sandwiches to go.

93 INT. TOMBS - DAY

93

Shakes walks down a corridor.

JUDGE V/O
How do you plead?

JOHN V/O
Not guilty, your Honor.

JUDGE V/O
Thomas Marcano?

TOMMY V/O
Not guilty, your Honor.

JUDGE V/O
John Reilly and Thomas Marcano, you are
hereby held without bail.

LORENZO'S NARRATION
In all the years since Wilkinson's, we
had never once spoke to each other
about what happened there. We remained
caring friends, but the friendship had
been altered as we traveled down our
separate paths. Still, we were friends.

94 INT. WAITING AREA

94

Shakes is seated in a waiting area.

LORENZO'S NARRATION
By the time of Noke's murder, the
friendship had become less intimate,
but no less intense.

John and Tommy are being led over to Shakes, both in chains and cuffs.
They sit down and both look to Shakes, pleased with themselves.

LORENZO'S NARRATION
We accepted each other for what we
were. Few questions were asked. No
demands were made.

JOHN
(to Shakes)
One down, Shakes. One down.

HARD CUT to the roaring sound and energy of a train screaming into an
elevated station.

95 OMITTED

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96 EXT. ELEVATED STATION - NIGHT

96

Shakes steps out of one of the cars. No one is on the platform. The train pulls away. He stands alone.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

At the time of Nokes's shooting,
Michael was working as an Assistant New
York District Attorney.

He looks around for someone but no one is there.

Shakes comes down the stairs of the platform. He starts to walk away from the station unsure of where he's going.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

I got a call that he wanted to meet at
45th Street in Queens, but he didn't
say where...and he hung up.

WE SEE Michael standing in the shadows, smoking a cigarette.

MICHAEL

What'd they have to say?

SHAKES

Don't you think this is a little cloak
and dagger?

MICHAEL

What about Nokes? They talk about him?

SHAKES

John did, but not by name. All he said
was: "One down, Shakes".

MICHAEL

I hear they hired Danny Snyder? That
right?

SHAKES

That's temporary. King Benny's gonna
move in one of his lawyers.

MICHAEL

No, Snyder's perfect.

SHAKES

Perfect? The guy's a fall-down drunk.

MICHAEL

That's why he's perfect.

SHAKES

What are you talking about?

MICHAEL

You covering this story for your newspaper?

SHAKES

I'm a timetable clerk, Mikey - ask me what movie's playing at what time. I'm lucky they let me in the building.

Michael doesn't say anything. A beat.

SHAKES

Wanna get a cup of coffee?

MICHAEL

We gotta take a walk.

97 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

97

Michael and Shakes walk and talk, the elevated platform above them.

MICHAEL

I'm gonna prosecute John and Tommy in an open court.

SHAKES

Are you fucking nuts? They're your friends...your friends. You heartless fuck!

Michael smiles.

MICHAEL

Before you take a swing, Shakes, hear me out.

SHAKES

Do something smart, call in sick tomorrow. It might save your life.

MICHAEL

I'm not taking this case to win. I'm taking it to lose.

Shakes looks at him and can't figure out what Michael's up to.

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MICHAEL

It's pay-back time, Shakes. We can get back at them now. John and Tommy started it, and you and I can finish it.

SHAKES

What the hell are you talking about?

MICHAEL

Shakes, when's the last time you read "The Count of Monte Cristo"?

SHAKES

Dunno. It's gotta be ten years.

MICHAEL

Revenge. Sweet lasting revenge. Now it's time for all of us to get a taste.

SHAKES

You crazy bastard.

A sense of excitement comes over Shakes. He throws his hands up in the air, a sense of relief and joy. The El train speeds loudly overhead.

MINUTES LATER

Michael and Shakes walk along.

MICHAEL

I asked for the murder case - said I was from the same neighborhood as the accused, knew the mentality of the area, would be able to keep the witnesses from running away, hold the case together - and win it. There's no need to worry about the link with Wilkinson's. Like all juvenile records in the state, ours were destroyed seven years after our release.

Michael looks at him very carefully. A beat.

MICHAEL

Freeing John and Tommy is not enough, Shakes. I gotta go after the other guards. I need to go after Wilkinsons. Bring it all down.

98 EXT. UNDER AN OPEN SHED - LATER

98

TIGHT SHOT of a manila folder being placed in a set of hands.

PULL BACK to reveal Michael and Shakes crouched under the shed looking through the folder. The rain is coming down hard.

MICHAEL

Adam Styler, plainclothes cop, assigned to narcotics in Queens. Shakes down dealers for dope and cash. He's got a cocaine problem. The rest of the folder contains other personal information.

Michael hands Shakes a second manila folder.

MICHAEL

Henry Addison now works for the Mayor of the City of New York. He's a community outreach director in Brooklyn. His sexual habits haven't changed...still likes sex with young boys.

Shakes is shocked.

MICHAEL

Addison belongs to a group of well-heeled pedophiles. They like to party together three times a month, paying out big dollars for all-nighters with the boys they buy.

SHAKES

How long you been working on this, Mikey?

Michael pulls out another folder.

MICHAEL

Ralph Ferguson...he's a clerk working in a social service agency on Long Island. He's recently divorced and he's got one child. On weekends, he teaches Catholic Sunday School.

SHAKES

He sounds clean.

MICHAEL

That's exactly why I want him. I'm gonna call Ferguson in as a character witness...talk to him about his best friend, Sean Nokes. Once I've got him on the stand, I can open the door to Wilkinson's.

*
*
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*
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SHAKES

What about John and Tommy? You want them to know anything about this?

MICHAEL

Nothing. It'll be better in court if they don't know.

99 EXT. STREET - LATER

99

LONG SHOT of Michael and Shakes walking under the elevated train, after the rain. Michael hands Shakes some keys.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

The "not guilty" verdict had to be a verdict that no-one would dare question. Danny Snyder was to remain as Tommy and John's attorney. We needed to keep him sober and alert, and too scared to tell anyone what we were up to. Michael had set up a system of messengers and drop boxes, and I would pass information back to him in a similar manner. For this plan to succeed, we needed total secrecy of the only people we completely trusted. After this night, Michael would not be available to any of us. The only time we would see him, would be in court.

ANGLE ON SHAKES

SHAKES

I guess this is it, huh?

MICHAEL

One more thing.

SHAKES

What?

MICHAEL

You've got four witnesses who say they saw the shooting and are willing to testify. We need to knock that number down.

SHAKES

I'll talk with King Benny.

MICHAEL

I'll take two, if you can get us one for our side.

SHAKES

One what?

MICHAEL

One witness. A witness who will put John and Tommy somewhere else on the night of the murder. Anywhere else. A witness they can't touch.

SHAKES

Don't they have a name for that?

MICHAEL

A judge would call it perjury.

SHAKES

And what are we calling it?

MICHAEL

A favor.

100 EXT. HELL'S KITCHEN - KING BENNY'S PLACE - DAY

100

WE HEAR a Dean Martin song playing.

101 INT. KING BENNY'S PLACE - DAY

101

As the Dean Martin music continues, King Benny stands behind the bar drinking a large white mug of hot coffee reading a three page letter. He walks over to the window and looks out to the Hell's Kitchen street.

KING BENNY

Tony!

Tony looks over. He's sitting with four other men counting morning betting slips. He gets up and walks over to King Benny.

KING BENNY

Bring Danny Snyder to see me.

TONY

Danny Snyder, the lawyer?

KING BENNY

You know more than one Danny Snyder?

TONY

No, King.

KING BENNY

Then bring me the one you know.

He walks away from the window and puts his cup down on the bar. Then he takes one final look at the letter and picks up a book of matches. He lights a match and puts it to the letter, drops it in the sink and watches it burn. Then he laughs.

102 INT. FAT MANCHO'S CANDY STORE - DAY

102

TIGHT SHOT of a hand reaching for Juicy Fruit gum.

FAT MANCHO O/C

You gonna pay me for that, you little prick?

SHOT WIDENS to include Fat Mancho and Shakes.

SHAKES

I never did before...why ruin a good habit.

Shakes moves towards the door.

SHAKES

I'll wait for you outside.

103 EXT. FAT MANCHO'S CANDY STORE - DAY

103

Shakes stands in front of the Candy Store opening a piece of gum. Fat Mancho comes out carrying two wooden crates for them to sit on, and a sweaty Yoo-Hoo for him to drink. They both sit down. Shakes points to the fire hydrant in front.

SHAKES

Kids still use that in the summer?

FAT MANCHO

It still gets hot, don't it? That pump's the only beach they know.

SHAKES

King Benny's been around to see you?

FAT MANCHO

Some fucking team we putting together. A drunk lawyer on one side, a fucking kid lawyer on the other. A paper boy making like Dick Tracy. Four sets of eye balls swear they saw the whole thing, and the two on trial killed more people than cancer. That motherfucker Custer had a better shot at a walk.

SHAKES

Nobody's expecting it. That's the biggest card in our favor. Need you to pull a few strings, Fat Man.

FAT MANCHO

This goes bad, it ain't a fucking year upstate in a kid jail.

SHAKES

There's no connection between Nokes and us. The police think it's a drug related homicide.

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FAT MANCHO

If you get caught on this, you're
looking straight at serious.

SHAKES

There's no choice. Not for us.

Fat Mancho looks towards the fire hydrant. It's spraying water.

0000717

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE:

104 EXT. STREET - FIRE HYDRANT

104

WE SEE a YOUNG JOHN run through the cascading water.

BACK TO PRESENT TIME:

Fat Mancho looks at Shakes.

FAT MANCHO

They ain't good boys any more. They're killers now, cold as stone.

SHAKES

I know. I know what they were and I know what they are. It's not about that.

FAT MANCHO

I read that shitty paper you're working on. Read it every day, still ain't seen your fucking name anywhere.

SHAKES

Be patient. Some day you will. Just keep on buying it.

FAT MANCHO

I don't buy shit. I never put any of my money in a stranger's pocket.

Shakes is amused by him.

105 EXT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

105 *

A shiny black cadillac moves through the streets. We notice for the first time that the neighborhood has changed since the time the four boys were young. We see graffiti and the buildings are run down. The cadillac pulls over to the curb. The passenger door opens and King Benny steps out and walks into one of the run-down buildings.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Within days of Michael taking the case, the West Side Boys got a visit from King Benny.

106 INT/EXT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

106 *

CAMERA shoots through a dirty window as WE SEE King Benny talking to members of the West Side Boys gang. They are dressed in black leather outfits.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

The King requested the verbal abuse directed toward Michael continue, but there was never to be a death move against him. The hit on Michael Sullivan, if there was to be one, could only come from King Benny.

107 EXT. HELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

107

There's a lot of street activity, even though the air is cold. WE SEE a WOMAN in her 20's walking down the street.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

The underground word had spread through the streets with the speed of a late-night bullet. King Benny's "sleepers" were making their play.

108 INT. APARTMENT HOUSE - NIGHT

108

Shakes is sitting on the floor outside the door of an apartment, holding a six-pack. He seems tired and stares vacantly into space.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

"Sleepers" was a street name for anyone who spent time in a juvenile facility.

WOMAN'S VOICE O/C

Mug me, or marry me, Shakes...

The voice brings Shakes out of his trance.

ANGLE on the YOUNG WOMAN. It is the same woman we saw on the street. This is CAROL MARTINEZ.

CAROL

...I'm too tired for anything else.

SHAKES

Will you settle for a couple of beers, Carol?

CAROL

If that's your best offer.

SHAKES

I'll throw in a hug and a kiss.

CAROL

Deal.

He stands, puts his hands around her waist, and holds her close. There's a moment of tenderness between them.

CAROL

You need something, don't you, Shakes?

109 INT. CAROL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

109

TIGHT SHOT of a hand thumbing through albums.

CAROL O/C

You pour the beer.

ANOTHER ANGLE of the apartment. It is clean and orderly, filled with books and framed posters of old movies. The kitchen has a small table in the center, and a large cut-out of Humphrey Bogart smoking a cigarette is taped to the fridge.

ANGLE on Shakes pouring beer into glasses.

SHAKES

You got any Frankie Valli?

CAROL

You're so old fashioned, Shakes. Valli was gone before the Pill.

SHAKES

Frankie Valli forever.

The SOUND OF DRUMS is heard. The music immediately catches his ear. It's Frankie Valli's "Oh, What A Night". He smiles.

Carol does a few struts to the music as she moves over to Shakes and takes the beer.

CAROL

You look tired. They don't give you time for sleep on this new job of yours?

Shakes holds up his beer glass and toasts. He takes a sip of it.

SHAKES

So, how much do you know?

CAROL

Just what the neighborhood says, and what I read in papers like yours.

SHAKES

What does the neighborhood say?

CAROL

That they're going to put Johnny and Tommy away, and that their best friend is going to be the one to do it.

SHAKES

You believe that?

CAROL

It's hard not to, Shakes. Unless we all have it wrong, he did take the fucking case.

SHAKES

Yeah, he did take the case.

CAROL

Then what else is there to say?

She walks over to the window and looks out onto the street. She suddenly becomes upset.

SHAKES

You know Michael very well...maybe even better than I do.

CAROL

I thought I did. Now I don't know.

SHAKES

You do know, Carol.

CAROL

For God's sake, he even went in and asked for it. What the hell kind of friend is that?

SHAKES

The best kind. The kind who will throw away whatever he's got just to help his friends.

CAROL

What are you telling me, Shakes?

SHAKES

You know this neighborhood, Carol. Everything is either a shake down or a scam. Why should this be any different?

She looks at him and understands that this is about something else.

CAROL

I'll get us another beer.

She walks into the kitchen.

CAROL

You want a sandwich with it.

SHAKES

Got any fresh mozzarella and basil?

CAROL

How about a couple of slices of old ham
on stale bread?

SHAKES

With mustard?

CAROL

Mayo.

SHAKES

You got me.

LATER

Carol and Shakes relax on the couch. There are empty beer bottles and empty plates on the table in front of them.

CAROL

It just happened. Michael was living
in Queens, working and going to school.
I was here doing the same. We'd go
weeks without seeing each other. After
a while it was easier to let it go.

SHAKES

You still love him?

CAROL

I don't think about it, Shakes.
(after a beat)
If I did, I'd say yes.

SHAKES

You're with John, now?

CAROL

As much as anybody can be with John.
The man I know is not the boy you
remember. But there's something
special about John. You just have to
look harder to see it.

(beat)

Why didn't you ever ask me out?

SHAKES

You were Mikey's girl. He got to you
first.

CAROL

And after Mikey?

SHAKES

I never thought you'd say yes.

CAROL

Well, you were wrong, Shakes.

SHAKES

Will you say yes to me now, no matter what I ask?

CAROL

Yes. What do you want me to do?

SHAKES

Working at Social Services you have a lot of access to city files...

CAROL

Yes.

SHAKES

From time to time we're gonna need you to get us a little information.

Carol nods "yes".

SHAKES

You visit John?

CAROL

Once a week, for about an hour.

SHAKES

Good. Keep that up. Just don't tell him you've seen me...in fact, don't tell him anything. The more it looks hopeless to him, the better this might work.

110 INT. COUNTY JAIL - NIGHT

110

CAMERA PANS the cells. WE SEE John in prison uniform, lying on his bunk, staring at the ceiling. Then CAMERA picks up Tommy, also in prison garb, asleep on his bunk.

111 INT. NEWSPAPER OFFICE - DAY

111

Shakes walks into the office, past busy newspaper reporters, and heads for a small cubicle in the back.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Michael's plan relied heavily on Hell's Kitchen to deliver information and keep quiet. Both were skills the neighborhood had in abundance. We had set up a simple method of communication. If Michael was sending, messages were left at work for me to call my non-existent girlfriend, Gloria.

Shakes enters his cubicle. CAMERA PANS his cluttered desk and lands on a handwritten office telephone message. It reads: "Call Gloria".

12 INT. SACRED HEART CHURCH - DAY

112

WE SEE Tony, one of King Benny's men, enter the empty church.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Once I received the signal, I would send one of King Benny's men to pick up an envelope no later than noon the next day, at one of three designated spots.

He takes a seat in one of the pews, and picks up a prayerbook. He flips through the pages and finds a brown envelope inside. He sticks it in his pocket, gets up from the pew, crosses himself and leaves.

113 EXT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT - BREAK OF DAWN

113

*

A YOUNG BOY, around 12, walks along the street with a copy of the New York Times under his arm.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

If I needed to get word to Michael, I would have someone from the neighborhood pick up an early edition of the New York Times, write the word "Edmund" on the upper right-hand corner of the Metro section, and drop it in front of Michael's apartment.

114 INT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT - BREAK OF DAWN

114

Michael picks up the New York Times from outside his door, checks through the Metro Section and sees "Edmund" written in the right-hand corner of the newspaper.

115 OMITTED

115

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116 OMITTED

116

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117 INT. ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

117

Michael is sitting at his typewriter.

TIGHT SHOT of typewriter and words being typed on a sheet of paper:
"Did you have anything to drink at lunch?"

CAMERA PANS Michael's desk to show pages and pages of typewritten questions.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Our margin of error was zero.

118 INT. FAT MANCHO'S CANDY STORE

118

TIGHT SHOT OF FAT MANCHO

Fat Mancho is talking to someone off camera.

FAT MANCHO

You want a Rolls Royce, you go to
 England or wherever the fuck they make
 it. You want champagne, you go see the
 French. You want money, find a Jew.
 But you want dirt, scum buried under a
 rock, a secret nobody wants anybody to
 know, you want that and you want that
 fast, there's only one place to go -
 Hell's Kitchen. It's the lost and
 found of shit. They lose it and we
 find it.

119 EXT. DE WITT CLINTON PARK - DAY

119

The weather is cold. King Benny and Shakes sit on a park bench. King Benny is feeding seeds to a circle of pigeons, a coffee cup rests next to his right leg together with a bottle of Sambuca Romana.

SHAKES

I didn't know you liked pigeons.

KING BENNY

I like anything that don't talk.

SHAKES

The case goes to trial first Monday in
 the New Year. It'll be a small story
 in the papers tomorrow.

KING BENNY

You only got two witnesses who are
 gonna testify. Two others changed
 their minds. That won't be in the
 papers tomorrow.

SHAKES

Which two?

KING BENNY

The suits at the bar.

SHAKES

That leaves the couple in the booth.

KING BENNY

For now.

SHAKES

Everything else is falling into place?

MICHAEL

I have to prove to you that the two men who stand accused, killed a man named Sean Nokes in cold blood without any apparent motive. I will present to you evidence, and offer into account testimony to prove that. I will place them at the scene of the crime. I will bring witnesses to the stand who will confirm that they were there on that deadly night. I will present to you enough evidence that you can then go into the jury room and come back with a clear decision that's beyond a reasonable doubt. Now, I know you all know what that means since you probably watch as much television as I do.

THREE of the WOMEN JURORS smile, and a MALE JUROR laughs out loud and points a finger.

MALE JUROR

I hear that.

JUDGE WEISMAN

Let me remind one and all, that this is a courtroom, not a living room. With that in mind, would the jurors please refrain from making any further comments.

MICHAEL

My fault, your Honor. I gave the impression that a response was necessary. It won't happen again.

JUDGE WEISMAN

I'm sure it won't, Counselor. Proceed.

ANGLE on Carol and Shakes who are amused by this exchange.

ANGLE ON MICHAEL as he continues.

MICHAEL

The past history of these two young men is not important, and not at issue in this case. Violent or peaceful, criminal or honest, saints or sinners, none of it matters. What does matter, is what happened on the night of the murder.

CAMERA PANS

Danny Snyder is making his opening statement.

O'CONNOR

John Reilly and Thomas Marcano are two innocent pawns, quickly arrested and just as quickly prosecuted on the slightest threads of evidence.

SHAKES

(whispering to Carol)

He got their names right...that's a good beginning.

122 EXT. SACRED HEART CHURCH - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING 122

123 INT. SACRED HEART CHURCH - NIGHT 123

Shakes is kneeling in prayer in one of the pews. He pulls a rosary out of his pocket. As he drapes it over his hands, WE HEAR:

NOKES O/C

What do these things do?

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE:

124 INT. WILKINSON HOME FOR BOYS - GUARDS' QUARTERS - DAY 124

We're back in time to a Young Shakes, Nokes, Styler, Addison and Ferguson. A cardboard box is on the desk, and Nokes is holding rosary beads in his hand.

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YOUNG SHAKES

They're for praying.

NOKES

(looking through the box)

Look at all this shit. What does your fucking mother think, that her son is in the army?

He pulls out a small jar of roasted peppers in olive oil and a bottle of artichoke hearts.

YOUNG SHAKES

The Warden's supposed to clear the mail, not the guards.

NOKES

Well, the Warden ain't around, and when he ain't around, we clear it.

STYLER

Ain't none of it on the approved list.

ADDISON

I'm sure your momma got a copy of that list.

YOUNG SHAKES
My mother doesn't speak English.

NOKES
Don't blame us for your being stupid.

YOUNG SHAKES
She didn't look to do anything wrong.
Can I have the box please?

NOKES
Sure. The box is yours. What's in it,
is ours. That seems fair.

Nokes looks at Shakes and hands him the rosary beads.

NOKES
You gonna let us hear you pray?

YOUNG SHAKES
I'd like to do it alone.

STYLER
Just this once, let's hear you pray.

Shakes refuses.

NOKES
Maybe he needs something to pray about.

He reaches under his desk and pulls out a black baton. He hands the baton to Styler.

STYLER
Put your hands on the desk and lay them
down flat. Now, start thinking up some
prayers.

NOKES
Spread your legs apart.

Styler starts to pull down Shakes' pants.

PRESENT TIME:

125 INT. SACRED HEART CHURCH - NIGHT

125

Adult Shakes is holding onto the rosary beads, lost in thought,
hearing Nokes' voice in his head.

NOKES O/C
We can't hear no prayers.

FERGUSON O/C
You better start, before Styler loses
his baton up your ass.

Shakes' face shows he is re-living the pain of the past. He starts to pray.

SHAKES

"Our father which art in heaven...

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE:

126 INT. WILKINSON HOME FOR BOYS - GUARDS' QUARTERS - DAY 126

Young Shakes, his hands on the desk, is clutching the rosary beads. Nokes, Styler, Addison and Ferguson watch him as he prays.

STYLER

Nice and loud...pray nice and loud.

TIGHT SHOT of Young Shakes, tears streaming down his face.

YOUNG SHAKES

...hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done...

PRESENT TIME:

127 INT. SACRED HEART CHURCH - NIGHT 127

Shakes holding the rosary and praying.

SHAKES

...on earth as it is in Heaven. And forgive us our trespasses...

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE:

128 INT. WILKINSON HOME FOR BOYS - GUARDS' QUARTERS - DAY 128

TIGHT SHOT of Young Shakes gripping the rosary beads tightly, a pained expression on his face.

YOUNG SHAKES

...as we forgive those who trespass against us...

ANGLE on Addison, Styler, Nokes and Ferguson watching Young Shakes.

ADDISON

That part must be about us.

NOKES

(to Young Shakes)

Louder! Louder, fucker! Make like you're in a fucking church.

PRESENT TIME:

129 INT. SACRED HEART CHURCH - NIGHT

129

Shakes is holding the rosary tightly, tears running down his face.

SHAKES

...and lead us not into temptation, but
deliver us from evil...

130 EXT. SACRED HEART CHURCH - NIGHT

130

Shakes walks out of the Church and sees Carol sitting on the church steps.

SHAKES

Sorry I'm late. I lost all track of
time.

CAROL

We supposed to wait here for him?

SHAKES

He's waiting for us at his place.

He nods his head toward a red brick building next to the church.

SHAKES

The rectory.

CAROL

Oh, my God! Oh, my God!

SHAKES

Not quite...but it's close.

131 INT. RECTORY - NIGHT

131

Father Bobby sits in a recliner in his small, book-lined first floor room. He has his back to a slightly-open window. He lights a cigarette and takes a deep drag. Shakes sits on the windowsill in the corner of the room that looks down onto the schoolyard. Carol stands.

FATHER BOBBY

How was court today?

SHAKES

Like the first round of a fight.
Everybody just feeling one another out.

FATHER BOBBY

How do the boys look?

CAROL

Like they wished they were someplace
else.

FATHER BOBBY

It's the sheep that stray that you most want back.

SHAKES

It's not too late, Father. We still have a chance to bring in a couple of stray sheep. One more chance.

He gets up and moves toward Father Bobby.

FATHER BOBBY

Is that one chance legal?

SHAKES

Last chances never are.

FATHER BOBBY

King Benny behind this?

SHAKES

He's in it, but he's not calling the shots.

FATHER BOBBY

Who is?

SHAKES

Michael.

Father Bobby takes a deep breath and leans forward in his chair.

FATHER BOBBY

I should have smelled it. The minute Michael went for the case, I should have figured something was up.

SHAKES

It's a good plan. Michael's got it all covered. Every base you look at, he's got it covered.

FATHER BOBBY

Not every base, Shakes. You're still short something or else you wouldn't be here.

Shakes smiles.

SHAKES

Don't shit a shitter, right?

FATHER BOBBY

That's right. So spill it. Where do you come up short.

SHAKES

A witness. Somebody to take the stand and say they were with John and Tommy the night of the murder.

FATHER BOBBY

And you figured a priest would be perfect?

SHAKES

Not just any priest.

FATHER BOBBY

You're asking me to lie. Asking me to swear to God, and then to lie.

SHAKES

I'm asking you to help two of your boys.

FATHER BOBBY

Did they kill Nokes? Did they walk into the Pub and kill him, like they say?

SHAKES

Yes. They killed him exactly like they said.

00170000

Father Bobby gets up from his chair and walks over to his desk. From a middle drawer he pulls out a bottle of Dewar's whisky.

FATHER BOBBY

This is some favor you're asking me.

SHAKES

You always said if there was ever anything I needed, to come and ask you.

FATHER BOBBY

(pouring himself a drink)
I was thinking more along the lines of Yankee tickets.

SHAKES

I don't need Yankee tickets, Father. I need a witness.

FATHER BOBBY

What about the life that was taken, Shakes? What's that worth?

SHAKES

To me, nothing.

FATHER BOBBY

Why not, Shakes? Tell me.

He pours another glass of whisky and hands it to Shakes. He looks over to Carol, she nods "yes", and he pours her a glass.

WE SEE Shakes talking intimately to Father Bobby and Carol. They listen intently.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

If Father Bobby was going to be involved, he deserved to know what he was getting into. If he wasn't, I trusted that the truth would go no further than his room. I thought Carol needed to know as well.

132 EXT. RECTORY - NIGHT

132

LONG SHOT of the door of the Rectory.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

I told them about the torture, the beatings...and the rapes. I told them about the four frightened boys who prayed to Father Bobby's God for help that never came. I told them everything.

00170000

The door opens and Carol and Shakes exit saying goodbye to Father Bobby. WE CAN hear them talking quietly in the distance.

FATHER BOBBY

Got a decision to make. All I can do is pray that it's the right one.

SHAKES

It will be, Father, whichever way you go.

FATHER BOBBY

(to Carol)

The boys were on target about you.

He reaches out and holds her hand.

CAROL

About what?

FATHER BOBBY

They always said you had balls, and they were right.

CAROL

I'll take that as a compliment, especially coming from a priest.

Carol and Shakes walk away. Father Bobby watches them for a beat, then closes the door.

133 INT. COURTROOM - DAY

133

ANGLE on MRS. SALINAS, a woman in her 40's, on the witness stand.

MICHAEL O/C

Mrs. Salinas, how often have you had
dinner at McHales?

*

MRS. SALINAS

Just that one night.

ANOTHER ANGLE on Michael.

MICHAEL

Who decided to eat there?

MRS. SALINAS

I did.

MICHAEL

Why?

MRS. SALINAS

I read about it in a magazine. They
said it was colorful.

MICHAEL

And was it?

MRS. SALINAS

Up until the shooting.

ANGLE ON Shakes looking over at the defense table. John and Tommy
both smile. O'Connor is furiously scribbling notes on a legal pad.

CAROL

(whispering to Shakes)

What's he taking notes for? He knows
the questions he's supposed to ask.

SHAKES

(also whispering)

Maybe he forgot them...left them on a
bar stool.

BACK ON MICHAEL questioning Mrs. Salinas.

MICHAEL

Did you have anything to drink?

MRS. SALINAS

We ordered a bottle of red wine, a
Chianti I believe.

MICHAEL

That's all?

3 INT. COURTROOM - DAY

133

ANGLE on MRS. SALINAS, a woman in her 40's, on the witness stand.

MICHAEL O/C

Mrs. Salinas, how often have you had dinner at McHales?

MRS. SALINAS

Just that one night.

ANOTHER ANGLE on Michael.

MICHAEL

Who decided to eat there?

MRS. SALINAS

I did.

MICHAEL

Why?

MRS. SALINAS

I read about it in a magazine. They said it was colorful.

MICHAEL

And was it?

MRS. SALINAS

Up until the shooting.

ANGLE ON Shakes looking over at the defense table. John and Tommy both smile. Snyder is furiously scribbling notes on a legal pad.

CAROL

(whispering to Shakes)

What's he taking notes for? He knows the questions he's supposed to ask.

SHAKES

(also whispering)

Maybe he forgot them...left them on a bar stool.

BACK ON MICHAEL questioning Mrs. Salinas.

MICHAEL

Did you have anything to drink?

MRS. SALINAS

We ordered a bottle of red wine, a Chianti I believe.

MICHAEL

That's all?

MRS. SALINAS

Yes, that's all.

MICHAEL

Did you notice the two men who walked in shortly after you sat down for dinner?

MRS. SALINAS

I heard them come in.

MICHAEL

Did you see their faces when they came in?

MRS. SALINAS

No, not when they came in.

MICHAEL

Why not?

MRS. SALINAS

I was talking to David. When I finally looked up, they had walked past me.

MICHAEL

Did you notice their faces when they went to the bar?

MRS. SALINAS

From the side. I could see them in profile.

MICHAEL

Both of them?

MRS. SALINAS

Yes, both of them.

MICHAEL

Did you see them approach the booth where Mr. Nokes was sitting?

MRS. SALINAS

I noticed it, yes.

MICHAEL

Did you hear what was said between them?

MRS. SALINAS

No.

MICHAEL

Did you see them pull out their guns.

MRS. SALINAS

No.

MICHAEL

Did you hear the shots?

MRS. SALINAS

Yes. I heard the shots.

MICHAEL

What did they do after the shooting?

MRS. SALINAS

They walked out of the Pub as if nothing had happened.

MICHAEL

And at that time, did you see their faces clearly?

MRS. SALINAS

Yes. I looked up as they walked by.

MICHAEL

Are you positive of that, Mrs. Salinas?

MRS. SALINAS

Yes, very positive.

MICHAEL

And are the two men you saw in McHales in this room today?

*

MRS. SALINAS

Yes, they are.

MICHAEL

Point them out to me, please.

MRS. SALINAS

(points at John and Tommy)
They're sitting right over there.

MICHAEL

Your Honor, will the record reflect that Mrs. Salinas identified defendants John Reilly and Thomas Marcano as the two men in question.

JUDGE WEISMAN

Noted.

MICHAEL

I have no further questions.

JUDGE WEISMAN
(to Danny Snyder)
Counsel, are you ready to proceed?

ANGLE on Danny Snyder.

SNYDER
Yes, your Honor. The defense is ready.

Snyder wears a grey suit that needs cleaning, and a white shirt tight around his neck.

His blue tie is stopped at an Oliver Hardy length and his shoes are badly scuffed.

ANGLE on Shakes and Carol.

SHAKES
(whispers to Carol)
He's got that Columbo look down. All
he's missing is the cigar.

CAROL
It's probably in his pocket, still lit.

ANGLE on Danny Snyder.

SNYDER
Good morning. I just have a few
questions. I won't take too much of
your time, Mrs. Salinas.

MRS. SALINAS
Thank you.

SNYDER
You said you only had wine to drink
with dinner. Is that correct?

MRS. SALINAS
Yes.

SNYDER
Are you sure about that? Are you sure
that was all you ordered...one bottle
of wine?

MRS. SALINAS
Yes. A bottle of red Chianti.

SNYDER
Had you anything to drink prior to
that?

MRS. SALINAS
What do you mean, prior?

SNYDER

At lunch maybe. Did you have anything to drink at lunch?

MRS. SALINAS

Yes, I did.

SNYDER

What did you have, Mrs. Salinas?

MRS. SALINAS

I went shopping and stopped for lunch at a place on Madison Avenue.

SNYDER

I didn't ask where you went, I asked what you had to drink at lunch.

MRS. SALINAS

A martini.

SNYDER

And what else?

MRS. SALINAS

And some wine.

SNYDER

How much wine?

MRS. SALINAS

One glass, maybe two.

SNYDER

Closer to two?

MRS. SALINAS

Yes. Probably two.

SNYDER

What time did you have lunch, Mrs. Salinas?

MICHAEL

Objection, your Honor. What Mrs. Salinas did on the day of the murder, has nothing to do with what she saw the night of the murder.

TIGHT SHOT OF TYPEWRITTEN QUESTION ON SCREEN:

"How much she had to drink does, your Honor".

BACK TO SNYDER

SNYDER

How much she had to drink does, your Honor.

JUDGE WEISMAN

Overruled.

SNYDER

What time, Mrs. Salinas, did you have lunch?

MRS. SALINAS

About one-thirty.

SNYDER

And what did you have for lunch?

MRS. SALINAS

A salad.

SNYDER

A martini, two glasses of wine, and a salad. Is that correct?

MRS. SALINAS

Yes, that's correct.

SNYDER

And then you had wine at dinner, about six hours later? Is that right?

MRS. SALINAS

Yes, that's right.

SNYDER

How much wine did you have to drink by the time my clients allegedly walked into McHales?

MRS. SALINAS

(getting angry)

Two glasses.

SNYDER

So, would you say four glasses of wine and a martini in a six hour period is a lot for you to drink?

MRS. SALINAS

Yes, it is.

SNYDER

Had you ever heard a gun fired, Mrs. Salinas...prior to the night in question, that is?

MRS. SALINAS

No, I hadn't.

SNYDER

How would you describe the sound?

MRS. SALINAS

Loud. Like fireworks.

SNYDER

Did the sound frighten you?

MRS. SALINAS

Very much.

SNYDER

Did you close your eyes?

MRS. SALINAS

At first...until the shooting stopped.

SNYDER

Did you think the men who did the shooting were going to kill everyone in the Pub?

MRS. SALINAS

I didn't know what to think. All I knew was a man had been shot.

SNYDER

Did you think you might be shot dead by two cold blooded killers?

MRS. SALINAS

Yes...yes, I did.

SNYDER

Yet, despite that fear, despite that risk to your life, you looked at their faces as they left the Pub. Is that correct?

MRS. SALINAS

Yes, that's right.

SNYDER

Is it? Did you really look at their faces? Did you really look, Mrs. Salinas?

MRS. SALINAS

I glanced at them as they walked by... but I did see them.

SNYDER

You glanced? You didn't look?

MRS. SALINAS

I saw them.

SNYDER

You glanced at them, Mrs. Salinas. You glanced at them through the eyes of a frightened woman who may have had too much to drink.

MICHAEL

Objection, your Honor.

SNYDER

No need, your Honor. I have no further questions.

JUDGE WEISMAN

Thank you, Mrs. Salinas. You may step down.

ANGLE on Carol and Shakes.

CAROL

(whispers to Shakes).

He reads Michael's notes very well.

*
*
*

134 EXT. STREET - HELL'S KITCHEN - BREAK OF DAWN

134

An unmarked police car is parked with the engine running.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

It was six fifteen on a Sunday morning.

135 INT. POLICE CAR - BREAK OF DAWN

135

ANGLE on DETECTIVE FRANK MAGCICCO in the driver's seat, sipping a cup of coffee.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Frank Magcicco worked out of a Homicide unit in Brooklyn. He was a first grade detective with an honest name and a solid reputation. He was also King Benny's nephew.

NICK DAVENPORT O/C

Frank, what is this shit?

FRANK

Hear the kid out, Nick.

CAMERA PANS to NICK DAVENPORT in the back seat, then over to Shakes sitting next to him. Shakes is holding a heavy manila envelope. CAMERA moves in on the envelope. There is a name written across it: "Adam Styler".

NICK O/C
Okay, what's it gonna cost?

CAMERA PANS back to Nick Davenport.

LORENZO'S NARRATION
Nick Davenport was with Internal Affairs. He was ambitious and wanted to make Captain before he hit 40. He knew the fastest way up that track was to reel in a maximum amount of dirty cops in a minimum amount of time.

SHAKES
You don't offer him anything. You don't use him to finger other cops. You bring him in, and you bring him down.

NICK
That ain't up to me.

SHAKES
Maybe I should take this to someone else.

NICK
(to Frank)
Where did you find this fuck?

FRANK
If I were you I'd do what the kid says.
(casually sips coffee)
You make this one, you're gonna be having breakfast once a month with the Commissioner.

NICK
(to Shakes)
Okay, Eliot Ness. He won't be offered any deals.

SHAKES
Two more things.

NICK
Let me hear them.

SHAKES
He gets convicted. He gets State time. I don't want him sent to one of those cop country clubs. He's gotta do prison time.

NICK
You've got a real hard on for this Adam Styler guy. What's your beef with him?

SHAKES

There's one more thing.

NICK

I can't wait.

SHAKES

It's simple. Nobody knows who fed you the information...and I mean nobody.

NICK

How did you get it?

SHAKES

It fell into my lap, just like it's falling into yours.

Nick nods. Shakes hands him the manila envelope and Nick looks at the file of papers inside. We also see photos of the former Wilkinson guard, Adam Styler.

NICK

Christ Almighty! You got everything in here but a confession.

SHAKES

I thought I'd leave that to you. My preference is that you beat it out of him.

NICK

(holding up file to Frank)

There's even surveillance photos. This piece of shit's pulling in about five grand a month, ripping off pushers. Has been for about three years.

SHAKES

More like four.

NICK

He ain't gonna see five.

SHAKES

You have enough for a conviction?

NICK

It ain't up to me. It's up to a jury.

SHAKES

Then show the jury this.

He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a plastic bag. In it is a snub nose .44 revolver and three spent shells.

NICK
(amused)
What you got there, Ness?

SHAKES
Three weeks ago, the body of a drug dealer named Indian Red Lopez was found in an alley in Jackson Heights. There were three bullets in his head and nothing in his pockets.

NICK
I'm with you so far.

SHAKES
That's the gun that killed him, and these are the shells.

NICK
And what's behind door number three?

SHAKES
The prints on the gun belong to Adam Styler.

Nick takes the gun from Shakes and puts it in his pocket.

NICK
Do me a favor, would you?

SHAKES
What?

NICK
If I ever make it onto your shit list, give me a call...give me a chance to apologize.

SHAKES
You'll find a woman's name and phone number in the folder. Pay her a visit. Her English isn't good, but it's good enough to tell you she saw Adam Styler put the gun to the drug dealer's head and pull the trigger.

He opens the car door.

SHAKES
You need anything else, Frank knows how to reach me.

FRANK
Take care of yourself, kid. The water gets choppy out your way.

SHAKES

I'll do what I can.

He gets out of the car and closes the door.

NICK

(rolls down the car window)

Hey, Ness. You ever think of becoming a cop?

SHAKES

And leave the good guys?

136 INT. SACRED HEART CHURCH - MORNING

136

A Sunday service is in progress and Father Bobby is leading the Mass. Shakes is in line waiting to take Communion. When he reaches the pulpit where Father Bobby is offering the ceremonial wine and wafer, he looks hard at Father Bobby. The priest's face is imbued with the holiness of the religious ceremony...nothing else, as he gives Shakes the holy sacrament.

137 INT. COURTROOM - DAY

137

TIGHT SHOT of a replica of McHales, with little wax figures sitting in * place of the patrons and employees.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Michael had done all that could be expected of an assistant district attorney seeking a conviction in the murder case of People vs. Reilly and Marciano.

TIGHT SHOT of blown up photos of the crime scene.

CAMERA PANS to a MAN on the stand giving testimony.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

He had a forensics expert detail the make and caliber of the gun that killed Nokes.

CAMERA PANS to John and Tommy at the defense table.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

He just never had the murder weapon to present as evidence, and he never gave the jury a motive for the murder.

ANGLE on Michael sitting at a desk in the crowded courtroom. CAMERA moves in on his face. He is looking very tired.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

The tension of his task, the hours he was working, and the uncertainty about the outcome, weighed heavily on him. If the plan worked, it would be everyone's success. If it failed, the fault would fall to Michael.

138 EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY

138

Father Bobby dressed in his priest surplus, is playing one-on-one with a YOUNG BOY, aged 10.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Father Bobby Carillo, the priest with the best outside jump shot on the West Side, remained the key to a plan that called for all involved to get away with murder.

139 INT. SUBWAY STATION

139

As a train pulls into the station, WE SEE Carol standing on the platform with a few other people. The doors of the train open and she gets on and takes a seat. Suddenly, Michael enters by another door and sits behind Carol.

MICHAEL

So what's the emergency?

Carol starts to turn around.

MICHAEL

Don't turn around.

(beat)

Shakes shouldn't have sent you, it's too risky.

CAROL

Nobody sent me. I wanted to see you.

MICHAEL

Why?

CAROL

Shakes met with Father Bobby two weeks ago, but hasn't heard from him since.

MICHAEL

It's not an overnight decision for him.

CAROL

What if he doesn't testify?

MICHAEL

Then we got a very serious problem.

There's a long beat.

MICHAEL
(reluctantly)
Have Shakes talk to Father Bobby again.
Have him tell him the whole story. He
knows what that means.

CAROL
He already has.

MICHAEL
What?

CAROL
I was with him when he talked to Father
Bobby. I heard everything, Michael.

Michael is surprised by this information.

MICHAEL
So, you know?

CAROL
Yes.

There's an awkward pause. All we hear is the sound of the train
moving through the tunnel.

CAROL
If only you'd told me...things could
have been different.

Michael tries to say something, but can't. Carol's long hair falls
over the edge of the seat. He reaches forward and gently touches it.
Carol looks straight ahead, unaware Michael is doing this.

The train pulls into a station, and there's a loud sound of brakes.

TIGHT SHOT of Carol's face. She's struggling to say something to
Michael but too emotionally troubled to get the words out.

CAROL
If you could have talked....it would
have...it could have...

She turns around to Michael, but he has gone.

140 EXT. KING BENNY'S PLACE - DAY

140

King Benny stands in front of his club, his hands behind his back.
Three of his men huddle close by, stamping their feet against the
cold. The door to the club remains open and the sound of Doris Day
singing "Que Sera Sera" eases its way onto the street.

Shakes walks up the street and approaches King Benny.

There's a long beat.

MICHAEL
(reluctantly)
Have Shakes talk to Father Bobby again.
Have him tell him the whole story. He
knows what that means.

CAROL
He already has.

MICHAEL
What?

CAROL
I was with him when he talked to Father
Bobby. I heard everything, Michael.

Michael is surprised by this information.

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So, you know?

CAROL
Yes.

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moving through the tunnel.

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have been different.

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over the edge of the seat. He reaches forward and gently touches it.
Carol looks straight ahead, unaware Michael is doing this.

The train pulls into a station, and there's a loud sound of brakes.

TIGHT SHOT of Carol's face. She's struggling to say something to
Michael but too emotionally troubled to get the words out.

CAROL
If you could have talked....it would
have...it could have...

She turns around to Michael, but he has gone.

140 EXT. KING BENNY'S PLACE - DAY

140 *

ANGLE on an exhaust pipe, clouds of exhaust fill the cold air. Shakes
comes into the SHOT, heading toward the club. He enters. *

000071 7

140A INT. KING BENNY'S PLACE - DAY

140A

King Benny stands by the sink, short white apron around his waist. He is washing an eel in water. Doris Day is playing on the record player.

SHAKES

I see you've still got a thing for
Doris Day.

KING BENNY

She's a good woman.

He cuts the head off the eel and starts to wrap it in paper.

KING BENNY

You know the strega?

SHAKES

Hard to miss a lady with four warts and
only one eye.

KING BENNY

She needs the head.

(to Sal)

Sal, take this to the witch.

Sal picks up the package and exits.

SHAKES

What she need the head for?

KING BENNY

She takes the eyes.

SHAKES

Wonderful.

KING BENNY

She puts 'em in a bowl, mixes 'em with
water and oil.

SHAKES

Then what?

KING BENNY

People get headaches they go to her.
She looks into the eyes and tells 'em
who's wishing the headaches. She says
some words and the headaches go away.
Once in a while, the person who wished
the headaches goes away too.

He takes off his apron.

LATER

King Benny puts on his overcoat.

0000717

KING BENNY

This guy, Addison, the one who works for the Mayor, he's gonna quit his job in two weeks. He doesn't want nobody to know what kind of a guy he is. Don't want nobody to see pictures of him they shouldn't see.

SHAKES

He knows this?

KING BENNY

He will.

SHAKES

That it?

KING BENNY

The boys he buys for parties are expensive. Addison makes good money, but he don't make real money.

SHAKES

What's he owe?

KING BENNY

Eight grand with a heavy vig. I paid that off.

SHAKES

You paid?

KING BENNY

Henry Addison's chits belong to me now.

SHAKES

You hate debts.

KING BENNY

I hate Henry Addison.

They head toward the door.

140B EXT. KING BENNY'S PLACE - DAY

140B

Tony sits behind the wheel of the black cadillac, and the engine is running.

SHAKES

We going for a ride?

000071

KING BENNY

I am. You're going home...to sleep, if anybody asks.

SHAKES

Where you going?

KING BENNY

To pick up my money.

SHAKES

I want to be in on this.

KING BENNY

Go home. We're in the dirty end of the field now. That's where I play...and I like to play alone.

He opens the door to his car and looks over at Shakes.

KING BENNY

You're a good kid. You always were.
Don't let this change it.

He gets in the car and it pulls away. Shakes watches it go.

141 INT. LIVING ROOM - DIMLY LIT

141

A THIN BLACK MAN, "LITTLE CAESAR", dressed all in black, sits in a black leather chair. CAMERA slowly moves in on him.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

His mother named him Edward Goldenberg Robinson, after her favorite actor. To continue the Hollywood connection, Eddie Robinson took the street name "Little Ceasar" as he made his way up the ranks of the lucrative drug trade. He had a twelve year old son in a private school in upstate New York. He named him Rizzo after his youngest brother, who died while in the custody of the Wilkinson Home for Boys.

CAMERA PANS to King Benny standing in a corner by a window.

KING BENNY

I want you to give me some money.

LITTLE CAESAR

How much?

KING BENNY

Eight thousand dollars.

LITTLE CAESAR
I'll play along. How long before you
pay it back?

King Benny reaches into his pocket and takes out a folded piece of paper.

KING BENNY
I'm not paying it back. Somebody else
is.

LITTLE CAESAR
(takes piece of paper)
This somebody I know?

KING BENNY
Your little brother knew him.

LITTLE CAESAR
Rizzo? How did he know Rizzo?

KING BENNY
Henry Addison was a guard in an upstate
home. He was there the same time as
Rizzo, before and after he died.

Little Caesar calls to one of his MEN, BIP, on the other side of the room.

00170000
LITTLE CAESAR
Bip, count out eight thousand dollars
and put it in an envelope.

King Benny and Little Caesar stare at one another in silence while they wait for the money.

LITTLE CAESAR
You go back a long time, old man.

KING BENNY
Old men always do.

LITTLE CAESAR
Ran with the guineas back when the
guineas were tough.

KING BENNY
Ran when I could.

LITTLE CAESAR
Maybe you and me can do some business.
Close us a deal.

Bip hands an envelope with the money in it to King Benny.

KING BENNY
We just did.

LITTLE CAESAR
I'll play along. How long before you
pay it back?

King Benny reaches into his pocket and takes out a folded piece of paper.

KING BENNY
I'm not paying it back. Somebody else
is.

LITTLE CAESAR
(takes piece of paper)
This somebody I know?

KING BENNY
Your little brother knew him.

LITTLE CAESAR
Rizzo? How did he know Rizzo?

KING BENNY
Henry Addison was a guard in an upstate
home. He was there the same time as
Rizzo, before and after he died.

Little Caesar calls to one of his MEN, BIP, on the other side of the room.

LITTLE CAESAR
Bip, count out eight thousand dollars
and put it in an envelope.

King Benny and Little Caesar stare at one another in silence while they wait for the money.

LITTLE CAESAR
You go back a long time, old man.

KING BENNY
Old men always do.

LITTLE CAESAR
Ran with the guineas back when the
guineas were tough.

KING BENNY
Ran when I could.

Bip hands an envelope with the money in it to King Benny.

*

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King Benny starts to move out of the room.

LITTLE CAESAR
I'll look up our friend soon and
collect the money he owes me.

King Benny stops in the doorway, his face in the shadows.

KING BENNY
He owes you something more than money.

LITTLE CAESAR
Ain't nothing worth more than the
green.

KING BENNY
This is.

LITTLE CAESAR
What, old man? What's this guy owe
that means more than dollars?

KING BENNY
He owes you Rizzo. He's the man that
killed your brother.

LITTLE CAESAR
They said he died of pneumonia.

KING BENNY
They said.

*
*
*
*

King Benny steps into the light and through the apartment door as it
closes.

142 INT. COURTROOM - DAY

142

Shakes and Carol are in the courtroom.

ANGLE on Michael

MICHAEL
Your Honor. The prosecution would like
to call Ralph Ferguson to the stand.

Shakes takes a deep breath, turns and watches Ferguson as he comes
down the center aisle of the courtroom. He looks a little heavier
than he did twelve years before, and he's lost some hair.

John and Tommy look on from the defense table, confused. Ferguson
walks past them and gets sworn in.

Michael shuffles through some papers.

0000717

MICHAEL

Good morning, Mr. Ferguson. I'd like to thank you for coming. I realize that this is a long trip for you.

FERGUSON

I'm sorry it had to be for something like this.

0007170000

MICHAEL

You and the victim, Sean Nokes, were such good friends, I think your testimony as a character witness will be very valuable.

FERGUSON

We were great friends. You'd have to look hard to find a better friend.

MICHAEL

How long did you two know each other?

FERGUSON

About fourteen years.

MICHAEL

How often did you see each other?

FERGUSON

As often as we could...on weekends, holidays, vacations. Things like that.

MICHAEL

Would you say you were his best friend?

FERGUSON

His closest, that's for sure.

MICHAEL

What kind of man was Sean Nokes?

FERGUSON

He was a good man. Too good to be shot dead by a couple of street punks.

O'CONNOR

Objection, your Honor. Statement is one of opinion, not fact.

MICHAEL

He was asked his opinion.

JUDGE WEISMAN

Overruled. Please continue.

MICHAEL

Did he have any enemies that you were aware of?

FERGUSON

You mean other than the two men who killed him?

MICHAEL

Yes.

FERGUSON

Sean Nokes had no enemies.

MICHAEL

Thank you, Mr. Ferguson. I have no further questions, your Honor.

JUDGE WEISMAN

Mr. Snyder. He's your witness.

Snyder, as rumped as ever, stands.

SNYDER

Can you tell us how you and Sean Nokes first met, Mr. Ferguson?

FERGUSON

We worked on a job together upstate.

SNYDER

As what?

FERGUSON

We were guards at The Wilkinson Home for Boys.

SNYDER

What is that? A prison?

FERGUSON

No, it's a juvenile facility for young boys.

SNYDER

And your function was what?

FERGUSON

Standard stuff. Keep the boys in line, see they got to their classes on time, keep an eye out for trouble...put them down for the night. Nothing exciting.

SNYDER

As guards, were you and Mr. Nokes allowed to use force to, as you say, keep the boys in line?

FERGUSON

What do you mean, force?

SNYDER

Were you allowed to hit them?

FERGUSON

No, of course not.

SNYDER

Were any of the boys hit by any of the guards at any time?

FERGUSON

I'm sure something like that may have happened. It was a big place...but it wasn't common practice.

SNYDER

Let's narrow the place down then. Did you or Mr. Nokes ever hit any of the boys under your care at The Wilkinson Home for Boys?

Both Judge Weisman and Ferguson stare at Michael waiting for an objection.

ANGLE on Michael at his desk, not moving, eyes on Ferguson. John and Tommy look toward Michael trying to figure out what's going on.

SNYDER

Would you like me to repeat the question, Mr. Ferguson?

FERGUSON

No.

SNYDER

Then answer it, and remember you're on oath.

FERGUSON

A few of the boys we considered discipline problems were hit on occasion.

SNYDER

And how were they hit?

FERGUSON

What do you mean?

SNYDER

Fist, open hand, a kick, a baton maybe?

FERGUSON

It depended on what the situation called for.

SNYDER

And who determined that?

FERGUSON

The guard on the scene.

SNYDER

That's a lot of power to have over a boy, isn't it?

FERGUSON

It came with the job.

SNYDER

Did torture come with the job?

Ferguson just looks at Snyder.

SNYDER

Boys were tortured, weren't they?
Weren't they, Mr. Ferguson?

Spectators lean forward. Judge Weisman angrily looks to Michael.

FERGUSON

On occasion.

SNYDER

Who tortured them?

FERGUSON

The guards.

SNYDER

Which guards?

FERGUSON

I can't remember all of them.

SNYDER

Remember one.

Ferguson squirms in his chair. He looks over at the defense table and instead of seeing John and Tommy as they are now:

FERGUSON SEES THEM AS THE YOUNG BOYS THEY WERE AT WILKINSONS.

FERGUSON

(after a beat)

Sean Nokes.

A murmur runs through the courtroom. ANGLE on Carol. Tears are running down her face.

BACK ON SNYDER

SNYDER

Let me ask you, Mr. Ferguson. Was there ever any sexual abuse at The Wilkinson Home for Boys?

JUDGE WEISMAN
Counselor. This line of questioning
better lead somewhere, having to do
with this case.

SNYDER
It will, your Honor.

JUDGE WEISMAN
For your sake.

SNYDER
Answer the question, Mr. Ferguson. Was
there ever any sexual abuse at the
Wilkinson Home for Boys?

FERGUSON
Yes. I heard that there was.

SNYDER
I'm not asking if you heard. I'm
asking if you saw.

FERGUSON
(in a very low voice)
Yes, I saw.

SNYDER
Did you and Sean Nokes ever force
yourselves on any of the boys?
(beat)
Did you and Sean Nokes rape any of the
boys at the Wilkinson Home, Mr.
Ferguson?

Ferguson doesn't answer. There's a deafening silence in the
courtroom.

JUDGE WEISMAN
Counselors. Approach the bench now.

Michael and Snyder approach the sidebar.

ANGLE ON SIDEBAR

JUDGE WEISMAN
(his temper flashing above
his calm demeanour)
What the hell is going on here?

MICHAEL
(glancing over at Ferguson)
Well, your Honor, it looks like I
called the wrong character witness.

JUDGE WEISMAN
And what are you going to do about it?

MICHAEL

Nothing, your Honor. There's nothing I can do about it.

JUDGE WEISMAN

Or maybe, Counselor, you've already done enough.

The Judge walks back behind his bench.

JUDGE WEISMAN

Please answer the question, Mr. Ferguson.

Ferguson is holding back tears.

SNYDER

Did you and Sean Nokes ever rape any of the boys at the Wilkinson Home?

Ferguson doesn't answer.

SNYDER

Let me ask you this: Sean Nokes visited your home on numerous occasions, am I right?

FERGUSON

Yes.

SNYDER

And on any one of those occasions, did your ex-wife ever leave Sean Nokes alone with your child?

FERGUSON

Our child?

SNYDER

Would your ex-wife ever leave Sean Nokes alone with your child?

FERGUSON

There would be no reason for her to be alone with him. It wouldn't come up.

SNYDER

It never came up?

FERGUSON

No.

SNYDER

And did she ever voice any concern?

FERGUSON

I don't think so.

SNYDER

We have a deposition from your ex-wife, Mr. Ferguson, explaining why he was not allowed to be in a room alone with your daughter.

Ferguson is trapped.

SNYDER

Do we need to enter that as evidence or do you want to answer the question?

FERGUSON

(with a choked voice)

Yes.

SNYDER

Yes, what?

FERGUSON

Yes. Sean Nokes had experiences with some boys.

SNYDER

Were you there?

FERGUSON

Yes.

SNYDER

Did you observe?

FERGUSON

Yes.

SNYDER

Did you do more than observe?

FERGUSON

Yes...but it wasn't just by us.

SNYDER

By you and Sean Nokes?

FERGUSON

Yes.

SNYDER

On more than one occasion?

FERGUSON

Yes.

SNYDER

With more than one boy?

FERGUSON

Yes.

SNYDER

Now, do you still think Sean Nokes was
a good man, Mr. Ferguson?

FERGUSON

He was my friend.

*
*
*
*
*
*

SNYDER

A friend who raped and abused boys he
was paid to watch over.

FERGUSON

Are you finished? I want it to be
over.

(looking over to Judge)

Please, your Honor, I want it to be
over.

SNYDER

I have no further questions.

JUDGE WEISMAN

The witness is excused...and Mr.
Ferguson, if I were you, I wouldn't
stray too far from home. People will
want to talk to you. Do you
understand?

Ferguson walks past John and Tommy without looking at them, and exits
the courtroom.

MICHAEL

The prosecution rests its case, your
Honor.

JUDGE WEISMAN

Thank God for that.

143 EXT. LAGUARDIA AIRPORT RUNWAY - MARSH - NIGHT

143

JET PLANES ROAR OVERHEAD

LONG SHOT of FOUR BLACK MEN walking with Henry Addison. His face looks
beaten and bloody. He's reluctant to want to continue walking, but a
gun pushing at his back convinces him otherwise.

ANGLE ON A BLACK MERCEDES

The tinted window is half down. Little Ceasar sits in the back looking
out, smoking a cigarette calmly. He watches the scene unfold. WE HEAR
a distant sound of a GUNSHOT over the ROAR of the planes.

A LONG SHOT of the shooting. Addison is staggering in pain from the
shot. The other men pull out their guns, and almost systematically,
one after another, they keep shooting as Addison struggles. The ROAR
of the planes drains out any of the other sounds. Addison staggers,
and then falls dead.

TIGHT SHOT on Little Ceasar looking out. The tinted window rolls up.

14 EXT. SIDE OF FAT MANCHO'S CANDY STORE - DAY

144

A ball hits against a brick wall. Fat Mancho and Shakes are playing handball. It's a freezing cold day.

Carol leans against a chain fence. She has a thick winter scarf around her neck, and her hands are wrapped around a hot mug of coffee.

SHAKES

Most people play handball in the summer. It's easier to see the ball without tears in your eyes.

FAT MANCHO

I give a fuck about most people.

SHAKES

What do you have planned after the game? A swim?

Fat Mancho scores a point.

FAT MANCHO

That's six for me, two for you.

SHAKES

You never play this game. How can you be good?

FAT MANCHO

You never seen me play, fool. I was your age, I was All-Spic. Played the best...beat the best.

SHAKES

(shivering from the cold)

You know, I think it's half-time.

LATER

Shakes, Fat Mancho and Carol sit against Fat Mancho's wall on top of three copies of the Sunday Daily News. Carol and Shakes are drinking coffee while Fat Mancho slurps a Reingold.

SHAKES

John and Tommy are starting to smell something. They just don't know what.

FAT MANCHO

A spic be living in the White House time it reaches their fucking brains.

CAROL

Snyder's come through big.

FAT MANCHO

He's a drunk, but he ain't a fool.

SHAKES

We only win when John and Tommy walk.

FAT MANCHO

Then you gotta get 'em out of the shooting hole. Put 'em someplace else. Only your witness does that, and he's doing a Claude Rains so far. Nobody's seen the fucker.

CAROL

What if he doesn't show? What if we go in the way we are?

FAT MANCHO

Street's only one matters. Court's for uptown people with suits, money... lawyers with three names. You got cash, you can buy court justice. On the street, justice got no price. She's blind where the judge sits. But she ain't blind out here. Out here, the bitch got eyes.

SHAKES

We need both.

FAT MANCHO

Then you need a witness.

145 INT. SACRED HEART CHURCH - NIGHT

145

TIGHT SHOT OF Jesus on the Cross.

ANGLE on Father Bobby kneeling and praying in front of the statue. He crosses himself.

CUT TO:

THE SCREEN SUDDENLY IS BLUE AND HAZY.

146 EXT. WATER

146

A young Michael jumps into camera frame and floats in slow motion. We realize that we're UNDERWATER and Michael has jumped from above. As he disappears from view, a young John comes into view through the water, followed by a young Tommy and finally a young Shakes.

147 EXT. PIER - DAY

147

Adult Michael stands looking towards the water, remembering happier times.

147A INT. COURTROOM - DAY

0000717 147A, *

WIDE SHOT--only a few people are present. Michael is going over some notes. A MAN approaches him. *

MAN

Excuse me, Mr. Sullivan?

MICHAEL

We've met, right?

MAN

Yes, we have. A few weeks back. I was asked to testify at the trial.

MICHAEL

You were in the Pub with Mrs. Salinas.

MAN

Yes, that's right.

MICHAEL

Why are you here, Mr. Carson?

CARSON

I want to testify about what I saw.

MICHAEL

What did you see?

CARSON

I saw the two men leave the bar, seconds after the shooting. I saw their faces and they saw mine.

Michael looks at him, something has gone wrong with the plan.

MICHAEL

Why didn't you remember any of this three weeks ago?

CARSON

I was trying to keep my marriage together. But after what I saw them do to Helen on the stand...

MICHAEL

She'll survive, Mr. Carson.

CARSON

I can't sit back and let it pass.

MICHAEL

What about your wife? You want her to know about you and Mrs. Salinas.

CARSON

She already does.

000071 7

Michael is caught off guard, wondering what to do.

7B INT. JUDGES' CHAMBERS - DAY

147B

Snyder and Michael sit across from the Judge.

SNYDER

This is the first I'm hearing about this witness, your honor. We're not ready. Not today.

JUDGE WEISMAN

How much time do you need?

SNYDER

A two week continuance. At the very least.

JUDGE WEISMAN

Two hours, counselor. That's plenty of time to run a sheet on the witness and find out all you need to know. Do you agree, Mr. Sullivan?

MICHAEL

(looking to Snyder)

Yes, sir. Two hours seems about right.

JUDGE WEISMAN

It's a cut and dry matter. What did he see and when did he see it. The questions never change, counselor. You know that. Only the faces. Now, let's get on with it.

147C INT. COURTROOM - DAY

147C

TIGHT SHOT OF MICHAEL

CARSON

I saw them leave the Pub minutes after the shooting.

MICHAEL

You looked at their faces?

CARSON

Yes, I looked at them and they looked at me.

MICHAEL

Did they say anything to you?

CARSON

No, they just looked at me and walked out of the Pub.

MICHAEL

Do you think they killed Sean Nokes?

CARSON
I know they killed him.

ANGLE on Carol and Shakes - they seem uneasy.

147D INT. COURTROOM - DAY

147D

SNYDER
Mr. Carson, we're the defendants armed,
as far as you could see?

CARSON
No.

SNYDER
Were they bloodied in any way? Either
on their clothes or their bodies.

CARSON
No.

SNYDER
Did you turn and look behind you when
you heard the shooting?

CARSON
No, I did not.

SNYDER
Why not?

CARSON
I was concerned for my companion's
safety.

SNYDER
Are you referring to your lover, Mrs.
Salinas?

MICHAEL
Objection. Relationship between Mr.
Carson and Mrs. Salinas is immaterial
and has been previously established.

JUDGE WEISMAN
Sustained.

SNYDER
Did the two defendants threaten you in
any way?

CARSON
No.

SNYDER
Did they threaten your companion?

CARSON

No.

SNYDER

Did they threaten anyone in the Pub, as far as you know?

CARSON

No. Not as far as I know.

SNYDER

Then why were you so afraid?

CARSON

They had just shot and killed a man in cold blood.

SNYDER

Did they? How do you know what you didn't see?

CARSON

I just know.

SNYDER

You just know. You just know what you didn't see.

(beat)

No further questions.

148 EXT. FAT MANCHO'S CANDY STORE - DAY

148

Father Bobby walks along the street and into the Candy Store.

9 INT. FAT MANCHO'S CANDY STORE - DAY

149

Father Bobby stands at the counter of the Store. Fat Mancho hands him a pack of cigarettes and an envelope. Father Bobby slips the envelope and cigarettes into his pocket and leaves.

150 INT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

150

Shakes and Carol are going up steps to the courthouse. Michael is coming from another direction. They exchange a look of uncertainty, and Shakes shrugs "I don't know" to Michael. Danny Snyder walks past them into the courthouse.

SNYDER

Thought I was gonna be late. Morning
Mass you know.

Shakes and Carol are unsure what that means.

151 INT. COURTROOM - DAY

151

As Shakes and Carol take their seats, Michael moves towards the prosecution table. John and Tommy are brought in and sit at the defense table. A YOUNG WOMAN approaches Michael and hands him an envelope. He tears it open, takes out a yellow legal size piece of paper and reads it.

LATER:

TIGHT SHOT of Danny Snyder.

SNYDER

Your Honor. The defense calls to the
stand Father Robert Carillo.

ANGLE on Father Bobby who walks through the courtroom with the confidence of a fighter heading into a main event. Tommy and John are surprised; Shakes and Carol are pleased, and maybe for the first time in a long while, we see the beginning of a smile on Michael's face.

The Bailiff hands Father Bobby a bible.

BAILIFF

Raise your right hand and place your
left on the bible.

TIGHT SHOT of Father Bobby's hand on the bible.

BAILIFF O/C

Do you swear that the evidence you are
about to give, shall be the truth the
whole truth and nothing but the truth.

ANGLE on Father Bobby and the Bailiff.

FATHER BOBBY

I do.

BAILIFF

Take the stand.

Father Bobby sits and Danny Snyder approaches him.

SNYDER

Father Carillo, to which parish do you belong?

FATHER BOBBY

The Sacred Heart of Jesus on West 50th Street.

SNYDER

And how long have you been there?

FATHER BOBBY

It'll be twenty years this spring.

SNYDER

And what is your position there?

FATHER BOBBY

I'm a priest.

A light laughter ripples through the courtroom.

SNYDER

I'm sorry, Father. I meant what do you do there?

FATHER BOBBY

I'm the school principal. I teach seventh grade and coach most of the sports teams. I'm also acting Monsignor, serve Mass daily, listen to confessions and try to repair whatever needs fixing.

SNYDER

They keep you busy.

FATHER BOBBY

It's a poor parish. Low on funds and short on staff.

SNYDER

Do you know most of the people in your parish?

FATHER BOBBY

No. I know all the people in my parish.

SNYDER

Do you know the two defendants, John Reilly and Thomas Marciano?

FATHER BOBBY

Yes, I do.

SNYDER

How long have you known them?

FATHER BOBBY

Since they were boys.

SNYDER

Father, do you recall where you were on the night of November first of this past year?

FATHER BOBBY

Yes, I do.

SNYDER

And where was that?

FATHER BOBBY

I was at a basketball game at the Garden...the Knicks against the Celtics.

SNYDER

What time does a Knick game begin?

FATHER BOBBY

They usually start at about seven thirty?

SNYDER

And what time do they end?

FATHER BOBBY

Between nine thirty and ten, providing there's no overtime.

SNYDER

Was there any that night?

FATHER BOBBY

No, there wasn't.

SNYDER

And who won the game, Father?

FATHER BOBBY

Sad to say, it was the Celtics. Kevin McHale and Robert Parish were a little too much for our guys that night, even on All Saints Day.

SNYDER

Were you at the game alone?

FATHER BOBBY

No, I went there with two friends.

SNYDER

And who were those two friends, Father?

FATHER BOBBY

John Reilly and Thomas Marcano.

SNYDER

The two defendants?

FATHER BOBBY

Yes, the two defendants.

Michael takes a breath and looks toward the ceiling. John and Tommy are overwhelmed. John looks back at Shakes. Shakes surreptitiously raises a copy of the book he is holding - "The Count of Monte Cristo". For a second, John's hard look disappears, and tears well up in his eyes.

ANGLE on Snyder.

SNYDER

At eight twenty five p.m., the time the police say the victim, Sean Nokes, was murdered, were you still with Mr. Reilly and Mr. Marcano at the basketball game?

FATHER BOBBY

Yes, I was.

SNYDER

And at what time did you, Mr. Reilly and Mr. Marcano part company?

FATHER BOBBY

About ten thirty, maybe a little bit later. They left me in front of the rectory, near where they had picked me up.

SNYDER

Did the two defendants tell you where they were going after they left you?

FATHER BOBBY

No, but I can imagine after a night spent with a priest, they went looking for the first open bar they could find.

There's light laughter in the courtroom.

SNYDER

So then, Father, if the two defendants were with you on the night of the murder, they couldn't have shot and killed Sean Nokes, as the prosecution claims. Isn't that correct?

FATHER BOBBY

Unless they shot him from the blue seats at the Garden.

SNYDER

No, Father. He was not shot from there.

FATHER BOBBY

Then he wasn't shot by those boys.

SNYDER

I have no further questions. Thank you, Father.

JUDGE WEISMAN

Your witness, Mr. Sullivan.

MICHAEL

Thank you, your Honor.

He stands up and walks over to Father Bobby.

MICHAEL

Did you buy the tickets for the game, Father, or were they given to you?

FATHER BOBBY

No, I bought them.

MICHAEL

On the day of the game?

FATHER BOBBY

I went to the box office about a week before.

MICHAEL

How did you pay for the tickets?

FATHER BOBBY

With cash. I pay for everything with cash.

MICHAEL

Did you get a receipt?

FATHER BOBBY

No, I didn't.

MICHAEL

Did anyone know you were going to the game...other than the two defendants?

FATHER BOBBY

I don't think so.

MICHAEL

So, there's no record of any purchase?

FATHER BOBBY

That's correct.

MICHAEL

So, how do we know you were there? How do we really know you and the defendants were at the Game on the night of the murder?

FATHER BOBBY

I'm telling you both as a witness and as a priest. We were at the game.

MICHAEL

And a priest wouldn't lie, isn't that correct?

FATHER BOBBY

A priest with ticket stubs wouldn't need to lie...

00170000
He puts his hand into his pocket and pulls out three torn tickets.

FATHER BOBBY

...and I always keep the stubs.

MICHAEL

Why's that, Father? Why do you keep them?

FATHER BOBBY

Because you never know when someone will want more than your word.

MICHAEL

Has anyone questioned your word before today?

FATHER BOBBY

No. No-one ever has.

Michael gives Father Bobby a look that shows his real feelings and gratitude. A very personal moment that is shielded from the rest of the court.

MICHAEL

I have no further questions at this time. You are free to go.

As Father Bobby steps down from the stand, the spectators in the courtroom applaud him.

THEME MUSIC COMES IN AND CONTINUES LOW UNDER REST OF THIS SCENE

LORENZO'S NARRATION

I have never recovered from seeing Father Bobby take the stand and lie for us - to even the score for John and Tommy. He didn't just testify for them, he testified against Wilkinson and the evil that had lived there for too long. Still, I was sorry he had to do it.

HARD CUT:

152 INT. COURTROOM - DAY

152

TIGHT SHOT OF JUDGE WEISMAN

JUDGE WEISMAN

Has the jury reached its verdict?

INCLUDE JURY MEMBERS

JURY FOREMAN

We have, your Honor.

JUDGE WEISMAN

On the count of murder in the second degree, how do you find the defendant, John Reilly?

JURY FOREMAN

Not guilty.

JUDGE WEISMAN

On the count of murder in the second degree, how do you find the defendant, Thomas Marciano?

JURY FOREMAN

Not guilty.

The courtroom erupts in thunderous applause. Shakes hugs Carol. John and Tommy smile and laugh, reaching out for as many hands as they can shake. Flash bulbs pop.

A pair of women in the middle of the room begin to cry hysterically. Four young men in the back are singing "Danny Boy". An old lady sits fingering the beads of her rosary, her lips moving in silent prayer.

Judge Weisman steps down from behind his bench. Michael walks over and shakes hands with Danny Snyder, then he disappears into the mass of bodies.

153 INT. COURTHOUSE - CORRIDOR - DAY 153

Michael walks alone. He enters an elevator and the doors close.

154 EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY 154

The CAMERA moves toward a hot dog stand. Michael walks into the shot.

MICHAEL

(to hot dog Vendor)

Let me have a hot dog with mustard,
sauerkraut and onions.

Shakes walks up to Michael.

SHAKES

You did good in there, Counselor.

Michael pays the Vendor and then walks with Shakes down the street.

SHAKES

What happens to you now?

MICHAEL

I walk away. Wait a few weeks, then
hand in my notice. After the way I
handled this case, they won't be in a
rush to keep me from the door.

SHAKES

You can switch to the other side. Work
as a defense lawyer...more money in it.

They sit down on a bench.

SHAKES

There's always gonna be more bad guys
than good. The work from John and
Tommy's crew alone will get you a house
with a pool.

MICHAEL

Not for me. I've seen all the law I
want to see. It's time for something
else.

SHAKES

Like what?

MICHAEL

I'll let you know when I know.

SHAKES

You're too old to play for the Yankees,
and you're too young to take up golf.

MICHAEL

(finishing off his hot dog)
You're shooting holes all through my
plans...I'm starting to panic.

SHAKES

You'll work things out, you always
have.

Michael looks back towards the Courthouse in the distance at the
continuous stream of people coming and going.

MICHAEL

It's time for quiet, Shakes. I just
want to shut my eyes and not have to
see the places I've been. Maybe I'll
get lucky and forget I was ever there.

He gets up from the bench, holding his briefcase by his side.

SHAKES

Don't disappear on me, Counselor. I
may need a good lawyer some day.

MICHAEL

You can't afford a good lawyer.

SHAKES

I may need a good friend.

MICHAEL

I'll find you when you do. Count on
it.

SHAKES

I always have.

Michael turns and walks away. Shakes watches him go.

SCREEN IS BLACK

TITLE CARD READS: SPRING, 1982

*

155 EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

155

WE SEE Shakes walking down the street towards the restaurant.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

A full month had passed since the
acquittal, and no-one had made contact.
In those few weeks, our lives had
reverted back to what they had been
prior to the murder of Sean Nokes.

0000717

Shakes walks into the restaurant.

156 INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

156

CAMERA moves through the entrance way of the restaurant.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Carol had returned to her stack of social service files, helping troubled teens and single mothers.

CAMERA moves toward a back room in the restaurant.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

John and Tommy went back to the streets, running the West Side Boys.

CAMERA moves into the back room. There's a table filled with pitchers of beer and bottles of Dewar's, along with candles flickering inside hurricane shells.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

I was promoted from clerk to reporter trainee, covering the entertainment beat. Michael, as he had promised, resigned from his job after working the losing end of the can't-miss case.

CAMERA comes around on Shakes looking at the table. A WAITER approaches.

00170000
SHAKES

This is an Irish table, and I'm Italian.

WAITER

What's missing?

SHAKES

Wine.

WAITER

Red or white?

SHAKES

Both.

As the Waiter turns to leave the room, he runs into John and Tommy. The boys look at one another for a beat, then they both go around the table to Shakes.

JOHN

I don't know how to fucking thank you.

He grabs Shakes and holds him.

TOMMY

I can't believe what you did. .
 (throwing his arms around
 Shakes' neck)
 I can't believe you got away with it.

SHAKES

It was all Mikey...it was his plan.

John pours himself a glass of beer.

JOHN

When I first heard he took the case, I
 was gonna have him burned.

SHAKES

What stopped you?

JOHN

He was a friend, and if you're gonna go
 away on a murder rap, who better to
 send you?

TOMMY

And the way he was handling his end of
 the case, I thought he just sucked as a
 lawyer. I started feeling sorry for
 the bastard.

CAMERA PANS to Michael standing in the doorway, a big grin on his
 face.

MICHAEL

Never feel sorry for a lawyer.

JOHN

Get over here, Counselor.

Michael moves over toward him, and both John and Tommy embrace him,
 pulling Shakes into the small circle.

JOHN

(shouting, to Michael)
 You're the real Count! Alive and well
 and working in downtown New York City!

MICHAEL

Not after this week. This Count's on
 the dole now.

ANGLE ON CAROL in the doorway.

CAROL

What is this? A gay bar?

John looks over at Carol.

JOHN

It was until you walked in. How about
a kiss to go with the hello?

CAROL

Deal.

She kisses John, then hugs Tommy and Shakes and looks at Michael.
There's a long beat between the two of them. Then he puts out his
arms, she steps into them and he hugs her. They hold one another as
if they never want to let go.

HARD CUT:

LATER:

The FIVE FRIENDS sit around the table laughing and talking. They're a
little drunk and loose.

CAROL

(to Michael)

I suppose you think "The Three Stooges"
are better than "The Marx Brothers".

MICHAEL

Hands down.

CAROL

And you probably like John Wayne
westerns too.

JOHN

(leaning over)

That's where you're wrong. We love
John Wayne westerns.

CAROL

(laughs)

You guys are hopeless.

SHAKES

That's why we're still together.

CAROL

(to Michael)

And are you telling me that you still
think Soupy Sales is funnier than Woody
Allen?

MICHAEL

Can Woody Allen do "White Fang"?

CAROL

Probably not.

MICHAEL

That's right. Nobody does what Soupy does, because nobody can.

CAROL

No, Michael. It's because nobody wants to.

They all laugh.

CAROL

You guys remember when you formed that stupid singing group?

MICHAEL

"The Four Gladiators". Best quartet to ever hold a Hell's Kitchen corner.

JOHN

(lighting a cigarette)

Remember what Shakes wanted to call the group?

TOMMY

"The Count and His Cristos". Man, that would have sent albums flying out of the stores.

SHAKES

We weren't that bad. Some people wanted to hear us sing.

JOHN

The group from the deaf school don't count.

SHAKES

They applauded.

TOMMY

Fat Mancho was gonna be our manager, and King Benny was gonna be the bankroll...get us suits.

CAROL

What happened to that plan?

SHAKES

They heard us sing.

They all laugh.

MICHAEL

Let's do a song for Carol.

CAROL

Don't you guys have to go out and shoot somebody?

JOHN

We've always got time for a song.

TOMMY

Pick it, Mikey. Nothing too slow.

CAROL

Not too loud. Some people might be eating.

SHAKES

This is like "The Beatles" getting together again.

The Four Boys move toward a corner of the room and start clicking their fingers, getting into the rhythm of a song.

TOMMY

We sing better in the men's room. The walls hold the sound.

CAROL

There's one downstairs. I'll wait here.

The Four Boys begin to sing Frankie Valli's "Walk Like A Man".

"Walk like a man, fast as you can,
walk like a man my son. Go tell the
world, forget about the girl and walk
like a man, my son."

The Four Boys, now young men, continue to sing as the theme music comes up and takes over.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

It was our special night, and we held it for as long as we could. It was something that belonged to us. A night that would be added to our long list of memories. It was our happy ending, and the last time we would ever be together again.

THE THEME MUSIC plays counter to the uptempo music that the boys are singing.

157 INT. TENEMENT BUILDING - EARLY MORNING

157

LONG SHOT of a darkened hallway. CAMERA moves towards a MALE BODY lying on the floor.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

On March sixteenth, nineteen eighty four, John Reilly's bloated body was found face up in a tenement building. His right hand held the neck of a bottle of boiler gin that killed him. At the time of his death, he was a suspect in five unsolved homicides. He was two weeks past his 29th birthday.

158 INT. MOUNTAIN CABIN - UPSTATE NEW YORK - DAY

158

LONG SHOT of a DEAD BODY lying against the wall.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Thomas Marcano died on July twenty sixth, nineteen eighty five. He was shot at close range, five times. The body lay undiscovered for more than a week. There was a crucifix and a picture of St. Jude in his pocket. He was twenty nine years old.

159 EXT. ENGLISH COUNTRY VILLAGE - DAY

159

CAMERA PANS the English countryside and a quiet village with thatched roofed houses.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Michael Sullivan lives in a small town in the English countryside where he works part-time as a carpenter. He no longer practices law, and has never married. He lives quietly and alone.

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160 EXT. CAROL'S BUILDING AND BACKYARD - DUSK

160

CAMERA looks up at a second floor window. WE CAN SEE Carol inside.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Carol still works for a social service agency, and lives in Hell's Kitchen. She has never married, but is a single mother supporting a growing twelve year old son.

WE SEE a YOUNG BOY enter the shot.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

The boy, John Thomas Michael Martinez, loves to read and is called Shakes by his mother.

WE CAN SEE that the Young Boy resembles a young John.

161 EXT. CHURCH PLAYGROUND - UPSTATE NEW YORK - DAY 161

LONG SHOT of the playground. WE SEE a priest playing one-on-one basketball with a young boy.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Father Robert Carillo is the Monsignor of an upstate New York parish. He keeps in touch with all his boys, and is always there when needed. He prays every day for the boys he lost.

162 INT. HOME FOR THE DISABLED - CORRIDOR - DAY

162 *

LONG SHOT of a figure in a wheelchair coming towards the camera. It is dark, and we're unable to see his face clearly.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

Adam Styler was fired from the New York Police Department, brought up on corruption and murder charges. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to a twelve year prison term, as part of a plea bargain agreement. He served eight of those years in a maximum security prison. He was transferred to a minimum security facility only after a fourth attempt on his life left him paralyzed from the waist down. He now lives in a New Jersey suburb in a home for the disabled.

163 INT. KING BENNY'S PLACE - NIGHT

163 *

We're back at the OPENING SCENE in the dimly-lit room, which we now know is King Benny's club. Although their faces cannot be clearly seen, from their voices and silhouettes we know that the two men talking across the table from one another are Shakes and Ferguson.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

After the trial, Ralph Ferguson disappeared, afraid of being brought up on child endangerment and rape charges. In 1993, King Benny brought him to see me to beg for forgiveness and to stop the contract on his life. I told him I didn't have the power to do that.

164 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

164 *

LONG SHOT of a rather somber Ralph Ferguson walking away from King Benny's Place in Hell's Kitchen.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

I lived for nearly a year afraid of this man's every move...and now Ralph Ferguson is living the rest of his days equally afraid, wondering from day to day when the inevitable will come.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE UP

TITLE CARD READS: SUMMER, 1966

164A EXT. SACRED HEART CHURCH - EVENING - ESTABLISHING

164A *

165 INT. GYM - EVENING

165 *

We're back in the opening sequence, except there are only four boys left in the 'twist' competition: a BLACK BOY, a PUERTO RICAN and TWO IRISH BOYS - Young Michael is one of them. Now the film is at normal speed, and WE CAN HEAR Chubby Checker's "Let's Twist Again" playing. Young Shakes, Tommy, John and Carol are watching excitedly.

ANGLE on Father Bobby watching from a corner of the stage.

*

The Dance Judge taps the black boy and removes him, then the red-headed Irish boy. The Puerto Rican boy and Michael continue to twist furiously as the Dance Judge studies them. Then he taps the shoulder of the Puerto Rican and declares Michael the winner. The Disc Jockey slaps a \$50 bill into Michael's hand while everybody whistles and applauds.

Shakes, Tommy, John and Carol close in on Michael. The boys hoist him on their shoulders and carry him through the gym. Carol follows as they exit onto the street.

166 INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - EVENING

166 *

The three boys carrying Michael, with Carol at their side.

MICHAEL

Where we going?

SHAKES

Any place. Do anything we want.

JOHN

We got the time.

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TOMMY

We can go anywhere. There's nothing
can stop us.

LORENZO'S NARRATION

The night and the streets were ours,
the future lay sparkling ahead, and we
thought we would know each other
forever.

SCREEN GOES BLACK

*