

torso

screenplay by Ehren Kruger

based on the graphic novel by
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DARKNESS.

And the faint peal of a distant TRAIN WHISTLE...

As a faraway HEADLIGHT rounds into view. A tiny bright eye, now headed our way...which illuminates...

A MAN'S SILHOUETTED FIGURE

Walking the train tracks toward us. He wears a topcoat and fedora, masculine, iconic, his gait slow but firm. He is completely in shadow, haloed by the train's white hot light.

The piercing WHISTLE sounds again, and now the rising THUNDER of wheels and pistons. The silhouetted man merely trudges on.

The light is closing. The engine grows deafening. The whistle screams, again and again. And as the light reaches a blinding intensity, with the train bearing down like a bullet--

--the Silhouetted Man steps off the tracks, out of harm's way--

--as the whistle SCREAMS and frame fills with white-hot LIGHT, the train's relentless thunder, and the words...

T O R S O

INT./EXT. PASSENGER TRAIN CAR - NIGHT (1947)

OPENING TITLES begin, as WALT CAHILL (25) starts awake at the SCREAM. Cheek to the window, he spills a lapful of papers. Across the aisle, two PRETTY GIRLS giggle at him.

CONDUCTOR'S VOICE

Next stop will be Cleveland, ladies and gentlemen. Fifteen minutes to Cuh-leevee-land, Ohio...

Walt grabs his papers -- uh-oh, he's overslept -- and breaks the seal on a brand-new reporter's NOTEPAD. Opens to the first page and writes: "11/5 -- INTERVIEW -- ELIOT NESS."

...as we INTERCUT GLIMPSES of research folders: archival news articles. "A NEW G-MAN IN TOWN," "CHICAGO'S NEW CRIMEFIGHTER: ELIOT NESS." "NESS CALLS TASK FORCE HIS 'UNTOUCHABLES,'" "HAVE CHICAGO GANGLORDS MET THEIR MATCH?"

...while the train speeds the outskirts of 40's Cleveland, a mature industrial mecca, bustling and alive...

...while Walt pores through his folders, jotting prep notes...

...and more JUMP-CUT HEADLINES: "MOB BOSS ARRESTED BY FEDERAL AGENTS," "MAFIA CONTRACT ON NESS' LIFE?" "AL CAPONE TO STAND TRIAL," "CAPONE FOUND GUILTY!" "ELIOT NESS: CHICAGO'S SAVIOR."

As the train pulls into the station, people stand to collect luggage. When the two Pretty Girls do...Walt "accidentally" drops his open notepad at their feet.

WALT

Miss, I'm sorry, I think that's mine...

The first girl retrieves it, reads the top line. Stops.

PRETTY GIRL #1

Ohmygod. You know Eliot Ness?

WALT

Walt Cahill, Chicago Tribune. If you're ever in town, give me a call.

INT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Walt hustles off, makes a beeline for the nearest phone booth...

INTERCUT INT. CHICAGO TRIBUNE NEWSROOM

A plump matronly SECRETARY picks up, outside an EDITOR's office:

AGNES THE SECRETARY

Mr. Allenby's office.

WALT

Agnes, it's Walt here, how are you, buttercup? Just the sound of your voice always brightens my day. Listen, I need a favor: I'm off to the hotel, but guess I misplaced the name of it. If you could just check on Mr. Allenby's desk, without mentioning--

AGNES THE SECRETARY

MR. ALLENBY! THE KID WE SENT TO CLEVELAND SAYS HE LOST THE DAMN ADDRESS!

WALT

Thank you Agnes. I only pine for you all the more.

Veteran editor ALLENBY (50) glowers, snatching up the phone:

ALLENBY

You can't find his goddamn hotel? Is that the headline for me here?

WALT

I didn't even pack a change of clothes. I had to race to make the train--

ALLENBY

You know what "inauspicious" means?

WALT

Sir, you know I'm grateful for the opportunity--

ALLENBY

Yeah, well, Gratitude don't trade on the New York Stock Exchange. You think those other boys are calling in some S.O.S.? Take me all of two seconds to run the A.P.'s coverage--

WALT

--but it won't have the hometown angle, sir. I meant to call Agnes, not to take your time.

ALLENBY

You gonna show me you got the chops to be a beat reporter, Cahill?

WALT

Yes, sir, that's what I--

ALLENBY

Start.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Walt hustles outside, surveying for cabs...just as a BUS pulls away, revealing a giant billboard across the street--

--with the thirty-foot-high image of ELIOT NESS. A legend. Trim, all-business, all-American smile. Emblazoned with: "*Eliot Ness for Mayor of Cleveland. VOTE YES FOR NESS!*"

As we END OPENING TITLES and PRE-LAP the fanfare of...

EXT. CLEVELAND HOTEL - NIGHT - ELECTION NIGHT 1947

A MAN'S SILHOUETTE acknowledges the cheers of a small crowd of supporters beyond a rope cordon. A few REPORTERS. Signs and banners wave. We see the Man only from behind, or obscured--

--as he escorts his raven-haired wife (BETTY NESS, 40) into the hotel, flanked by a coterie of campaign AIDES, and two tough-guy uniformed COP ESCORTS (CPT. KINCANNON and CPT. GROLSCH, 40's).

REPORTERS (O.S.)

Mr. Ness, how d'ya like your chances?
Any final thoughts? What's tomorrow's headline?

As they sweep past, Walt scrambles out of a just-arriving taxi, realizing he's about to miss the man...as a pretty brunette aide, LUCY FORRESTER (32), shoots 'em a smile:

LUCY

All up to the voters now, boys! Tonight
we celebrate a great campaign!

KINCANNON/GROLSCH

No interviews! NO INTERVIEWS!

WALT

(stops short, pales)

No interviews...?

--as he forces his way through the sidewalk bustle, fumbling for
his pen and notebook as he presses toward the ropes--

WALT

Excuse me, Mr. Ness! I'm with the Chicago
Tribune! Your old hometown paper, sir!
I came all the way from--

--until his spiral notebook gets KNOCKED from his grasp. SMACK!
It hits the sidewalk. Walt bends to grab it, but -- KICK!
Passing feet knock it ahead. Walt lunges for it, but BOOT!
Another kick SKIDS it spinning the other way--

--and SHPLUNK! It lands in a muddy puddle curbside. Walt
skedaddles over on hands-and-knees -- just as a ROLLS-ROYCE LIMO
pulls up, crushing the notebook under a rear tire. Walt sighs--

--as the limo's opening door BANGS him in the forehead. Knocked
on his butt, two SOCIETY WOMEN emerge above him.

WALT

Ladies.

INT. HOTEL CLEVELAND - LOBBY

Walt scrambles in, spotting Ness and staff entering an elevator:

KINCANNON/GROLSCH

Back off, boys! Speeches for later! No
press on the man's floor!

As the doors shut, reporters disperse. But not Walt. He
watches the numbers stop at "12."

INT. HOTEL KITCHEN

Bustling chaos. Walt scampers through, spotting a service
elevator, joining two WAITERS carrying domed silver trays--

WALT

Hiya, Jack Franklin, Board of Health.
We're doin' spot checks on your kitchen
and such. Mind if I ask to see your
service trays there?

As the doors shut, the perplexed Waiters uncover their trays. Walt adjusts his hair in their silver domes' reflection:

WALT
Good polish, nice shine. We like to see that.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY/NESS' SUITE - MOMENTS LATER

Walt bangs out of a "Staff Only" door, to spot Ness, his wife and Lucy about to enter a suite, flanked by the two hulking Cops. Walt hightails it. Skids into the doorway just in time--

WALT
Mr. Ness! If I could just have a moment--

The two cops block his way. Ness doesn't even turn--

LUCY
Another one. Fellas, call security--

WALT
Just a couple quotes, that's all I need!
It's for the Trib! I'm from Chicago!
South Side, Kensington, same as you!--

KINCANNON
No interviews tonight for nobody!

The cops manhandle him out of the room. He tries to hang on--

WALT
It'd be a honor, sir, you don't even know! Back home we don't play cops-and-robbers! We play Capone-and-Ness!

GROLSCH
No press, bud. Look in the mirror.

WALT
Mr. Ness! MR. NESS! You are my one chance to make a difference with my life!

In the room, Ness half-turns. Seeing this, the two cops pause. As ANGLE fully reveals him for the first time. A legend, now age 45. Still handsome. Still a fighter.

WALT
I've been working the trenches four years, sir. I'm a copy-proofer, fact-checker, got an office in the basement. Every couple years a reporter slot opens up, and us office guys get to chase it. Top election night story gets the gig.
(MORE)

WALT (cont'd)
And so bein' we're from the same
neighborhood, you and me...I told my boss
I'd try to land an interview.

NESS
What's your name, son.

WALT
Walt Cahill, sir. Go White Sox.

Ness trades a look with Lucy, who subtly shakes her head no.
But Ness studies Walt, with a half-smile...

WALT
I know how you feel tonight, Mr. Ness.
'Cause I can't wait four more years to
get this chance again.

INT. NESS' SUITE - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

A GLASS OF MILK, by an empty chair. Walt sits waiting, mopping
his brow with his tie. Now realizes he's without his notepad.
Spotting a room service cart, Walt grabs a white cloth napkin.

Ness consults with Lucy and AIDES, studying exit poll paperwork.
The room crackles with energy. Then Ness finally sits down:

NESS
Five minutes, Mr. Cahill, that's about
all I can spare--

WALT
That's perfect, that's great, it's just a
couple quotes I need.

NESS
Still remember me in Chicago, do they?

WALT
Are you kidding? The glory days?
(Ness smiles)
But most folks don't know you ended up
moving on to Cleveland. To take over
their police force--

NESS
To take on a challenge.

WALT
Heard this used to be called the
crookedest town in America.

NESS
Times change.

WALT
And now it's twelve years later and
you're running for Mayor--

NESS
Are you writing on a napkin?

Walt shifts, caught.

NESS
The Tribune. Good paper -- in my day.

No reprimand, just a smile. He offers Walt a campaign flyer.

NESS
It's alright, Mr. Cahill, you can cut to
the chase. Are we doin' Prohibition War
Stories? How'd He Put Capone Away? Or
is it the hatchet job: Why'd He Ever
Leave Chicago? Why's He Running For
Mayor, Thought He'd Be President By Now.

Ness offers a genuine smile. Walt just blinks.

NESS
You want me in the white hat, you want me
in the black hat? C'mon, son. What's
your angle?

WALT
I don't...I don't have an angle.

NESS
You asked for an interview, son. You
gotta give me something to swing at.

WALT
I guess...I just wanted to know what
happened to you. If you ended up where
you wanted to be.

Ness' expression shifts slightly.

WALT
Just to hear it from you -- when you look
back on your career...what's the choice
that defines you most. You know what I
mean? The one where everything would've
be different...

Walt smiles openly, waiting. Ness still hasn't answered.

WALT
Mr. Ness--?

NESS

I'm sorry...Lucy, has that phone call
come through yet?

Off with aides, Lucy looks over. She's unclear, then recovers:

LUCY

Uh...? Oh yes, actually, um, just
now...the Governor's office on the line.
Calling to wish you luck--

NESS

Can it wait? This man's in from Chicago--

LUCY

It's the Governor, sir--

WALT

Oh hey, I can wait. Me. Over here--

NESS

I'm sorry, Mr. Cahill, I only wish we had
the time. Look, I'm just an ordinary
American who believes in our laws and our
system of justice. I go to work to
support my family and I try to do the
very best job I can. And if that means a
fight, for what's fair and what's right,
here I am, son, and ready to serve.

He stands abruptly, offers a hand. Walt, flummoxed, shakes it.

NESS

Those were quotes. Gotta write those
down. Thanks, Lucy, we're done.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Walt's escorted out by Cpt. Kincannon and Cpt. Grolsch--

WALT

Just a couple more things! Mr. Ness!

LUCY

Sorry, Chicago. Got an election to win.

Smiling, she shuts the door in his face. The two cops forcibly
escort him off, each holding a shoulder--

WALT

Hey, uh, officers, you can ease up now--

KINCANNON

Thinks he can show us up like that...

GROLSCH
Just waltz right in on the next Mayor of
Cleveland...

KINCANNON
Wally Walnuts, we got news for you--

They shove him ahead -- BANG! -- right into the elevator doors.

KINCANNON
You bother the man again, I'll put my
boot up your ass like a swizzle stick.

--as the elevator opens with a DING. A man (60) in fedora and
OVERCOAT inside. A bulldog with a perpetual slouch.

KINCANNON
Well now, looky here. Hotel dick, now,
is he? Movin' up in the world.

OVERCOAT
This the trouble?

The two cops hurl Walt inside alone. The doors close.

OVERCOAT
You're the trouble.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Walt picks himself up. The Overcoat shows little interest.

OVERCOAT
Rules are rules. Hotel policy.

WALT
(sotto, perplexed)
I had the interview...and then it was
over...

OVERCOAT
Why? What'd you ask him?

WALT
Just...to tell me about his life...

OVERCOAT
What makes you think the man would want
to do that?

Walt sizes the older man up now. There's some agenda there...

OVERCOAT
He tell you how he did it? Made
Cleveland what it is today?

WALT

He said he turned the city around.

OVERCOAT

(a musing nod)

Next time ask him about 450 Beacon Street. Or the Mad Russian. Or the night of the fire. Next time ask him 'bout Torso.

WALT

"Torso"? What's that?

OVERCOAT

That's the price he had to pay.

The elevator reaches the lobby. Doors open onto a BUSTLING SCENE: gowns, suits and politicians. Campaign posters of Ness. The man in the overcoat takes Walt by the arm:

OVERCOAT

No shoeshines, no nightcaps, no cigarette girls. You won yourself a chaperone.

EXT. HOTEL CLEVELAND - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

The Overcoat escorts Walt out the front doors, lets him go at the sidewalk. Hands back in pockets, heads back in:

OVERCOAT

I see you again, better have a room key.

WALT

Hey, hang on -- wait, mister -- hey!

But he's gone. Walt blinks, flummoxed, bumped and jostled as a COMMOTION blows past. It's the retinue of SENATOR JOHN BOLTON (62), a garrulous charmer, riding a wave of flashbulbs...

REPORTERS (O.S.)

Senator! How 'bout the race tonight!
Pick a horse for us, whaddya say?!

...while Walt ends up at the curb, beside that same mud puddle. Reunited with his ruined notepad at last.

WALT

"Torso"...

And with the shrill blast of a TRAIN WHISTLE, we--

CUT TO:

EXT. KINGSBURY RUN RAVINE - NIGHT (1935)

POV races through overgrown grasses and weeds. An urban wasteland, shadowy, trash-strewn. To the sound of panicked, panting breaths. Sprinting, stumbling, desperate...

There's a BLACK BOY (15) running for his life.

The shrill WHISTLE sounds again, and now we hear its ENGINE, as a LIGHT illuminates a thicket of TRAIN TRACKS--

--as ANGLE reveals a YOUNGER BOY (12) struggling to keep up with his brother, as the Older Boy nears the light--

YOUNGER BOY

ARCHIE, NO!

--but the Older Boy just looks back with a grin, tripping and stumbling as he tries to leap the train tracks--

--just as a FREIGHT TRAIN rumbles past, obliterating the boy from view. His brother stops short just in time:

YOUNGER BOY

Archie?! ARCHIE!!!

The deafening train CLATTERS past. The scared boy can't see through. Then finally, it's gone...

...and reveals the Older Boy standing on the far side, safe and sound. His back turned. Staring at something.

YOUNGER BOY

(crossing the tracks)

Archie, you damn crazy.

The Older Boy hasn't moved. In sumac bushes at his feet, something's wrapped in a BLOOD-STAINED PATCHWORK QUILT.

The two boys stare. Trade a look. Then the Older Boy reaches down for an edge...and lets the misshapen quilt unfurl. And as its horrible contents come tumbling out, we--

CUT TO:

INT. DIVE BAR - HOTEL DISTRICT - *BACK TO ELECTION NIGHT 1947*

RED WINE SPLASHES into a grimy glass. A keg gets tapped with a foaming HISS. SCOTCH bleeds over ice....

REPORTERS (O.S.)

Clickety-Clack and Hackety-Hack. // Two bodies, hold the noggins. // And missing da humdingers, why don't you mention. Yeesh, whatta way to go.

Walt's scribbling furiously on cardboard coasters, at the mercy of four drunk REPORTERS. It's a working-class hangout...

REPORTER #1	REPORTER #2
Go ahead and quote me, kid:	Yeah, go on and quote him.
most diabolical killer in	Put him in print for a change.
American history.	

REPORTER #3	REPORTER #1
Made Jack the Ripper look like	We're talkin' about bodies all
John the Baptist.	over the <u>streets</u> .

REPORTER #4
 But good ol' Ness hunted him down, didn't he? Badge in one hand, gun in the other. Put the ol' Untouchables on the case!

The reporters start laughing. Private nods, little winks...

WALT
 So Ness solved it? He caught the killer?

REPORTER #4
 You kiddin' me, kid? Ness put a bullet in his brain!

REPORTER #2
 Burned the crazy bastard alive is the way I heard it.

REPORTER #3
 Nah, he cut the sonofabitch into pieces and fed his old lady's cats.

Walt senses the laughter's at his expense. Stops taking notes, puts down his pen. The locals offer more drink coasters:

REPORTERS
 Aw c'mon, c'mon. Buy another round, we'll set you straight.

WALT
 Yeah, yeah. How much of it's true.

REPORTER #1
 You didn't mess with Eliot Ness, mister. Not in those days. Not in Cleveland.

Two scribblers nod reverence, two others snicker. And as Walt surveys their poker faces, a calm, dry VOICE cuts in--

FRITCHEY (O.S.)
 So there's this kid comes running out of a burning building, total inferno, the whole thing's on fire...

--and the men part to reveal CLAYTON FRITCHEY (44) ensconced on the barstool beyond them. Sallow face, rumpled suit and a natty polka-dot bow tie. He's several drinks down, as usual.

FRITCHEY

...and the boy sees a man on the street,
says "Please sir, please help me! My
ma's trapped inside with my little
brother and my baby sis!" So the man
takes off running right up to the blaze,
drops his pants and starts jerking his
johnson. The flames are rising, the
family's dying, and the poor kid screams
"What are you doing?!" Says the man,
"It's alright. I'm a journalist."

The reporters chuckle and groan, surrounding like sharks--

REPORTER #2

Twitchy-Friggin'-Fritchey--

REPORTER #3

Hey Twitch, you the pot or the
kettle on that one?

REPORTER #1

Get lost on the way to the
country club?

REPORTER #4

Still scribblin' the Pillow
Talk Express?

REPORTER #2

Those blue-hair society dames!
Bet they're all real
chatterboxes in the sack!

REPORTER #3

But ya gotta take their teeth
outta the jar, don't you?

Fritchey drops a fiver, on his way out, with eyes on Walt--

FRITCHEY

They shut the book on Torso years ago.
Try talking to someone who was there.

WALT

OK -- wait a minute -- were you?

FRITCHEY

Trust me. I'm nowhere near drunk enough.

And he's gone. The young sharks guffaw, mocking the old-timer,
as Walt surveys the bar, frustrated, sotto:

WALT

One interview. How hard can it be...

EXT. HOTEL CLEVELAND - SIDE OF BUILDING - NIGHT

Walt returns along the lounge-side of the hotel. A group of
PRETTY WOMEN in POWDER BLUE LONGCOATS are sweeping the streets.

Through windows, he can see Senator Bolton and his WIFE holding
court, regaling some REPORTERS with tales.

Intrigued, Walt sets his resolve. He rounds back for the front, but sees Kincannon and Grolsch smoking cigs by the entry. So he ducks aside, spots separate doors to the hotel restaurant...

INT. HOTEL CLEVELAND - RESTAURANT ENTRY - MOMENTS LATER

Walt enters, stack of PAPERS now in hand. Met by a MAITRE'D:

MAITRE'D
Reservation with us, sir?

WALT
I'm with the Senator's staff -- brought his draft legislation. He's making tips tax-exempt.

MAITRE'D
Oh. By all means.

Entrance gained, Walt slips toward the lounge, abandoning the leaflet litter as he nears the raconteur Senator...

BOLTON
...because there are ideals and there are actions, boys. A man either lives by one or the other. And with all due respect to my good man the Pope, I'll take a prizefighter over a priest. It's the same as they asked me as Mayor: why hire Ness to run my city?

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. CLEVELAND CITY HALL - DAY (1935)

--where we pick up (Mayor) Bolton at a podium, mid-sentence:

BOLTON
BECAUSE I BELIEVE IN OUR FUTURE, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! I believe in the future of Cleveland! A paragon of American industry that ranks with the great and prosperous cities of the world! But to compete on such a stage, my friends, you know as well as I...this city has to change. That's the promise I made you in November and the one I intend to keep.

IN THE SHADOWS OF COLUMNS

A pair of HANDS are clasped. A crowd somewhere beyond.

BOLTON (O.S.)
For you and I, we are at war, my friends.
At war with crime and corruption.
(MORE)

BOLTON (O.S.) (cont'd)
 And what we require is the wisdom of a
 warrior, who has seen such battles won.

A MAN and WOMAN stand, hand-in-hand. In silhouette.

BOLTON (O.S.)
 So let's all give a great big Ohio
 welcome to your new Director of Public
 Safety, the head of your police and
 emergency services, and the leader of
 Chicago's heroic Untouchables...it is my
 great honor to be the man who signs his
 paycheck...the one and only ELIOT NESS!

A MARCHING BAND begins o.s.. The man kisses the woman gently
 and they advance together, past the columns and into the light--

--where a CROWD OF THOUSANDS awaits at the base of the steps of
 City hall. They're meeting NESS (here 33) and his blonde wife
 EDNA (32, all-American homemaker) for the first time. They
 descend the steps halfway to meet Mayor Bolton at a podium.

Handshakes, smiles, flashbulbs. Edna edges away to take a seat
 beside Bolton's wife. Ness steps to the podium, surveys the
 hopeful Clevelanders. Boyish, nervous, but a firm jaw:

NESS
 Wow, Mister Mayor. You made me out to be
 a real somebody.

His joke falls flat. So he starts his speech...

NESS
 My name is Eliot Ness. I grew up in a
 bakery on Chicago's South Side, the
 youngest of four children. My father was
 never wealthy, but he was rich in a way.
 For he told me the only things in life of
 any value...are the ones no one else can
 ever take. Not money, power or fame.
 But integrity. Honesty. And respect for
 the law. They allow a man to sleep well.
They make communities strong.

Ness surveys the faces in the crowd, mostly poor...

NESS
 When I walk the streets of Cleveland, I
 see a community that's lost its way.
 You've lost your faith in your police,
 for you know they're on the take. You've
 lost your faith in your elected officials
 for all around you see blight and decay--

Uneasy murmurs from the crowd. Bolton stage-whispers...

BOLTON

Jesus, Eliot. Don't sugarcoat it...

NESS

But you survive, you endure, and you lament there's nothing you can do. Well, I'm here to tell you you're wrong.

Bolton looks wary, Edna looks worried, but Ness plows ahead, gaining courage and momentum...

NESS

We must honor integrity. We must honor decency. We must honor the law. We must look to our own lives, every one of us. Let us remember what is truly of value...that we may all be wealthy men. That's the legacy I envision for Cleveland, Ohio, and why I'm proud to now call it home. So today I ask you to hear me as I heard my father then: I will not "request" the better angels of your natures. For all our sakes...I will demand.

An uncertain beat...and the audience erupts with APPLAUSE and CHEERS. Bolton finally exhales. Edna casts Ness a deeply proud look...and we leave him bathed in a city's adoration as we--

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL CLEVELAND - LOUNGE - *BACK TO ELECTION NIGHT*

--where Walt now sits wedged in Senator Bolton's banquette, now scribbling on his cocktail napkins--

BOLTON

Damn lucky to land him, I'll tell you that. FBI was the job he really wanted. But Hoover wouldn't hire him. Saw him as a threat.

MRS. BOLTON

Poor Eliot. So unfair.

BOLTON

Eliot eats only meat, did you know that? Meat and potatoes.

MRS. BOLTON

And milk.

BOLTON

God yes, and milk. An example for us all.

He nudges his wife, expertly preserved. She duly titters.

WALT
And what could you tell me about his work
on "Torso"?

Bolton's smile fades. So does the wife's.

BOLTON
Young man, that case was Eliot Ness's
finest hour.

WALT
"Finest?" See, I heard--

BOLTON
Good God, are we here to talk about
madmen? Or are we here to elect one!
Waiter, let's have some milk over here!
Milk for everyone! Milk all around!

He trades more laughs with his wife, then spots Lucy the pretty
campaign aide passing by--

BOLTON
Oh Lucy! Lucy, be a dear!

LUCY
By all means, Senator.

BOLTON
This handsome young fellow here, what's
your name again?

WALT
Walt Cahill, Chicago Tribune.

Lucy's stare flattens to see Walt back in the hotel...

BOLTON
He's an out-of-towner so you can be
straight with him. Wants to know Eliot's
curriculum vitae. How he raised this
fair city like a phoenix from the ashes,
etcetera, embellishments, so forth.
(to Walt)
Lucy started here as his secretary--

LUCY
Senator, I am extremely busy--

BOLTON
And if we didn't make time for the press,
my dear girl, how would they ever learn
to spell our names?

LUCY
 (grits a smile)
 C'mon, Chicago. Follow me.

She marches off. Walt hurries to depart the booth--

WALT
 Thank you for your time, Senator.

BOLTON
 Best of luck to you, young man.
 (winks)
 She has a boyfriend but I hear it's not serious.

Walt blinks, but skedaddles off to catch up. At Bolton's table, a WAITER arrives with a tray full of MILK GLASSES. A beat.

BOLTON
 Good God. I was joking.

INT. HOTEL CLEVELAND - LOBBY

Where Walt hustles to keep pace--

WALT
 So you were his secretary?

LUCY
 Listen, mosquito. I don't know who let you back in here or how you got in good with the Senator...
 (stops, to another AIDE)
 Ollie, if they're here, they already voted! Why are there posters everywhere! Joie de vivre, OK? This is a party!
 (checks her watch)
 Shit. He's gonna be starving.

INT. HOTEL KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

A serving tray is lifted: sliced roast pork beside a medley of vegetables and greens. Lucy proceeds to chuck most of it, to the dismay of a HOTEL CHEF looking on--

LUCY
 The pig is fine, keep the pig, but it's potatoes or nothing.

HOTEL CHEF
 I'm afraid we have none prepared--

LUCY
 No potatoes? Who doesn't serve meat with potatoes?

HOTEL CHEF

The second entree tonight is prime rib.

LUCY

Side of prime, send it up, this the menu?

She grabs a calligraphy-printed sheet, hands it to Walt--

LUCY

You look like you need something to write on.

--and she's off the way she came, with Walt in tow, as WAITERS wheel a ROASTED PIG right by on a platter--

LUCY

Lucy Forrester. Three R's, two together. Campaign coordinator, you are not to write "secretary"--

She waltzes out through a swinging door, as Walt follows-- and nearly collides with her as she walks right back in.

LUCY

You are not to write "secretary."

WALT

I'm just trying to get a handle on this "Torso Killer" case.

LUCY

Aren't you're writing about the election?

WALT

It's for background, a line or two, tops.

She studies his eyes. A touch suspicious.

LUCY

You know what makes a Great Man? You know why they call Great Men great? Because they are tested.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - LOBBY - DAY (1935)

Ness enters "Central Station," in his trademark camel's hair topcoat, suit and hat. He nods to the FLATTIES (beat cops) as he passes. They all eye him warily...

LUCY (V.O.)

You have to understand what Eliot was up against, walking in there day one on the job. A thousand cops under his command and every one wanting him to fail.

(MORE)

LUCY (V.O.) (cont'd)
This city was their personal bank
vault...and he was here to bust it down.

INT. NESS' OFFICE - DAY

The CHIEF OF POLICE shows Ness into his office suite, where Lucy (here 20) stands to greet him. She's different: shy and demure, glasses on. Has trouble meeting his handsome gaze...

CHIEF MATOWITZ
Bird's from the pool. If her looks ain't
your type, they'll send up another one.

NESS
Good morning. I'm Eliot Ness.

LUCY
Lucy. Lucy Forrester.

She shakes his hand, weak and nervous. Ness smiles warmly.

NESS
Any policemen in your family, Miss
Forrester?

LUCY
No, I'm sorry, sir--

NESS
(to the Chief)
She'll do fine.

Ness shows the off-balance Chief the door as he shuts it.

NESS
Miss Forrester. There are one thousand,
two hundred and seventy four men employed
by this department. I want the file on
every single one.

EXT. LAKESIDE COTTAGE - DUSK

An idyllic house on the shore of Lake Erie, where a procession of ten police SQUAD CARS arrives. Ness and Lucy emerge from the first. The trunks of all ten are lifted...

...and POLICEMEN begin carting BOXES OF FILES toward the cottage -- as Edna Ness emerges, stroking a tabby cat. Seeing her husband's workload, her face falls...

INT. LAKESIDE COTTAGE - DUSK

SIX CATS scurry aside as the cops carry the boxes in. Lucy supervises, then wanders into a formal dining room, where a sideboard displays photos of the Untouchables' Chicago heroics. She picks up a glamour shot of Ness, clearly smitten...

EDNA (O.S.)
 I miss Chicago, that's all, Eliot. I
 don't know anyone here. I'll be alone
 with the cats all day...

Lucy slips behind a sheer-curtained door as Edna and Eliot come
 into view in the adjoining room, full of unpacked possessions...

NESS
 Mrs. Ness. This city needs us.

EDNA
 Oh, I know. Show me one that doesn't.
 Though I was under the impression they
 were going to provide you with an office.

She narrows her eyes at the incoming file boxes, just as a cat
 scurries across the dining table beside them...

NESS
 And I was under the impression we had
 stopped rescuing strays.

EDNA
 Why Mr. Ness. Are you offering to keep
 the bedroom warm in their place?

NESS
 Stocked with files, cozy as can be.

She pouts, but he smiles. Takes her hands, standing close...

NESS
 It's just for now, I promise. Till I can
 turn this department around. Then the
 theater, the symphony -- we'll take on
 the town.

EDNA
 Might I remind you, Eliot...you were my
 Untouchable first.

NESS
 And you, Mrs. Ness, are the most
 beautiful woman in the world.

They're standing close, hands clasped. And as they kiss...
 another CAT leaps off a bookshelf to land on Ness' shoulders.
 He doesn't react till he breaks the kiss...

NESS
 But changes must be made.

EDNA
 Of course, my love. You first.

She laughs as Ness swats away the clinging cat. He then draws his service revolver, mock-taking a bead...

EDNA
Eliot, no! Eliot, stop! For God's
sakes, the poor frightened thing...

Lucy watches from behind the curtain as Edna chases Ness around the dining room, trying to take the gun away, a mock-fight with both laughing, and clinching for another kiss...as Lucy -- with a schoolgirl's crush -- averts her eyes and slips away.

LUCY (V.O.)
In all my time at Central Station, I'd
never met anyone like him. Beholden to a
calling. A selfless code...

EXT. UPSCALE DISTRICT - NIGHT - DAYS LATER

Where Lucy rushes a sidewalk crowd, librarian-glasses slipping, wobbling as fast as her high heels will carry her--

LUCY (V.O.)
He truly believed it was his duty to help
honest citizens...anywhere, anytime...

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

--as she races inside, past the MAITRE'D, scanning the crowd--

LUCY
Mr. Ness!

--and now interrupts his romantic dinner with Edna--

LUCY
I'm sorry, please forgive me -- Mr. Ness,
he says it's urgent! Mr. Cullitan, the
District Attorney, he's gone out to the
Harvard Club to serve a warrant. He's in
a standoff! Says he's facing machine
guns! And he can't get any city support!

NESS
Have shots been fired? Have we alerted
the Chief?

LUCY
He claims it's not our jurisdiction!

NESS
It is if good men are in danger. Mrs.
Ness, I'm sorry, darling.
(to Lucy)
Would you please keep my wife company for
the rest of her supper.

Before he rushes out, Lucy stops him. Licks her sleeve and rubs a stain off his lapel. He nods thanks and he's gone. Lucy plops into his chair, breathless. Takes a sip of Ness' milk.

LUCY
I'm Lucy. It's an honor.

EDNA
So it would seem.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL CLEVELAND - BALLROOM - *BACK TO ELECTION NIGHT*

Where Walt hustles to keep up with Lucy, on the move--

WALT
Yes, I met his wife briefly upstairs.
She seems very nice.

LUCY
Upstairs? God, that's Betty. I'm
talking about his first wife. You really
don't know anything, do you?

WALT
But what about "Torso?"

LUCY
Eliot came here with a vision. He took
on the odds and cleaned house. And once
upon a time, guys like you actually wrote
about that.
(looks past him)
Oh you gotta be kidding me...

And she abandons him, storming toward the lobby, where two dozen YOUNG BOYS in camel's hair coats and fedoras are rough-housing and playing. Like mini-Nesses. Lucy advances on AIDES:

LUCY
Ed! ED! You see this thing here with
all my blood, sweat and tears? It's
called a schedule!

WALT
Miss Forrester--? Lucy--?
(she finally turns)
Was that campaign coordinator or senior
campaign coordinator?

LUCY
Chicago, I like you: you listen. I'll
talk to you later...

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Entering, Walt freezes, again spotting Kincannon and Grolsch. He grabs a Ness poster to shield his face, spins the other way--

INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

--and back into the lounge area, where he notices out the window...Fritchey the half-drunk reporter. Aimlessly ambling across the street toward the bustling "Public Square."

EXT. "PUBLIC SQUARE" - MOMENTS LATER

Fritchey weaves the bustling nexus of downtown, flanked on one end by the towering Hotel Cleveland, and on the other by its ornate rival, the Hollenden Hotel.

The Election Night scene is charged and lively, with SUPPORTERS bandying "Vote Yes for Ness" signs. A few of them scuffle with CAMPAIGNERS with "Thomas Burke: Man of the People" banners...

...and as Walt pursues Fritchey across, the Burke signs soon outnumber the Ness signs. Entering opposition territory.

WALT

Mr. Fritchey! Mr. Fritchey! Walt
Cahill, Chicago Tribune--

Fritchey turns, with a bag of peanuts. No recognition at first. So Walt flashes his cocktail coasters of "notes."

WALT

Are you drunk enough yet?

FRITCHEY

I could be.

CUT TO:

EXT. A SNOWY ALLEY - NIGHT (1935)

A PIT BULL is snarling and barking, straining at the rope that holds him to a post.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Somebody shut that mutt up!

A PORTLY WOMAN hurries out in her nightgown, trying to hush the animal. It's fixated on a LARGE BASKET in the snow.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

If I hafta go and come down there, I'll
shoot him, I swear to God!

The woman wanders over to investigate, as a skeevy, shirtless MAN leans out a high tenement window.

PORTLY WOMAN
It's the hams, someone left some hams!
Are these your hams?

AGGRAVATED MAN
Just give 'em to the goddamn dog!

PORTLY WOMAN
They're good hams. They're worth
something!

AGGRAVATED MAN
Yeah, so's a good night's sleep!

The woman SHUSHES the dog, collecting the heavy basket...

AGGRAVATED MAN
Hey. Hey you. How's about I pays you
two dollar fifty to come up and give my
Caddy a jack?

PORTLY WOMAN
I'm married.

AGGRAVATED MAN
I'll give you five.

PORTLY WOMAN
Lemme see it.

The shirtless man flashes some bills. The woman sighs.

PORTLY WOMAN
Hafta check with my husband.

She leaves the basket on her three-step stoop and heads inside,
as the man shuts his window. The pit bull finally SNAPS his
frayed rope, charging to KNOCK the basket over--

--and sends the "hams" spilling down the steps...to reveal
they're not hams at all. But body parts. A chunky ARM. A
human THIGH. Two swollen FEET. And a woman's TORSO.

The dog is busy. The dog is quiet.

CUT TO:

INT. HOLLENDEN HOTEL - BAR - *BACK TO ELECTION NIGHT*

A raucous, anticipatory scene at Party Central for "Thomas
Burke." Walt's with Fritchey, elbow to elbow:

FRITCHEY
Victim number three, she was chopped into
pieces like all the rest.
(MORE)

FRITCHEY (cont'd)
 Rather a godsend for the circulation.
 The paper's, of course, not hers.

WALT
 You covered the crime beat?

FRITCHEY
 I did then. Now I tally funerals and engagements. But in between, I'll have you know, I was something of a noted columnist. I have Mr. Ness to blame for that.

WALT
 I don't understand.

FRITCHEY
 Winter of '35, no one was paying much attention to the murders yet. Least of all our own alleged "police." They had their own heads to worry about...

CUT TO:

EXT. THE HARVARD CLUB - NIGHT (1935)

A BEAUTIFUL REDHEAD smiles down from a billboard hawking "Brite-a-Shine" beauty products. Her locks of glorious hair frame her come-hither look...and she towers over...a flashy neon sign: "THE HARVARD CLUB -- Entertainment Nightly."

FRITCHEY (V.O.)
 Back then, this East Side joint called the Harvard Club was Cleveland's H-double-Q for the mob. And every flatfoot in town knew he'd only get his cut of the action if he left well enough alone. Girls, gambling, guns -- you name it. If you wanted a criminal education, you went to Harvard.

It's a windowless building on the city outskirts, with two GUARDS packing Tommy guns in the rooftop shadows. As Fritchey exits, tipsy, FLASK in hand, past a PLUG-UGLY BOUNCER...

PLUG-UGLY
 See you tomorrow night, Fritch. Better luck next time.

Noting POLICE CARS nearby, Fritchey keeps his hat brim low. A small ARGUMENT over there. Arriving COPS and a CROWD OF ONLOOKERS gathering...so curious Fritchey sidles closer...

...to spy Ness with Chief Matowitz, some senior COPS and TOM CULLITAN (47), a D.A. raging at a trio of amused FLATTIES:

CULLITAN

Because your officers refuse to cooperate! With me! The District Attorney!

SURLY BEAT COP

Got news for you, boss. You ain't in Sunday School no more.

WISE-ASS BEAT COP

You go ahead and bust on in. We'll pick the bullets outta your ass--

CULLITAN

I have a warrant, a county warrant, for the mobster and murderer Shimmy Williams! Whom I know is inside that establishment!

WHINY BEAT COP

We take our orders from Captain Kincannon, boss.

NESS

And your Captain Kincannon reports to Chief Matowitz who reports to me.

SURLY BEAT COP

With all due respect, Mr. Ness, you got the big office and the fancy-ass suit. It's us with our lives on the line.

NESS

And do you know why I wear the suit? For a target. Your badges and your weapons, gentlemen.

CHIEF MATOWITZ

Eliot, this isn't necessary--

WISE-ASS BEAT COP

Is 'dis a joke? We're doing our jobs--

CHIEF MATOWITZ

I can vouch for these men--

WHINY BEAT COP

It's called keeping the peace!

Ness RIPS the badge off the cop's shirt with one hand. The cop stumbles back, surprised -- tripping into the other two--

--as Ness RIPS their shields from their uniforms too. They bumble back, hitting a snowbank, all three plopping to seats.

WISE-ASS BEAT COP

Chief. These guys got guns. You gonna do something here?

CHIEF MATOWITZ

With all due respect, Eliot, it's not really worth it.

(MORE)

CHIEF MATOWITZ (cont'd)
It's just an illegal gambling joint in
there. We'd be interfering with their
drug trade and sex trade at best.

Ness just stares at him. The Chief sagely shrugs. Ness
searches the bystanders -- sees their faces, awaiting his move.
Then spots Fritchey in the crowd with a notebook and pen:

NESS
You there! Reporter! You want the
exclusive? Get me cameras down here now.

EXT. HARVARD CLUB - NIGHT - LATER

FLASHBULBS POP as the beat cops sit handcuffed, surrounded by a
growing squadron of PHOTOGRAPHERS and JOURNALISTS. An
atmosphere of anticipation. A crowd of CITIZENS has built...

NESS
Ladies and gentlemen, I've come to
Cleveland to enforce the law. So I
intend to serve Mr. Cullitan's warrant
tonight -- and if my own officers won't
stand with me...I'll deputize each and
every Cleveland citizen who will!

The bystanders shuffle feet and avert their eyes. No one steps
forward. Except Fritchey, wanting that exclusive, now doing his
best to sober up. Ness nods thanks.

NESS
Good man. Are those cameras ready?!

The shutterbugs have spread out at the parking lot's edge...

NESS
On my signal.

From across the parking lot, Ness faces the club. Alone. On
the roof, the shadowed GUARDS and their Tommy guns have stopped
pacing, in position, trigger-fingers tense.

Ness takes a single step forward. Brandishes his badge high:

NESS
My name is Eliot Ness, Safety Director of
the City of Cleveland! If there is
criminal activity taking place here, I
warn you arrests will be made! Now I
know you men are armed and I suspect you
men fear nothing. Well tonight, I advise
you to fear one thing.
(beat)
Fear fame.

Flashbulbs POP as Ness begins his march. Intermittently
ILLUMINATED, the armed guards hesitate...

NESS

Who wants his picture in the paper?!
Make a move and you're on the front page!

Ness crosses the wintry lot -- a lone fedora and topcoat, badge held like a torch in the darkness. His eyes are on the Club's entry. Never looking to the guns above...

As the continuous POP-POP-POP of flashes STROBE the scene...and the GUARDS trade looks, unsure whether to fire...as Ness reaches the door. A relieved, private breath. Then turns back:

NESS

Get your close-ups, gentlemen!

Fritchey and the Photographers trade looks...and then tentatively start across the snow. As no shots come, they soon break into runs. Gathering behind Ness at the door.

Way back at the snowy lot's edge, the senior COPS trade looks:

POLICE LIEUTENANT

We should prob'ly, maybe, uh...start heading over there...

...as Ness raps hard on the door. A metal slit-cover ratchets aside. The dim PLUG-UGLY bouncer stares out--

PLUG-UGLY

Club's closed.

NESS

I have a message from the District Attorney for a Mr. Shimmy Williams.

PLUG-UGLY

Don't know no one by that name.

NESS

I'm fully prepared to have this building surrounded and arrest any man who enters or exits.

PLUG-UGLY

Fuck off. It's Saturday.

Ness just stares. Plug-Ugly sighs, unlatches the door--

PLUG-UGLY

Tell you what. How 'bout we have a talk, just you and me. Come to some kinda fiduciary understanding--

--and Ness lowers his shoulder and RAMS ahead, forcing his way in, knocking the Plug-Ugly off-balance--

INT. FOYER/EXT. DOORWAY

--as three more TUXEDOED GOONS back up, surprised, one dropping a tray of CASINO CHIPS, as Ness JUDO-CHOPS Plug-Ugly in the throat, KICKS him in the knee, PINS an arm back and SPINS him, then TRIPS him over a knee, accidentally stripping his toupee!

Fritchey and the photographers PILE IN the door, snapping SHOTS, as the goon hits the floor, sprawled amidst casino chips--

NESS

It's called jujitsu. From the Orient.

The goon struggles up, enraged, pulling his pistol--

PLUG-UGLY

Fuckin' cocksuck motherfucker, I'm gonna blow out your fuckin' brains--!

Ness blanches, alarmed, recoiling to ward him off as the goon takes a bead on a head-shot--

--but as he plants his front foot, he SLIPS on casino chips, flying off-balance as FLASHBULBS POP -- and the Plug-Ugly hits hard, head striking the metal chip tray. Knocked unconscious.

Ness is frozen in defensive jujitsu pose. Realizing no shot's forthcoming, he swallows. Looks to Fritchey:

NESS

Clearly, we'll be filing charges.

INT. HARVARD CLUB - GAMING AREA - CONTINUOUS

As Ness and his press platoon march round the corner--

NESS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! THIS IS A RAID!

--where just twenty or so CLUBGOERS are at the tables, drinking, gambling. Two COPS in uniform, hitting on a GOOD-TIME GIRL. And a pair of natty GANGSTERS at a lonely roulette table:

NATTY GANGSTER

What did he say? "Parade?"

And as Chief Matowitz and more COPS reluctantly spill in, the customers realize it's no joke, scrambling for the exits--

NESS

I want names! Get me names! And take pictures! Pictures of everyone!

--and as FLASHBULBS pop, EMPLOYEES scramble to spin slot machines behind ROTATING WALLS, drop POKER TABLES into the floor, open up secret ESCAPE HATCHES--

--as the Good-Time girl tries to flee her john, a young Cpt. KINCANNON (30)-- who spins to find Ness in her stead:

KINCANNON
What the hell, boyo...? I'm Captain
Kincannon! This is my fuckin' precinct!

NESS
Not anymore.

Ness spins him with an arm-trap hold, face to the bar, and offers the nearest reporter -- Fritchey -- a pair of cuffs:

NESS
What's your name, friend?

FRITCHEY
Clayton Fritchey. Plains-Dealer.

NESS
Well, congratulations, Mr. Fritchey. I'd
say tomorrow's front page is yours.

Fritchey eagerly cuffs Kincannon to the rail, then motions for his SHUTTERBUG to take some close-ups--

KINCANNON
THIS IS MY PRECINCT! Hey! You! HEY!
Someone catch that little whore and get
my money back!

At a poker table, Ness joins Cullitan, who's cornered a GANGLAND BOSS with a vengeful stare...

NESS
Mr. James "Shimmy" Williams?
(slams warrant down)
Your luck in Cleveland just ran out.

EXT. HARVARD CLUB - CONTINUOUS

Tuxedoed CLUB EMPLOYEES and GOOD-TIME GIRLS flee into the lot, passing Chief Matowitz, escorting the cuffed Gangland Boss--

CHIEF MATOWITZ
You have no idea. I mean, please,
believe me. I cannot stress just how
awkward this is--

--as the cheering CROWD OF CITIZENS pelts them with SNOWBALLS, and Ness stands in the doorway, with a satisfied look...

FRITCHEY (V.O.)

The one lesson he took outta Chicago, the real wisdom he learned from Capone...was you can't win over the people till you win over the press...and lemme tell you, that was alright by me--

INT. DARKROOM - PLAINS-DEALER - NIGHT

Flooded in red. As Fritchey bursts in on a Staff Photographer:

FRITCHEY

It's running front page! My byline, my column! This guy, he's our ticket!

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

OK, look, I got a whole buncha shots... and, well, there is this one...

Fritchey takes a still-wet sheet from a photo bath...and his eyes light up like it's Christmas morning...as we--

FLASHCUT! THE HARVARD CLUB -- with Ness in his backpedal crouch, about to get shot by Plug-Ugly, whose footing flies out from under him, as a FLASHBULB POPS--

--FREEZING THE IMAGE such that it appears that gun-toting Plug-Ugly has been sent flying backwards by Ness' judo-stance fist--

--as we PULL OUT to find it's the FRONT PAGE PHOTO on The Plains-Dealer, beside "American Enforcer -- by Clayton Fritchey."

TO REVEAL EXT. CLEVELAND NEWS STAND - DAWN

--where a DOWNTOWN CROWD buys up papers, as a NEWSHAWK calls:

NEWSHAWK

Read all about it, ladies and gentlemen! Eliot Ness, the One-Man Army! He's Cleveland's Enforcer and he's working for YOU!

EXT. LAKESIDE COTTAGE - DAWN

Ness stands in his doorway, perusing the paper. Beyond him, Edna's in her bathrobe. Cats meander.

NESS

A column. Every issue. On me.

He looks up to see Fritchey waiting, hat in hand.

FRITCHEY

Front page, five days a week. That's what the Plains-Dealer's offering.

(MORE)

FRITCHEY (cont'd)
 You give me the one-on-one and it's word-
 for-word the way you want it. Your
 message. Straight to the people.

Ness considers.

NESS
 Well, the first thing you'll need to
 understand, Mr. Fritchey. It won't be my
 "message." It'll be the truth.

INT. CENTRAL STATION - DAY - *BEGIN "HERO MONTAGE"*

BOOM! As Ness SLAMS through the doors, marching forth, as
 FLATTIES dart aside, our ANGLE RACES PAST...to find Fritchey in
 a phone booth, calling in the day's story:

FRITCHEY
 Quit painting your nails, sugar: I got
 front page stuff and I ain't stopping.
 "Six feet tall and a hundred and seventy-
 two pounds of valor, vim and vigor, Mr.
 Eliot Ness has come to Cleveland..."

INT. NEWSROOM - PLAINS-DEALER - DAY

Where Fritchey's new PLAIN JANE TYPIST dances her fingers over
 typewriter keys, phone to her ear, taking dictation:

FRITCHEY (V.O.)
 "...and -- mark my words out there -- all
 you Jack Nasties have met your match!"

INT. POLICE AUDITORIUM - DAY

Ness at a podium, Chief Matowitz at his side, before an audience
 of the city's entire POLICE FORCE:

NESS
 This is no badge, gentlemen. This is an
 oath. For to wear it is to swear your
allegiance...

INT. RED-LIGHT BROTHEL - NIGHT

Ness and some BEAT COPS bust through the door, rounding up
 dismal PROSTITUTES and their JOHNS on another raid...

NESS (V.O.)
 For an officer of the law must do more
 than "protect and defend." He must show
 his community how to live.

EXT. DINER ACROSS FROM BROTHEL - NIGHT

As from a PAYPHONE across the way, Fritchey REPORTS IN again,
 watching Ness and co. haul out the arrests...

FRITCHEY

"A leader of men and a master of wits,
Mr. Ness is also an expert in the
Oriental fighting art of Jujitsu..."

INT. NEWSROOM - PLAINS-DEALER - NIGHT

Where Fritchey's Plain Jane Typist takes his dictation,
flummoxed momentarily: first "Jewjitsoo," then "Joojitsu"...

FRITCHEY (V.O.)

"...in which an opponent's superior size
and strength is tactically used to defeat
him!"

...as she RIPS the paper from her typewriter and hands it off--

INT. "POLICY" GAMBLING HALL - NIGHT

--just as a NEWSPAPER hits with an overturned desk, showing
Fritchey's column "*American Enforcer*"...as ANGLE REVEALS a RAID
underway on the numbers rackets. With Ness in command...

NESS (V.O.)

An officer of the law must be virtuous
and above reproach, and in so doing
inspire others to strive for the noble
and honest path...

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Where a JUDGE bangs a gavel, adjourning the sentencing of
Captain Kincannon. He's led away in cuffs, casting Ness a
vengeful stare. Kincannon's shrewish WIFE spits in Ness' face,
before BAILIFFS haul her off too...as Fritchey looks on...

NESS (V.O.)

Free from oppression, free from fear.
For only then will his endeavors have
been in service to a world worth
building...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NESS' HOUSE - DAY

Where Fritchey smiles through an interview with Edna, trying not
to mind the six CATS crawling over and around him...

FRITCHEY (V.O.)

"And by his side for his Cleveland
crusade is his lovely wife Edna, a proud
Presbyterian and a delightful
conversationalist. They've been married
for eight fine years, and I'm telling you
ladies out there: if you want an honest
man...if you want an honest man..."

INT. FRITCHEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Fritchey's shirtless in bed, hat still on, typewriter propped on his stomach. Wired, inspired, seeking the perfect phrase...

FRITCHEY
...if you want an honest man...

PLAIN-JANE TYPIST (O.S.)
...gotta get 'em while they're young.

...as his Typist emerges from beneath the covers at his waist. Fritchey grins. Resumes pounding the keys.

FRITCHEY
Love it, sugar. Promotion for you.

INT. DETECTIVES' ROOM - DAY

A row of bullpen desks, where BLUE LEGAL ENVELOPES are perched on every one. As plainclothes D.T.'s arrive...

NESS (V.O.)
And so over the next few weeks,
gentlemen, many of you will be receiving
a certain blue envelope.

EXT. CENTRAL STATION PARKING LOT - DAY

A row of SQUAD CARS and MOTORBIKES, with BLUE LEGAL ENVELOPES tucked on the windshields...as TRAFFIC COPS emerge...

NESS (V.O.)
Inside you will find your severance
checks, and orders to relinquish your
badges and weapons...

INT. SENIOR LIEUTENANT'S OFFICE - DAY

A LIEUTENANT enters laughing with other SENIOR BRASS...until he sees the BLUE LEGAL ENVELOPE sitting on his chair...

NESS (V.O.)
My decisions are final. There will be no
appeals. Because any policeman who so
much as accepts a doughnut he didn't pay
for...staring today, you answer to me.

BACK TO INT. POLICE AUDITORIUM - END "HERO MONTAGE"

Where Ness concludes his speech with conviction...

NESS

For the dishonest public servant --
hiding behind a badge or a political
office -- this man to me is more
detestable than any so-called criminal on
our streets. We have our duty to the
law. We have our duty to the truth. It
is that which makes us men.

With that, he's finished. The room is silent. Ness nods a
signal to Lucy, in the front row--

--and she stands and APPLAUDS with haste. A cue for the rest.
Chief Matowitz reluctantly joins her. And the clapping comes
sluggishly, a slow wave...

...until the entire force offers dread-tinged acclaim. Amidst
REPORTERS at back, Fritchey sips from his flask...

AS WE FIND A ROW OF DETECTIVES

Sitting mid-auditorium, paunchy slouchers in their 40's and
50's...as ANGLE settles on the wiry, tall, androgynous DT. SAM
SIMON (33), half-reading a pulp paperback. He glances over to
his partner, the grizzled bulldog DT. DANIEL MYRLO (48)...

*...whom we recognize as the hotel dick ("The Overcoat") whom
Walt met in the Hotel Cleveland's elevator...*

MYRLO

Doughnuts are out.

SIMON

You are so fucked.

EXT. 55TH STREET BRIDGE - DAWN (1936)

Now springtime. A freight train with boxcars labeled "*Cuyahoga
Meatpacking*" RUMBLES a brackish river's span...

FRITCHEY (V.O.)

Now all the while Eliot was firing cops,
that Torso Killer was slouching his way.
First page A-19, then A-10...

...as a destitute FATHER and SON, with fishing rods, amble by...

FRITCHEY (V.O.)

...and then, before anyone knew it...the
real war was on the way.

...as down below, the current bobs some torn and tattered BURLAP
BAGS into view. Wrapped in one is a BLACK FEMALE ARM. A BLACK
FEMALE TORSO. And her WHITE LEG.

EXT. UNDERWATER - MORNING - LATER

SPLASH! A BRASS-HELMETED DEEP SEA DIVER plunges into the murk, drifting down, down, down into darkness...

EXT. RAILROAD BRIDGE - MORNING - LATER

A CROWD now gathered atop the trestle, watching a second brass-helmeted diver step off a POLICE BOAT...

...as Fritchey wanders home from a bender, sipping his flask...

FRITCHEY (V.O.)
In eight months now, six bodies, and
still not one that could be ID'd. And
for God's sake, let's be honest, if no
one was reporting the victims missing...
how important could they be?

Noting the commotion, he spots the two lead detectives (Myrlo and Simon) at the bridge's edge, surveying the scene:

SIMON
Black top, white bottom. She must've
been some kinda lady.

MYRLO
This is gonna be paperwork.

He crushes a cig, trudging off, as Fritchey steps into his path--

FRITCHEY
Detective! I'm with the Plains-Dealer!
Could I have a word?

MYRLO
Tunafish.

--and keeps walking. Fritchey remains, surveying the poor crowd on the bridge. A wake for neighbors unknown...

FRITCHEY (V.O.)
Men, women, old, young -- the M.O. was
always the same. Bodies dismembered,
heads and genitals missing -- and all the
blood drained. This wasn't some gangland
vendetta. We were dealing with a real-
life monster.

INT. NEWSROOM, PLAINS-DEALER - DAY

WHUMP! A paper hits Fritchey's desk: with a macabre sketch of a DEMONIC WILD MAN, and a headline: *"TORSO KILLER ON THE LOOSE! Mad Butcher Stalks the City -- Six Unidentified Victims So Far!"*

Fritchey and his Typist both stare at it. Troubled:

FRITCHEY

Look at that. We're below the fold.

As a BRIGHT FANFARE from a marching band takes us to--

NESS (PRE-LAP)

And now, ladies and gentlemen, as part of my "Drive Safely, Walk Sensibly" initiative...

EXT. DOWNTOWN INTERSECTION - DAY

--where Ness is on a small stage, beside a huge sign reading "*Drive Safely, Walk Sensibly.*" A huge SHEET covers something in the center of the intersection, suspended by wires. REPORTERS and a curious CROWD of citizens are gathered.

NESS

...I'm proud to present to you the very latest in traffic management technology. And to help me do the honors, please welcome a very special guest -- you know her now as the Brite-a-Shine girl -- Cleveland's very own Miss Ohio 1935!

The glamorous REDHEAD MODEL from the ubiquitous billboard ads emerges, waving. She wears a sexy-skirted "cop's uniform."

NESS

Miss Ohio, are you ready?

THE REDHEAD

Ready for safety, Mr. Ness!

She moves to the huge sheet, taking up a pull-rope--

NESS

Then courtesy of Detroit, Michigan, I bring to you our own fine city's very first...Centrally Synchronized Automated Traffic Signal!

--which reveals a TRAFFIC LIGHT hanging over the intersection. OOHS and AAHS from the crowd, as the lights CHANGE COLOR:

NESS

It uses a color-coded system that any citizen can learn, with timing that's adjustable and programmed remotely. From a single downtown office, municipal traffic flow can now be controlled. So let me open the floor to any technical questions--

Reporters immediately CLAMOR to get a word in edgewise, all brandishing the Plains-Dealer's DEMONIC WILD MAN front page:

REPORTERS

Mr. Ness, what about this "Torso Killer?"
// Why can't your force catch him? // Do
you even have a suspect?

NESS

Well, first let's all try to remember
that traffic fatalities number annually
in the thousands--

FIRST REPORTER

So are you saying decapitations are not
the police department's concern?

NESS

No, merely that individual homicide
investigations are not the purview of the
Safety Director. Let's move to queries
on the topic at hand -- Mr. Fritchey?

FRITCHEY

Uh...yes, Mr. Ness, I understand these
gadgets are completely weatherproof--

SECOND REPORTER

Have the police so much as identified a
single Torso victim?

THIRD REPORTER

Does anyone have a plan for catching him?

FRITCHEY

Could you speak a little bit about the
concept of the "blinking yellow"?

Fritchey's rivals just glare. Ness surveys the civilian crowd:

NESS

Ladies and gentlemen, on the subject of
these unspeakable crimes, you have my
word: one man will not bring fear to
this city. He'll be brought to justice
and before you know it.

FOURTH REPORTER

On a murder charge or tax evasion?

Some laughter from the press. Ness doesn't waver.

NESS

If the people of Cleveland wanted me to
take personal charge of that case, I
assure you I would not hesitate.
However, as they are well aware, I have
more pressing matters at hand.

He disregards shouted questions, taking his leave--

NESS

And now, without further ado, let's see
our new Synchronized Signals in action!

The MARCHING BAND resumes playing, and more MODELS take the stage, dressed in red, yellow and green "CAR" costumes, darting to the four points of the intersection as if for a Busby Berkeley-esque "traffic management" number...

FRITCHEY (V.O.)

See, the thing you gotta understand about Ness, is he never wanted to get involved. Never looked to lift a finger -- on this or any case. Not till people said the task was too much, the odds were too high, it couldn't be done. And then, and only then, would Eliot Ness stand up and say...leave it to me.

EXT. NEWSTAND - MORNING

WHUMP! A FRONT PAGE hits. With Ness and the headline: "NESS TO TAKE OVER TORSO CASE, CITING PUBLIC APPEAL."

CUT TO:

INT. HOLLENDEN HOTEL - BAR - BACK TO ELECTION NIGHT

Fritchey muses, staring deep into his scotch...

FRITCHEY

That's the legend we wrote for him.
That's the one he had to live up to.

WALT

And you used him -- to get a column. To make a name for yourself.

FRITCHEY

That right, kid? I used him?

A CAMPAIGNER charges into the bar, town crier-style:

BURKE CAMPAIGNER

Eight o'clock! Polls are closed!

FRITCHEY

The milk's for show. Remember that.
Time to go fit a fuckin' ring.

Fritchey downs his drink, departing his barstool--

WALT

But wait, what about Torso? Did he catch the killer or didn't he?

FRITCHEY

You'd have to ask him.

Joining the general exodus from the bar toward the ballrooms, Fritchey tries to get a decrepit BLUEHAIR's attention--

FRITCHEY

Mrs. Throckmorton! It's me, Clayton Fritchey, we met at the V.F.W. Ball! What a redolent gown -- can I ask you some questions, now that your divorce is all settled and final?

The doddering old thing clenches his hand, all flattered and ready to gossip. Escorts him off, as if to the gallows.

INT. CHICAGO TRIBUNE - EDITOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Walt's editor, Allenby, again shouts into his phone:

ALLENBY

It's Election Night, Cahill! They elect one. It's real simple.

INTERCUT INT. PHONE BOOTH - HOLLENDEN LOBBY

WALT

Yes, but this case made Capone look like a cakewalk! And nobody wants to talk about it! Doesn't that tell us something?

ALLENBY

(calls off)

OK, Agnes, hey, check with the publisher! See if we can hold Wednesday's paper till Friday!

WALT

Mr. Allenby, just listen to me. There's whether he wins...and there's why.

(pleads)

I'm a fact-checker, sir, that's what I am...and it's my job to tell you when one doesn't fit.

In his office, the editor snarls. Looks at the clock.

ALLENBY

You got till midnight, Cahill. Miss your deadline, don't come home.

And as he HANGS UP, Walt looks to the lobby's clock. It's just after eight. He's got less than four hours...

INT. HOLLENDEN HOTEL - LOBBY

Walt exits the phone booth and nearly runs into a black BELLHOP, presenting a HOUSE PHONE on a tray:

BELLHOP
Call for you, sir.

WALT
For me?
(picks up)
Uh, yes?

GERBER (OVER PHONE)
You the scribbler at the bar who's been asking after Torso?

WALT
Who is this?

GERBER
Dr. Arthur Gerber. The man with the candy. Table three.

INT. HOLLENDEN HOTEL - BALLROOM

An equally lavish party is getting started for Ness' opponent. There's a pompous George Sanders-type in an ill-fitting tux at a table with two SUB-AVERAGE BLONDES (17 & 18). This is City Coroner ARTHUR GERBER (50), holding court:

GERBER
...of all the names on that ballot -- how many deal with the mysteries of life? Who takes the delicate human heart, and is willing to hold it in his very hands?

WALT (O.S.)
You're Gerber?

The faux-debonair doctor glances up. Walt's arrived.

GERBER
Ah, girls, my interview is here. May I present Miss Annabeth Fowler and Miss Beatrice Hall.
(a leering smile)
These delightful young women have expressed an interest in politics.

INT. HOLLENDEN HOTEL - BALLROOM

Walt trails Gerber along a buffet line, stacking his plate:

GERBER

Eliot Ness is a fraud. A national embarrassment. You think Cleveland's forgotten? We had corpses in the streets! And his response was to paint more cross-walks!

WALT

But the murders stopped nine years ago.

GERBER

Yes? Thanks to who? Him?

WALT

That's what I'm trying to find out.

GERBER

Ness was a salesman! A shill! Fired his gun once his whole career! Once! At a lock!

WALT

You saying he never caught the killer?

Gerber slurps a chilled shrimp, licks his fingers:

GERBER

Eliot Ness couldn't catch a killer who was sitting in the electric chair.

CUT TO:

INT. AUTOPSY ROOM - DAY (1936)

In a quick MONTAGE of ONE-SECOND SHOTS we catch glimpses of:

--the incomplete REMAINS of #1. Bisected torso and limbs -- no head, no genitals. A reddish tinge. White male, 28.

--#2. Badly decomposed torso and limbs. Again no head, no genitals. Same reddish tinge to the skin. White male, 47.

--#3. Decomposing fleshy sections of a fat white female, 41. Same reddish tinge. Does in fact resemble hams.

--#4. Heavily tattooed torso, only one arm, one leg. Still no head, no genitals. Hispanic male, 25.

--#5. Tiny female torso, bisected. Same with limbs. Pubic region carved out. White female, 19.

--#6. Badly decomposed torso and limbs. Black female, 32. Same reddish tinge. And like all the rest...no head.

SIMON (O.S.)

You okay, Mr. Ness?

ANGLE REVERSES to find Ness doubled over, hand on the door as if ready to flee, handkerchief over his mouth.

Dr. Gerber (here 39), standing amidst the tables, trades a disbelieving look to Detectives Myrlo and Simon:

GERBER
Should I continue?

Ness nods, struggles back to a standing position as--

GERBER
Now with both the male and female victims, you'll notice the genitals have been removed--

--and now Ness doubles over again, stifling another retch.

GERBER
Will this take all day? I do have a lunch.

MYRLO
(shrugs)
He says he's taking over the case...

NESS
It's all right, gentlemen. I'm simply not accustomed to these...specifics--

Ness straightens, but still averts his eyes from the tables.

GERBER
I trust you have been in a morgue before?

NESS
Doctor, please. As you were saying.

GERBER
Yes, well, the absence of blood in the hearts suggests decapitation was the cause of death. The segmentation of the limbs occurred once they'd already been "bled out"--

SIMON
The blood's been drained. Maybe collected.

GERBER
And yet, no signs of a struggle. The killing blow was a single strike from a large, heavy blade -- separating the third and fourth cervical vertebra--

MYRLO

How do you chop off someone's head
without a struggle?

GERBER

Well, for instance, the Negress here--

NESS

That's someone's child. She has a name.

Gerber and the Detectives look to Ness. Now seems recovered.

GERBER

--shows us she was conscious and likely
awake. The castration element, of
course, implies a sexual component.

MYRLO

'Cept he dices boys and girls.

GERBER

And you'll note the corpses were all
washed clean. No trace of semen, blood,
hair or fingerprints.

NESS

He slaughters them and he cleans them?

SIMON

Tell him why the skin looks that way.

GERBER

Ah, yes: that reddish, waxy tinge. Some
sort of homemade chemical preservative.

NESS

What -- he's some kind of scientist?

GERBER

The mutilation is consistent and
methodical. His knowledge of human
anatomy is clear.

NESS

Which implicates whom -- doctors,
surgeons, medical students--

MYRLO

Coroners--

SIMON

So if he's so concerned with covering his
tracks -- why dump the bodies right out
in the open?

GERBER

I would have to conclude it's a challenge to catch him.

There's a silence.

NESS

Well, gentlemen, I just don't know about this. I don't like it, I can tell you that.

GERBER

Naturally, Mr. Ness.

The detectives and Gerber wait for more. But Ness has nothing. Arms folded, just shaking his head.

NESS

This is one very bad apple.

Another beat.

GERBER

Yes, Mr. Ness. I think we're all with you on that.

Annoyed, Gerber retrieves a tray of FLESHY VISCERA--

GERBER

Well then, speaking of apples, as you can see by the stomach contents, all these victims were clearly impoverished. Note the prevalence of potato and porridge--

--and again Ness clutches his stomach, stumbling back--

SIMON

Mr. Ness, maybe you should--

--and Ness crumples to the floor before the detectives can catch him. He's fainted. Gerber stares with disdain:

GERBER

They were people who wouldn't be missed.

Simon sighs, reaches for his wallet. To Myrlo:

SIMON

Double or nothing?

MYRLO

Go to hell. A bet's a bet.

CUT TO:

INT. HOLLENDEN HOTEL - BALLROOM - *BACK TO ELECTION NIGHT*

Walt and Gerber now back at his table, the girls listening in:

GERBER
In the miniscule mind of Eliot Ness,
there are two kinds of men. Men who wear
white hats and men who wear black. But a
madman, a hatless man, my God...Al
Capone, I assure you, never pickled a
woman's pussy.
(to the blondes)
Pardon my Hippocratic oaths.

WALT
So he was the wrong man for the job.

GERBER
His incuriousness was matched only by his
hubris. A great American, indeed.

WALT
Sounds like envy to me, Doctor.

GERBER
Do you know why he really came to
Cleveland? Not for our "safety." He
came to save our souls.

He throws a skeptical look to the blondes, who laugh as if he's
told a joke. Then, to Walt:

GERBER
And any man who believes he can do no
wrong...already has.

EXT. CENTRAL STATION - NIGHT

A clock ticks toward 9:00 as THUNDER rumbles...and Walt hurries
from a TAXI and into police headquarters...

INT. CENTRAL STATION - NIGHT

A lunk-headed desk sergeant, O'SHEA, peers down at Walt:

O'SHEA
Detectives Simon and Myrlo? Nah,
retired, the both of them.

WALT
Are they still in the city?

O'SHEA
Simon's a bookworm, owns some shop in the
Third. He's never gonna talk to you,
though.

(MORE)

O'SHEA (cont'd)
Mystery writer, he fancies himself.
Probably wants to write his own take down
the line.

WALT
Have an address for him?

O'SHEA
Nah, check the fag bars, the Nancys'll
know. You tell him O'Shea said hi. Guy
was a damn good detective for a pervert
and all.

WALT
I'll tell him you said hello.

EXT. ROARING THIRD RED-LIGHT DISTRICT - NIGHT

More distant THUNDER as Walt passes DIVE BARS and PEEPSHOWS,
arriving at a modest bookstore ("Simon & Co: Rare & Antiquarian
Books") incongruously nestled among them.

Through the window, Sam Simon is on a ladder, shelving titles.
He's 45 now, even more gaunt, something sad about him. There a
"Closed" sign on the door, but Walt knocks anyway...

SIMON (PRE-LAP)
If you've ever worked Homicide, rest
assured: you don't forget any case.
They wake you up at night, you know. The
ones you didn't save...

INT. BOOKSTORE - NIGHT

Walt peruses PULP DETECTIVE STORIES with hand-sketched covers
"by Dt. Sam Simon," as Simon brings over a tea tray:

SIMON
They're early efforts, but take a look.
Can't tell you what it means that you'd
like to read them...

WALT
You worked with Eliot Ness, didn't you?
You think there's cases keep him up at
night?

SIMON
If Eliot has regrets, I don't think he'd
share them. Even with himself.

WALT
And Torso...was your last case?

SIMON

Well, to be honest, the Safety Director
and I...we were never really on the same
page...

CUT TO:

INT. CENTRAL STATION - DETECTIVES' ROOM - DAY (1936)

A pair of BLUE ENVELOPES sit on adjacent desks. Hats and coats
still on, Myrlo and Simon stand staring:

MYRLO

How ya like that. On a fuckin' Monday.

INT. NESS' OFFICE - DAY

Myrlo and Simon hold the telltale blue envelopes, seated before
Ness' desk. Lucy departs, as Ness reviews paperwork:

NESS

Detective Samuel Simon. Twelve years
service. Says here you own a business on
East 43rd?

SIMON

It's a bookstore. My father started it.

NESS

A little cash flow on the side. In a
risque part of town.

SIMON

Rare books. It's all above board.

NESS

And yet I've heard your clientele is
predominantly men. Want to tell me why?

Myrlo and Simon trade a look.

NESS

After all, women do read books. My own
wife: a voracious reader.

(beat)

I mean, where are the women?

SIMON

I'm sorry...you're asking--?

MYRLO

Oh, Sam sorta specializes in male
writers. Writing 'bout men.

NESS

Well, as Mrs. Ness would be the first to tell you, there are many fine female authors too!

He smiles. Myrlo and Simon trade another look.

NESS

Oh, never mind, Detective Simon. Any private business is a conflict of interest. You'll need to sell your stake in order to keep your job with me.

(moving on)

Now your partner, Daniel Myrlo. Thirty years service and an exemplary conviction rate. An exemplary rate--

MYRLO

Never framed nobody innocent, if that's what you mean.

(to Simon)

How old is this kid?

SIMON

Thirty-three.

MYRLO

He looks younger.

(back to Ness)

You want our guns and our badges or what, mister. 'Cause otherwise we got work to do. And you're getting mighty close to having no real cops left.

Ness stares them both down:

NESS

I'm told you two are in charge of the so-called Torso investigation. Per the public's request, I've been tasked with its oversight. So may I have your assurance that for the duration of this case, you will follow the letter of the law?

MYRLO

How long do you figure it'll take?

EXT. KINGSBURY RUN RAVINE - NIGHT

A "Drive Safely, Walk Sensibly" billboard towers overhead, with the lovely Brite-a-Shine REDHEAD MODEL smiling down: *"It's as easy as stopping for a beautiful lady..."* Beside her smile, a sample traffic light: red, yellow, green.

Myrlo and Simon boot-stomp their way down the slope, with Ness skidding and slipping in his patent leathers:

SIMON (PRE-LAP)
The Nickel Plate's got bulls stationed at both ends of the gully. Switchmen in the towers. No one saw a thing...

EXT. RAVINE - MOMENTS LATER

They're now at the sumac bushes beyond the rails...

MYRLO
Palookaville. Body. Body. All wrapped up in a quilt.

NESS
Anything on the quilt?

SIMON
First sold at a flea market in Lancaster, PA. Hand-stitched by a 68-year-old blind Quaker named Anna Gundersborn.

MYRLO
But now that you're on the job, I'm sure things'll get more thorough.

NESS
So the deviant kills them -- somewhere safe -- then travels to dispose the bodies. He wouldn't want to travel far.

He notices a distant LIGHT GLOW, past the disappearing tracks:

NESS
What's out there, down around the bend?

MYRLO
(a look to Simon)
That's the endless trip down the bottomless hole.

NESS
Show me.

EXT. JACKASS HILL - OVERLOOKING SHANTYTOWN - NIGHT

From a ridgetop vantage, Ness, Myrlo and Simon survey a SHANTYTOWN stretching over a mile. Wood scrap, corrugated metal and cardboard-wall SHACKS. A permanent refugee camp for the destitute. In the oil drum FIRELIGHT, packs of STRAY CATS yowl.

MYRLO
Well, sir? You see something?

NESS
(with private disgust)
Cats...

SIMON
It's all one big shantytown -- home to thousands since the Depression. Whole families down there now. They ride the rails, most of 'em, impossible to track. And most likely it's where his victims are coming from.

NESS
And we have no way of knowing who any of them are?

MYRLO
We're hunting leads as best we can, Mr. Ness. But we're only two detectives.

NESS
Not anymore.

EXT. CENTRAL STATION - DAY - *BEGIN "NEW UNTOUCHABLES" MONTAGE*

ON SCREEN LEFT, we JUMP-CUT a series of fresh-faced, often bespectacled Andy Hardy POLICE RECRUITS as they bark at us:

YOUNG RECRUIT #1
Officer Carlton Werner, Princeton University, reporting for duty, sir!

YOUNG RECRUIT #2
Officer Brian Fitzgibbons, Pennsylvania State University, reporting for duty and proud to serve!

More RECRUITS announce names, as the screen is 3-WAY SPLIT--

INT. POLICE GYMNASIUM - DAY

ON SCREEN RIGHT, we see several dozen young RECRUITS in gray sweatsuits, learning JUJITSU from a Japanese INSTRUCTOR. In a corner, Fritchey observes, sipping his flask...

FRITCHEY (V.O.)
"Calling all the brave young men of Cleveland, Mr. Eliot Ness has announced the formation of the city's first 'Academy' for the selection and training of a whole new breed of police officer! Only college graduates of exceptional physical fitness may apply!"

INT. CITY HALL CORRIDOR - DAY

IN SCREEN CENTER, Ness marches with Mayor Bolton, with Myrlo and Simon flanking them:

BOLTON
A Torso Killer "task force"? Of twenty-five detectives?

NESS
Men I've handpicked myself, sir. Our most promising recruits. Honest men from respected families.

BOLTON
But without experience? We're closing in on the Republican Convention here, Eliot. I'm worried how this'll play in the press.

NESS
Sir. Leave the press to me.

EXT. NEWSSTAND - DAY

ON SCREEN LEFT, the headline screams "*MEET THE NEW UNTOUCHABLES! Ness Bestows Moniker On Elite Torso Task Force.*" Crowds are gathered. Papers are flying off the stands.

NEWSBOY
Eliot Ness and his New Untouchables!
Read all about the New Untouchables!

INT. POLICE CLASSROOM - DAY

ON SCREEN RIGHT, the same RECRUITS are in their gray sweatsuits, pecking away at a sea of typewriters. Fritchey still reports:

FRITCHEY (V.O.)
"No man will be awarded a badge who cannot type forty-five words per minute. No man will be bestowed a weapon who cannot summarize the United States Constitution. Eliot Ness says it's high time, ladies and gentlemen, for a higher standard."

INT. POLICE GARAGE - DAY

IN SCREEN CENTER, the lights BLAZE ON in a warehouse-sized garage full of SQUAD CARS. Ness, Myrlo, Simon march in:

NESS
This'll do. Move 'em out.

ON ALL THREE SCREENS, a BARRAGE OF SHOTS as the cars are removed. Desks, tables, chairs brought in. Maps are tacked up. Chalkboards labeled #1 through #6. As we watch the cavernous space turned into TORSO HEADQUARTERS.

INT. TORSO HQ - LATER

ON SCREEN CENTER, HQ is fully functional. The 25 young NEW UNTOUCHABLES sit as Ness paces, addressing them:

NESS
 Detectives, the reprobate we are hunting knows neither remorse nor restraint. It is our duty to secure this community. We'll hit fast, hit hard, and hit everywhere -- I want an arrest within a week.

EXT. KINGSBURY RUN SHANTYTOWN - DAY

ON SCREEN LEFT, the New Untouchables wander into the thick of hundreds of SHACKS and SHANTIES, rousting up the men...

NESS (FROM CENTER)
 For within this city, there's a "shadow city." A sanctuary for the godforsaken. I want the identity of each and every one of them...

ON SCREEN RIGHT, PADDY WAGONS are filled with the HOMELESS denizens of the shantytown. Flies swarm.

NESS (FROM CENTER)
 You're to interrogate them, photograph them, fingerprint them, catalog them, and at every step of the way, offer due courtesies and the presumption of innocence which is the very foundation of the law.

INT. POLICE BOOKING ROOM - DAY

ON SCREEN LEFT & RIGHT, we witness a JUMP-CUT CAVALCADE of MUG SHOTS: junkies, transients, runaways, hobos and madmen. Old, young, sick, sad. Flash! Flash! Flash!

INT. POLICE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

IN CENTER SCREEN, ANGLE TRACKS the hall, passing INTERROGATION ROOM after ROOM after ROOM. Each with a sad, disheveled FIGURE at a desk and a COP or two grilling them. As ANGLE reveals hall's end...where another hundred MEN are waiting in line...

NESS (V.O.)
 Every resident of the Third Precinct is a suspect.

(MORE)

NESS (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Only one is the n'er-do-well we are
 looking for. He's a right-handed man, he
 is large, he is strong, he knows the
 railyards well. And a man of such
 antisocial tendencies...shouldn't be very
 hard to find.

INT. NESS' OFFICE - DAY

IN CENTER SCREEN, the door bursts open as Lucy races in--

LUCY
 Mr. Ness! Wonderful news!

She beams like some shining magnificence.

LUCY
 They've found the heads!

EXT. LANDFILL - DAY - *END "NEW UNTOUCHABLES" MONTAGE*

with a sweeping AERIAL of the municipal landfill, and its
 backdrop of black-belching smokestacks. Mountains of trash,
 waste and refuse to the horizon--

--and as ANGLE soars above, past BULLDOZERS and DUMP TRUCKS,
 beneath SWARMS of carrion-feeding birds and gulls--

--we see scores of PATROL COPS hiking the landfill, poking and
 prodding...as ANGLE closes as they circle, gathered around--

--a HUMAN HEAD amidst the garbage, eyes blank and MOUTH OPEN, as
 we tumble right down the darkness of its throat!

INT. AUTOPSY ROOM - DAY

BOOM! Ness marches in with Myrlo and Simon, startling Gerber
 with goggles and a whirring bone saw--

NESS
 Dr. Gerber!

Gerber's saw slips. Blood speckles his goggles as he glares:

GERBER
 Why, Mr. Ness. I'll have a stretcher
 standing by.

NESS
 The heads of five of the six victims have
 been located. I want masks made
 immediately -- for the purpose of public
 display.

GERBER
 You're not serious.

NESS

In death, at the very least, these men
and women knew their killer. We need to
know who knew them.

And a shrill TRAIN WHISTLE serenades us as--

INT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Rain outside. A DEATH-MASK stares out -- a lifelike bust of #2,
dead eyes glazed, mouth contorted -- from under glass. Flanked
by four more masks, #1, #3, #5 and #6.

A banner above reads: *"Can YOU Help Your Fellow Citizens?
Contact Eliot Ness If You Recognize These Faces!"*

MEN, WOMEN and CHILDREN stand behind a barrier rope, stopping
for a look with a disturbed fascination...

Mothers avert the gaze of their children as they hurry past...

...as far in the distance, ANGLE REVEALS a mysterious, hulking
MAN in a hat and black topcoat. He's watching. We see him only
from behind. For he is the Torso Killer...

EXT. COUNTY FAIR - DAY

APPLAUSE from FAMILIES at checker-clothed picnic tables,
enjoying Ohio barbecue. Before them, a stage full of KIDS in
Dick Tracy fedoras & coats. And a banner: *"The Eliot Ness
Young Crime Fighters Club."* Lucy's at the podium:

LUCY

So remember, you kids out there, like
Hubert and Bobby here told you, the only
true citizen is a law-abiding citizen,
and you're never too young to start.
We've got chapters opening up all over
the city, so talk to your local fire
chief or elementary school principal.
Because, together...what do we say?

THE KIDS

LET'S BE THE "US" IN JUSTICE!

They brandish TOY BADGES as a BAND strikes up a bouncy tune.
Lucy keeps up the smile, but looks off-stage, to where Ness is
in private conversation with Myrlo and Simon. Faces grave:

SIMON

It's number seven.

EXT. EUCLID BEACH - DAY

A dirty stretch of sand at the edge of polluted Lake Erie, with huge FACTORIES belching smoke into the sky. A scraggly crowd of BATHERS are gathered -- it's a beach for the poor--

--as Ness, Myrlo and Simon arrive, passing a CORDON of officers, to see a misshapen burlap "*Purina Chicken Feed*" bag has washed up. Myrlo takes a knife and slices it open--

--to reveal two HAIRY LEGS and a MAN'S HEAD staring back. The cops recoil. Ness stifles a retch.

SIMON

He left the head this time. He didn't even try to hide it...

MYRLO

Something's caught in the neck.

Indeed, a crumpled up bit of paper. Myrlo reaches a pen in, to flick out...a BALL OF NEWSPAPER. He unfolds it to reveal the front page headline "*MEET THE NEW UNTOUCHABLES!*"

NESS

(a dark stare)

Gather the men.

EXT. SHANTYTOWN - NIGHT

A group of VAGRANTS sit around a CAMPFIRE...as ANGLE REVEALS the "bums" are Myrlo, Simon and other cops. Blending in:

SIMON (V.O.)

Spring and summer of '36, we put together files on over ten thousand suspects. Dead ends, every one. So Ness sent all of us into the city...

EXT. ROARING THIRD ALLEY - NIGHT

A giggling young PROSTITUTE leads her JOHN into the darkness, fumbling at each other's clothes amidst piles of trash--

SIMON (V.O.)

'Cause the killer had challenged him now.

--as a SHADOWED FIGURE descends upon the two lovers--

PROSTITUTE

Look out, right behind you!

--and the John shoves her out of the way, gun drawn, as he reveals he's a strapping young NEW UNTOUCHABLE--

NEW UNTOUCHABLE #1
Hold it there, police officer!

--as the Shadowed Figure, dressed as a BUM, holds up his hands and his badge. He's a New Untouchable too--

NEW UNTOUCHABLE #2
Hiya Gene.

NEW UNTOUCHABLE #1
Hi Phil.

They look to the Prostitute, who also has a gun drawn--

NEW UNTOUCHABLE #2
Hello Arthur.

--and the third man sighs, removing his lovely wig--

SIMON (V.O.)
None of it worked.

EXT. JACKASS HILL - OVERLOOKING SHANTYTOWN - NIGHT

Late, desolate. Except for Ness, in his iconic camel's hair topcoat and hat...staring down at the cesspool below...

SIMON (V.O.)
See, the thing you have to understand about Ness was what truly obsessed him. Seven lives had been taken, seven of our fellow citizens. And not a single voice ever came forward to say "I knew that woman, I knew that man." Twelve years and counting...and not a single one...

The "American Enforcer" just stands on the ridge alone...

SIMON (V.O.)
He couldn't conceive of such a thing. To live your whole entire life...and end forgotten. Never missed. As if you'd never lived at all.

CUT TO:

INT. BOOKSTORE - BACK TO ELECTION NIGHT

Simon turns a Torso case scrapbook's pages, reviewing a tattered Fritchey column from the Plains-Dealer:

SIMON
"He takes no one into his confidence. No one knows his mind, what he will do next, where he will strike."

WALT

That's the Torso Killer, all right.

SIMON

The article's about Ness.

CUT TO:

EXT. SYMPHONY HALL - NIGHT (1936)

The FANFARE THEME which opened the story gets an OMINOUS REPRISE as well-dressed GUESTS mount a red-carpet staircase, beneath a red-white-and-blue banner reading *"Welcome Delegates of the 1936 Republican National Convention"*--

--and as a CAR with a license plate "EN-1" lurches to a stop, Ness emerges, carrying a tuxedo jacket--

NESS

Thanks, fellas--

--as he hands his keys to two waiting COPS and hurries up the staircase, where Lucy meets him halfway--

LUCY

Mr. Ness, I wanted to warn you,
tomorrow's edition--

--and shows him a headline: *"VAMPIRE AT LARGE? Coroner Sez Killer May Consume Blood of Victims."* Beside it, the B-headline reads: *"PRESIDENTIAL CONVENTION TO OPEN TODAY."*

LUCY

The Mayor's called several times--

NESS

Find me Fritchey.

She keeps pace, walking backwards, fixing Ness' bow tie. At the top of the stairs, Myrlo and Simon await--

SIMON

Tests came back on #7, Mr. Ness. Chicken feed bag was from an Indiana supplier, it's over three years old--

MYRLO

No prints on the bag or the paper--

SIMON

Did find a two-inch brown-and-white hair, most likely a dog's. Plus one bottlecap labeled "Royal Crown Cola."

NESS
 I want a breed on the dog and a list of
 beverage distributors--
 (to Lucy)
 Is the coroner here?

INT. SYMPHONY HALL LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

--as Ness marches in with Myrlo, Simon and Lucy all trying to catch up. It's full of TUXEDOED MEN and GOWNED WOMEN, making their way to the hall as lights are DIMMED--

LUCY
 Yes, sir, he's at the bar.

EDNA (O.S.)
 Eliot! Thank God! You made it!

Edna Ness crosses through the crowd, in gown and jewels. Ness squeezes her hand, offers a peck on the cheek.

NESS
 Mrs. Ness, you look lovely. You're wearing it.

EDNA
 Oh yes, I'm sure Lucy picked it out for exactly this occasion.

Lucy reddens. Ness flubs a reply. Edna just smiles.

EDNA
 Just look at you co-conspirators. As if I don't know you keep a file on me.

BOLTON (O.S.)
 Eliot! Man of the hour!

Mayor Bolton's approaching with an older man, SENATOR HARLINGEN (65), old blue-blood money and power. Ness whispers fast--

NESS
 (to Edna)
 I'll have to meet you inside. Lucy, if you wouldn't mind escorting--

EDNA
 She won't.

Edna licks her finger, wipes a smudge of Ness' lapel (just as Lucy did at the restaurant). Then hooks out her arm in a "V," awaiting Lucy's escort. Lucy reluctantly takes it...

BOLTON
 Senator Harlingen, I'd like you to meet Eliot Ness.

THE SENATOR

Well now, the Eliot Ness, what's the phrase, my grandchildren say it.

NESS

Let's be the "us" in justice, sir.

THE SENATOR

There it is, there it is. The party needs more men like you. You've a hell of a future here, Ness. Thank God this Bolton only gets two terms--

Bolton shares a forced laugh with the Senator--

NESS

I've no political ambitions, sir.

THE SENATOR

Oh, don't worry, Ness. I said the same damn thing myself. When you do, we'll tell you.

He claps Ness on the shoulder and moves on. Bolton follows, but leans in for a private addendum--

BOLTON

I want a word. You and me.

And as they pass, it draws Ness' eye toward the bar--

--and he storms right over, with his detectives in tow, where Coroner Gerber is laughing with GOWNED WOMEN--

NESS

Dr. Gerber, good evening--

GERBER

What do you know, it's our own self-professed Untouchable. I believe Freud would have a field day--

--as Myrlo and Simon grab him by the arms and force him backwards, interrupting his courting of the ladies.

NESS

Stop talking to the press.

GERBER

All I said was the blood is drained. I never said he drinks it--

NESS

Compromise my case and I'll--

GERBER

What? You will what? Coroners are elected, Mr. Ness. By the common people. Unlike you.

(stands his ground)

I'm well aware of the names you call him: "Deviant." "Degenerate." You must think he's a rabid dog. This killer is smart, Mr. Ness. He's a student of human nature. How else could he so well hide? Whereas you, with your self-righteous Boy Scout bromides, you exist on a whole different plane. You may as well try to arrest your own shadow.

NESS

Doctor Gerber--

GERBER

He cuts innocent men and women into cordwood. You may not wish to see that in print, but that's what ends up on my table.

--and he wriggles free. The HOUSE LIGHTS dim once more, lobby clearing out as Fritchey ambles over, flask in hand--

FRITCHEY

Mr. Ness! You wanted to talk?

--as Ness brandishes the Plains-Dealer, again on the move--

NESS

No more column. No exclusives.

FRITCHEY

C'mon now, I'm not the whole newsroom! Am I writing that Dracula stuff? Here! Front page! I came up with eight hundred words on your parking-meter-thingys!

NESS

What your publisher fails to understand is that the purpose of a free press--

FRITCHEY

Hey, Ness, listen up--

(SINGS a high note)

Okay? I'm the choir. And I'm the one compromising his integrity to be the mouthpiece for your agenda. Don't tell me I'm gonna get shut out. Then there's nothing in it for me.

NESS

Your "integrity?"

FRITCHEY

That's right.

NESS

I'm sure I've never heard you use the word.

INT. SYMPHONY HALL - CONTINUOUS

Guests are taking seats as the quartet marches in, with Lucy meeting up again to lead them around the side--

LUCY

The Mayor's box is this way, sir--

FRITCHEY

Look, Ness, Torso sells. It's what people want to read. You can't ask 'em not to run with a story that sells papers.

NESS

I'm not asking them. I'm warning you.

He thumps the paper into Fritchey's gut and leaves him...

...as Ness, Lucy, Myrlo and Simon now arrive at the Mayor's Box. Bolton excuses himself from Senator Harlingen and other VIP's--

BOLTON

Everything all right, Eliot? You look a little ragged--

NESS

Not used to the tuxedo, sir.

BOLTON

Well...here we are, at long last. Alf Landon, Frank Knox. One of them likely our future President. These are not men who cede the front page.

NESS

I know, sir--

BOLTON

Then let's be perfectly clear on Torso. Whatever you need -- it's yours. Just get us through these next few nights. When it's all eyes on Cleveland. Our Cleveland.

NESS

The streets are safe. You have my word.

On the stage beyond, a CURTAIN rises, revealing the CLEVELAND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA. The audience APPLAUDS.

BOLTON
The Senator will be relieved to know.

He offers a smile and returns to his guests. Ness dismisses Myrlo and Simon as he marches on--

NESS
Meet me back at HQ in two hours--
(turns, lost, to Lucy)
Now...Mrs. Ness?

LUCY
Right this way.

--and as the detectives head out, Lucy escorts Ness toward the front rows. The CONDUCTOR strides across stage to APPLAUSE--

LUCY
(points into the row)
There she is. That one. There.

NESS
I'll see you later at the office.

--and he edges into the row, past TUXEDOS and GOWNS to sit beside Edna. He's finally at rest, with an exhausted sigh.

EDNA
Well, well. Alone with my husband. This
is an historic night.

Ness returns her smile, hands clasped...as ANGLE PULLS BACK, past the first few rows, to reveal the CONDUCTOR as he raises his baton...and brings it sharply down--

EXT. KINGSBURY RUN RAVINE - SAME NIGHT

As the O.S. ORCHESTRA plays, we watch FREIGHT TRAINS chugging on the tracks below, in the pitch black darkness--

--as above, at the ravine's edge, stand the boots of the TORSO KILLER. As a large BURLAP BAG hits the ground beside them.

EXT. RAVINE - MOMENTS LATER

The O.S. ORCHESTRA continues, as the Torso Killer descends the ravine-slope, dragging the bag. He's in the shadows, face unseen, moving through the brush and scree...

...and from a billboard, the Redhead smiles down. In this "Drive Safely, Walk Sensibly" ad, she's posed with 35/45/55 MPH signs: *"I like a man who knows his limits. Aren't I worth it?"*

The Torso Killer surveys the darkness. Making sure the ravine's is still. Then he starts across the network of tracks.

His misshapen bag SCRAPES the dirt and gravel, a low hush...and at a second sound, the Killer freezes. Midway across.

Another man, 40's, stooped and disheveled, is ambling the ravine, prodding with a walking stick, searching for scrap metal. He's known as THE MAD RUSSIAN.

He's a hundred feet from the Torso Killer. He's moving closer. Doesn't see him in the darkness.

The Killer doesn't move. Invisible. Black against black.

The Russian's set to pass right by him.

Until a SWITCHING MECHANISM turns on beneath the Killer's feet...and a RED WARNING LIGHT comes on right beside him! The Russian looks up. The Killer spins--

--seeking to shield his face, but for an instant he's visible as he SMASHES the red light with a gloved fist!

He grabs his burlap bag, but it snares on a track spike, ripping open. Body parts spill, with a HUMAN LEG tumbling to wedge beside the SWITCHING MECHANISM--

The track's guide rail ends up stuck, bumping on the LEG -- caught between one track-path and the adjacent one--

--as the Killer's once more enshrouded in darkness. The Mad Russian stands there, twenty feet away, too scared to move.

As a TRAIN WHISTLE sounds.

INTERCUT INT. SYMPHONY HALL - SAME NIGHT

The Conductor leads the Orchestra through a tense stretch of score. Holding Edna's hand, Ness is trying to relax...

...but he notices a POLICE OFFICER at the corner of the stage. The man's joined by a second OFFICER, who leads him hurriedly from his post.....and now Ness turns to see -- at the back of the audience -- a GROUP OF COPS in anxious conversation.

BACK TO EXT. RAVINE

A FREIGHT TRAIN hurtles through the Run. Most of its boxcars read "*Cuyahoga Meatpacking*." In between cars squat dozens of TRANSIENTS -- a free ride on the rails.

In the darkness, the Russian stands still. So does the Killer. Two shadows, waiting for the other to make a move.

And now, in the distance, the freight train is coming...

IN THE SYMPHONY HALL

Ness watches a PHOTOGRAPHER scurry in from a side door, alerting a REPORTER in the audience. The reporter hustles out. More SHUTTERBUGS rush in, finding REPORTER colleagues--

NESS

Something's wrong...

IN THE RAVINE

The train whistle sounds...and now the Killer RUNS. The Mad Russian starts after him, wielding his walking stick--

--but stops at what he sees in the tracks. The torn burlap bag...and the leg wedged in the track-switcher--

IN THE SYMPHONY HALL

Ness is hurrying up the aisle, to where COPS are gathered--

IN THE RAVINE

The Russian tugs at the leg, but it's stuck tight. He's frantic. The train is coming. The rails don't connect.

The train's headlamp is almost upon him...and as he looks up, realizing it's futile, he spins and flees...

IN THE TRAIN'S ENGINE

The TWO ENGINEERS keep watch, suddenly alerting as they see the lone HUMAN LEG and the disconnected RAILS in their path--

--and as they slam on the BRAKES with a SCREECH of metal--

INT. SYMPHONY HALL LOBBY - NIGHT

Ness bursts out to see Myrlo and Simon, just arrived...

NESS

Don't tell me. It's number eight.

EXT. KINGSBURY RUN RAVINE - NIGHT - LATER

Ness pushes his way through a CROWD of FIREFIGHTERS, POLICEMEN and REPORTERS, unlike anything we've yet seen--

--to arrive at the scene of a TRAIN WRECK. The ENGINE and over a dozen BOXCARS derailed, smashed open. The bodies of several TRANSIENTS lie beneath sheets. And, most surreally, cops are scurrying to and fro trying to wrangle--

--HUNDREDS OF PIGS, who snort and squeal, bumbling all around the wreckage, freed from their train to the slaughterhouse. There are five pigs for every man at the scene.

Ness wanders through in a devastated daze...as several of his New Untouchables come running, fresh-faced and eager:

NEW UNTOUCHABLE #1
We've got a burlap bag with traces of human tissue, label says "Cutler Tool & Die"--

NEW UNTOUCHABLE #2
We're casting bootprints found near the signal light, model Wellington Low-Boy, standard G.I. issue--

NEW UNTOUCHABLE #3
It's a human thigh-bone caused the derailment, sir, white female, early 20's. Uh, the pigs have made off with some of the evidence...

NEW UNTOUCHABLE #4
Two engineers and three transients were killed in the crash. And a man who was searching for scrap metal -- he's the only witness...

Ness finally snaps from his horror-struck daze.

EXT. RAVINE - MOMENTS LATER

Ness pushes through more COPS to find Myrlo, Simon and a RUSSIAN TRANSLATOR surrounding the scraggly Mad Russian -- who sits blanket-wrapped and shell-shocked atop an oil drum.

MYRLO
His face, his goddamn face -- how big was he, tall was he, what was he wearing? Gimme something from this Russkie! Can we get a sketch outta him or what?

The Translator speaks in hurried Russian. The Mad Russian stares ahead. So Ness tightly grips the man:

NESS
I'm Eliot Ness, your Safety Director. You're now under my personal protection. Now tell me: what did you see?

Off Ness' look of vengeance, the Russian starts mumbling.

NESS
What's he saying?

TRANSLATOR
A demon. A demon from Hell.

EXT. CONVENTION HALL - DAY

Rain and THUNDER. The banners and bunting are wet and destroyed. *"Home of the 1936 Republican National Convention."* There's no one on the streets.

EXT. FANCY RESTAURANT - DAY

More patriotic posters, drenched by the rain. *"Welcome Delegates!"* And another sign: *"CLOSED AFTER DARK."*

EXT. INTERSECTION - DAY

One of Ness' new TRAFFIC SIGNALS hangs above the empty road. It turns green. Yellow. Red. No one's on the streets.

On the sidewalk, a shuttered NEWSSTAND has a paper's front page posted. A headline screams: *"TORSO KILLER CAUSE OF RAILYARD MASSACRE."* And in the corner, a tiny article: *"Alf Landon Wins Presidential Nomination."*

INT. MAYOR BOLTON'S OFFICE - FOYER - DUSK

Ness stares out a window at a rainy intersection below. He watches a lost, errant PIG dart across the street. His expression doesn't change. Beyond him, a door opens:

MAYOR'S SECRETARY

Mr. Ness? They'll see you now.

Ness turns to see Bolton and Senator Harlingen within, faces grim. Ness enters the inner office. The door shuts.

INT. NESS' OFFICE - NIGHT

Ness stands in shadow. Myrlo and Simon sit waiting.

NESS

Do you know how we got Capone?

(beat)

Tax evasion. That's all it was.

You ask 'em in Chicago...they never remember. Because history's the ends. Not the means.

MYRLO

You want we start checking taxes?

From the darkness, Ness finally turns...

NESS

If I'd never come to this city,
Detectives...what would you and your men
have done? How'd you have caught the
Torso Killer...if no one'd ever asked you
to play by the rules?

And off Myrlo and Simon's shared look...

CUT TO:

INT. BOOKSTORE - *BACK TO ELECTION NIGHT*

A RUMBLE OF THUNDER outside. The rain's now here. Walt's still sitting with Simon, his PULP BOOKS and a CLIPPING FOLDER:

WALT

Wait a minute. He said that? Ness?

There's a RAP at the door. Outside, a handsome African-American ARTIST in a bomber coat, shielding from the rain.

SIMON

I'm sorry, Mr. Cahill. I have plans, as I said. But let's please meet again--

SIMON'S BOYFRIEND

Old friend of yours, Sam?

SIMON

You're jealous. I love it.

Simon kisses him on the mouth, takes his jacket--

SIMON

Mr. Cahill works for a publishing company, they're considering a book on the Torso case. He came to ask if I'd be interested in writing it.

SIMON'S BOYFRIEND

Sam! You're kidding! How'd they know you were a writer?

SIMON

Hey, I send my stuff to publishers. Just 'cause nobody answers back--

WALT

Look, um, it's not an offer, you know. I've gotta report back to my boss, but, um...lemme just ask one other thing: they told me Ness fired you.

SIMON

It's not as if I was alone.

WALT

Why don't you hate him?

SIMON

Eliot saw the world the way a child sees the world. He wanted so much for it. Who could hate a man like that?

(shrugs, brightly)

Can't wait to hear what your publisher says.

WALT
Yeah, well, thanks -- for the background.
We'll...be letting you know.

EXT. SIMON'S BOOKSTORE - NIGHT

Walt departs, watching Simon and his Boyfriend wave goodbye. Feeling bad for his duplicity. But he looks at the folder of CLIPPINGS and PHOTOS Simon let him borrow...and stops short.

WALT
Sonofabitch...

EXT. HOTEL CLEVELAND - NIGHT

The streets are clearing out as Walt hurtles through the rain, skidding inside, past a clock now showing "9:40."

INT. HOTEL LOBBY

Walt nearly trips over a gaggle of YOUNG KIDS in fedoras and camel's hair topcoats, as STAFFERS struggle to coax them into a line that stretches from the ballroom's doors--

PARTY EMCEE (O.S.)
And now, ladies and gentlemen,
celebrating their eleventh year of
service to the Cleveland community... how
'bout a big "let's be the 'us' in
justice" for the Eliot Ness Young Crime
Fighters Club!

The kids tumble into the ballroom, shoving and picking noses. Walt skids past to the front desk, flashing a PHOTO from Simon's folder. It's of Simon and his partner -- Myrlo--

WALT
Hi, I'm looking for this man, I met him
here, he's your house detective. Name's
Daniel Myrlo, used to be a cop--

DESK CLERK
Are you a guest with the hotel?

WALT
No, but he knows me--

DESK CLERK
Mr. Myrlo works for our guests.

The clerk sniffs and moves on. Walt bangs the desk--

WALT
Hey! It's important! Can you just tell
me if he's still here?

--to no avail. Looking down the desk, Walt now sees a woman's shapely figure leaning over it, stretching a phone cord as she scribbles furiously. It's Lucy. She slams down the phone, about to stride right past him--

WALT

Lucy...it's Walt Cahill, hi--

--as she suddenly embraces him and kisses him hard.

LUCY

Ten percent of the precincts are in --
we're up by four points!

Before he can stammer a response, she's off, beaming. Vanishes into the hotel bar. Walt stands there, dazed--

--and then, in the bar, he sees a WAITER walk past, carrying a tray with a single GLASS OF MILK.

INT. HOTEL BAR

Walt sidles to the doorway, giving him an angle on the BOOTH where the milk's delivered. Lucy's there, gesturing animatedly, reporting to a figure we can't see.

After a moment, they step aside, to allow Ness to exit the booth, flanked by Kincannon and Grolsch. They escort him to the men's room and stand guard outside.

Walt grabs an unattended hat from a nearby coat rack, tucks it low over his eyes and strides right by the bodyguards--

INT. MEN'S ROOM

Ness is washing his hands. Walt steps to another sink, then glances into the mirror, as if surprised--

WALT

Why, Mr. Ness! Hello!

NESS

Well, if it isn't the young man from
Kensington. Mister...

WALT

Cahill, Walt Cahill, Chicago Tribune.
Good paper -- in your day.

(smiles, then)

Actually, there was one last thing I
forgot to ask you.

NESS

Ask away.

WALT

Whatever happened with the Torso case?

Ness hesitates in his handwashing. Then resumes.

NESS

I supervised hundreds of criminal cases.
Hard to remember every one.

WALT

But that one you took personal charge of--

NESS

That was a long time ago.

WALT

Here's the thing, Mr. Ness. I checked
downtown. And the case is still open--

Ness smartly checks his suit in the mirror, departing--

NESS

Mr. Cahill, I assure you: when it comes
to Torso, justice was done.

And he's out the door.

INT. HOTEL BAR - MOMENTS LATER

Walt hustles out in pursuit -- only to have his collar grabbed
by a uniformed policeman. It's Kincannon--

KINCANNON

Can't the future Mayor of Cleveland take
a fuckin' piss in peace?

WALT

Hey, it's a hotel! It's a public hotel!

--as he hauls him through the bar's nearby service exit--

EXT. SIDE ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

--and deposits Walt in the now-pouring RAIN, hurled into a pile
of trash. All Walt's notes go flying.

KINCANNON

We're having a party, Wally Walnuts!
Ever been to a party? You needs tits or
an invitation!

He snatches up one of Walt's soggy papers. Frowns:

KINCANNON

This don't look like no tits.

He rips the paper in half, then snatches another one--

WALT

No! Those are my notes!

KINCANNON

This don't say R-S-V-fuckin'-P.

--and he destroys that one too. Walt scrambles, trying to retrieve more, but Kincannon plants a BOOT into Walt's chest. Struggling, he now notes the name on the cop's badge...

WALT

Kincannon? Captain Kincannon?

KINCANNON

I ain't payin' you for the hour, missy,
so don't you be screamin' my name--

WALT

But you were arrested! Ness sent you to prison!

Kincannon hauls him up, slams him against the wall--

KINCANNON

How would you know a thing about that--?

WALT

You work for him now?

KINCANNON

You wanna win a war, you don't bring the Boy Scouts. You ship whores and Marines. And you, boyo, were warned--

WALT

Did you work for him on the Torso case?!

Kincannon's fist hesitates, thrown off track. Walt scrambles--

WALT

Listen to me -- I -- I have money. I can pay you -- for your time. Just tell me how you ended up on Torso. I'll pay you. Ness doesn't have to know.

KINCANNON

You'll pay me?

Fist still raised, Kincannon narrows his eyes.

KINCANNON
 What the hell kind of newspaper you
 workin' for?

CUT TO:

INT. STATE PENITENTIARY - NIGHT (1937)

A dark prison corridor. Kincannon's a convict in a cell, as a
 GUARD's shadow falls:

PRISON GUARD
 It's guardian angel time.

EXT. TORSO HQ - NIGHT

Fog-shrouded, deserted. The garage's fence-gates shut.
 Kincannon arrives, now in street clothes...

...and approaches the Guard Station warily. It has the feeling
 of a set-up. A dark window drawn. Nonetheless, he raps on it.
 It slides aside to reveal Lucy, in her prim glasses:

LUCY
 Kincannon. You're on the list.

INT. TORSO HQ - NIGHT

Lucy escorts Kincannon in, to where eight other EX-COPS are
 seated -- Grolsch and other faces we saw Ness fire from the
 force. The walls are laden with Torso charts, photos, etc.

LUCY
 Mr. Ness? Everyone's here.

Ness stands at a huge annotated map of the crime scenes. He
 nods. Refuses to face his rough-and-tumble audience:

NESS
 Gentlemen. All of you were once officers
 of the law. Your community trusted you.
 And you betrayed that trust--

KINCANNON
 You're real one to talk, you dickless
 Judas fuck.

NESS
 --still, I won't contest that you know
 these streets as few men do--

KINCANNON
 Where's the reporters? Where's the
 photographers? Though you didn't dry off
 your nuts without them.

Ness steels his stare at the wall.

NESS

There is a killer in our midst. He may require skills such as your own.

GROLSCH

You're wanting us...to work for you.

NESS

You'll be given no weapons, badges, or titles. Nor will the Cleveland Police Department admit you're in its employ in any way.

CORRUPT EX-COP #1

You want vigilantes.

NESS

I want safe streets. In return, I would arrange for pardons...allowing all of you to someday wear the uniform again.

CORRUPT EX-COP #2

Well ain't Christmas come early...

NESS

Your name will be the Unknowns. You'll report to Detectives Myrlo and Simon.

KINCANNON

Not till I hear you say you were wrong.

Ness finally turns, silently seething. Meets Kincannon's smile. Myrlo and Simon step forward, to spare their boss:

MYRLO

This Torso Killer, gentlemen, he's the likes we've never seen. We've searched the Run, the Third, the shantytowns. Every ex-convict and mental deficient.

SIMON

He has some degree of medical knowledge. He possesses the means to travel. And he meets his victims in such a way that raises no suspicion at all.

MYRLO

So he could be a doctor. A scientist--

SIMON

A soldier--

KINCANNON

A cop.

The "Unknowns" trade intrigued looks...

KINCANNON
Well, boyo. You really cleaned up the
department, now didn't ya.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

BOOM! Kincannon and two Unknowns STORM through the doors,
dressed in Fire Marshals' gear, flashing toy badges--

KINCANNON
FIRE INSPECTION!

--as they bully through, shoving waiting PATIENTS aside--

LOCAL DOCTOR
Sir, this is a medical practice--!

KINCANNON
Special Order of the Safety Director,
Bruno! Gotta bring you up to code!
(to his mates)
Check his attic, check his basement. And
snap me some swee-venirs.

And his Unknowns raise CAMERAS -- FLASH! FLASH! FLASH!

INT. BARBER SHOP - DAY

CUSTOMERS scatter as three more Unknowns crash in, dressed as
Fire Marshals too, beating down a protesting BUTCHER--

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

MORTICIANS and CASKETS get shoved aside as three more "Fire
Marshal" Unknowns storm in, cameras FLASHING--

INT. TORSO HQ - DAY

A funeral home PHOTO is tacked to a MINIATURE BUILDING...as
ANGLE REVEALS half of the garage's floor is now a scale-model
representation of Kingsbury Run and the Roaring Third. The New
Untouchables are assembling it like worker bees--

NESS (V.O.)
Block by block, house by house, I want
this city searched. He takes them --
lures them -- somewhere. A cell, a
chamber, a laboratory -- some little
corner of Hell. Find that and we'll find
the man.

--as Ness, like a giant, literally walks the streets of his
MINIATURE CITY. The master of all he surveys...

INT. BROTHEL - NIGHT

CRASH! Kincannon and the Unknowns STORM IN, in leather Black Jackets, grabbing PROSTITUTES in lingerie and their flummoxed JOHNS. In their wake, Ness strides in--

NESS

We are searching for a man of unorthodox fascinations.

BROTHEL MADAM

Why, Mr. Ness. Is there any other kind?

INT. POLICE AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

Now filled with the MADAM and dozens of PROSTITUTES in various states of undress. Coffee and pastries are served. Ness is at the forefront, as SURVEILLANCE PHOTOS of various white-collar MEN are projected on a screen.

With each new face, a prostitute's hand shoots up:

PROSTITUTE #1

Yeah, he's a judge or a lawyer or somethin'. Likes it rough, but he ain't nothin' I can't handle.

The New Untouchables take notes on chalkboards, scribbling names under headings such as "Violent Sex," "Use of Knives/Weapons," "Bonds and Restraints," "Perversions -- Other."

More MEN projected. More women have answers:

PROSTITUTE #2

Amateur magician. He's into blindfolds.

PROSTITUTE #3

He's an accountant. Whips and chains.

PROSTITUTE #4

He brings his wife.

PROSTITUTE #5

He brings his sister.

PROSTITUTE #6

Got an Eleanor Roosevelt kinda-preference-thing.

PROSTITUTE #7

He held a switchblade to my neck while we did it.

SEVERAL IN UNISON

Oh him! That's the Chicken Man!

The cops all look up. Ness is profoundly disturbed...

NESS (PRE-LAP)

Show me a city free of crime, and I'll show you one with level sidewalks. Where the playgrounds are clean and the water fountains work. This is where safety begins. With civic pride!

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

Ness is at a podium, flanked by two dozen WOMEN in POWDER BLUE UNIFORMS, half-Girl Scout, half-janitorial. They're the same PROSTITUTES from scene previous. Now with brooms, rakes, etc.

NESS

So ladies and gentlemen, put your hands together now, for Cleveland's inaugural Beauty Brigade!

Tepid applause from the crowd, mostly REPORTERS--

REPORTER FROM CROWD

How come you'll no longer talk publicly about the Torso case?

ANOTHER REPORTER

Are there more victims we don't know about? Has the investigation failed?

--but Ness presses on with his speech, nodding to the Beauty Brigade as they model their uniforms and squeegees--

KINCANNON (V.O.)

He put on a hell of a show, that Ness. Him and his traffic lights, parking meters, squeaky clean streets. All the ways he was making people's lives safer. He never mentioned his files on every last one of 'em.

IN A PARKED BLACK SEDAN

Kincannon sits watching, just beyond the park's gates...

KINCANNON (V.O.)

And that was when I knew...that he was gonna he'd catch his killer. 'Cause I saw he'd stop at nothing.

(beat)

Just like me.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL LAUNDRY ROOM - BACK TO ELECTION NIGHT

WORKERS are busy washing and drying by hand, in a massive operation. Walt and Kincannon have commandeered a quiet corner, with Walt still soaked from the rain:

WALT

And you expect me to believe Eliot Ness organized some secret vigilante police force?

KINCANNON

I don't give a rat's ass what you
"believe." I expect you to pay me.

WALT

Revenge. You want to tarnish his name--

KINCANNON

His name don't need no help from me.

--as Kincannon suddenly grabs Walt by the collar, slams him back into the shadows where the workers can't see.

KINCANNON

Who's wearing the badge here? And
whaddya think that means? Tarnish" the
man? I'm trying to tell you he finally
got priorities straight.

He BANGS him to the wall, takes his wallet, removes the cash:

KINCANNON

You dumb fuckin' kid. Thanks for the
drinks.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Walt wanders back in, weary and battered from his latest run-in.
SWING MUSIC blares from the ballroom as--

LUCY (O.S.)

Hey, Chicago, what happened to you?

--he sees Lucy sitting among the phone boxes, drink in hand.

WALT

I'm working.

LUCY

As what, a punching bag? I thought you
just needed a couple quotes and you'd be
gone.

She motions to the phone box beside her. Walt sits down.

LUCY

This is it. What it all comes down to.
Waiting for a half-million strangers to
determine the course of my life...

WALT

Who else knows about the Unknowns.

LUCY

(affronted)
What's with you?

(MORE)

LUCY (cont'd)
 You always gotta want something from me?
 Who taught you how to have a conversation
 with a girl?

WALT
 I told you I'm working.

LUCY
 Yeah, well I'm working too -- for the
 future. Or maybe your career's more
 important than that--

WALT
 This is not about me--

LUCY
 There's a sentence that's a lie ever time
 it gets said.

WALT
 I just want the truth--

LUCY
 Hah. I hate that word. Trade you the
 truth about him for the truth about you.
 (off his look)
 Uh-huh. That's what I thought.

Walt says nothing. Lucy sighs, calmer. Stares off.

LUCY
 If not for that case, they would've been
 the best years of his life.

The party music from the ballroom still plays...

WALT
 What about for you?

And off Lucy's conflicted look, we--

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKESIDE COTTAGE - MORNING (1937)

The Ness CATS prowl the yard. Idyllic and charming...as Lucy
 emerges from an idling PATROL CAR with a stack of files...

INT. LAKESIDE COTTAGE

With no answer to her knocks, Lucy enters. Edna's quaint decor
 has been overrun, with CRIME SCENE MATERIAL tacked everywhere.

LUCY
 Mr. Ness?

INT. DINING ROOM

No response as Lucy wanders through, tailed by the cats. This room, too, overrun with grisly Torso documents.

LUCY
Mr. Ness...?

INT. HALL TO BEDROOM

Hearing VOICES ahead, she continues further...

EDNA (O.S.)
Enough about his crimes! Does it even
matter if you catch him? After him,
there'll be more crimes. And meanwhile
what happens to us--

NESS (O.S.)
We are two little lives, Mrs. Ness --
that's all!

Lucy freezes...as through the open door ahead, she sees a tearful Edna cross -- wearing only a nightgown -- as a fully-suited Ness pulls her back to him. Now gentle:

NESS
All we say has been said. What matters
is the world we leave behind--

EDNA
My world is you.

This stops him. She presses closer, stroking his face...

EDNA
We'll walk along the lake...we'll sit
listening to the waves...like we used
to...just for today...

And as she seems to get through...and their lips grow close:

NESS
The city isn't safe.

Before Edna can respond, they notice Lucy in the hall.

LUCY
Mr. Ness...I brought the detectives...

EXT. LAKESIDE COTTAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Ness throws on a jacket, exiting, Lucy striding to keep up--

NESS

Tell Mrs. Ness we'll be working late.
And to call you if she needs me.

He walks on to confer with some New Untouchables at a waiting car. Lucy looks back to the house -- where she sees Edna now outside. Walking down toward the lake.

EXT. EDGE OF LAKE - CONTINUOUS

Lucy follows. Edna stands at the lakeshore, bright and serene.

LUCY

Mrs. Ness?

(no response)

I know how it must look sometimes. I know what you may think. But Mrs. Ness, you have my word, there is nothing between me and your husband--

EDNA

Oh God, child. Would that there were.

Lucy's at a loss.

EDNA

That'd mean there was something more important to him than duty and honor.

She turns. Searches Lucy's eyes...

EDNA

He is the best man you will ever meet.
And he will never make you happy.

INT. NESS' OFFICE - NIGHT

Stacked with files. Ness is working with Myrlo and Simon:

NESS

Where are we on the boot-prints? Size 12 Wellington Low-Boys. How many shoe stores are in this city? How many undercovers would an op like that take?

--and as he glances up, he sees Edna standing in his doorway. Formally dressed, with a suitcase. Lucy's beside her:

LUCY

She didn't call...I didn't know--

EDNA

She won't be long.

Her manner is remote. Ness nods to his detectives and they depart. He and Edna are left alone.

EDNA
I'm going back to Chicago. To stay with
my parents.

NESS
I'd like to try to talk you out of that.

EDNA
Why?

NESS
We're going to catch him -- any day now.
We're making real progress. We're
narrowing the search--

EDNA
I thought you were going to say because
you love me.

A beat.

NESS
I see you've made up your mind.

EDNA
I love you, Eliot. I do. But not the
man I see you becoming.

NESS
I don't understand. I haven't changed.

She nods, with great regret.

EDNA
That's the man I mean.
(beat)
I'm leaving you, Eliot.

He seems lost for a reply. So she starts for the door--

NESS
Edna, you're making a mistake.

She stops.

NESS
I will catch him.

EDNA
Yes, Eliot. I have no doubt of that.

INT. LAKESIDE COTTAGE - NIGHT

Ness and Lucy stand in the living room. Bare shelves and walls,
most furniture gone. The case files remain...

NESS

She and I made a vow -- to help the people of this city. She chose not to see it through.

They're standing close. Lucy turns to him, removes glasses:

LUCY

I'm sorry, Mr. Ness. If there's ever anything...that you need from me...

Ness searches her eyes. Nods.

NESS

I'll need the house and furniture sold, then find me an apartment near HQ. Tell Fritchey to run a column on how very much my wife missed Chicago.

LUCY

(disheartened)

Yes, Mr. Ness--

NESS

Then set a Torso Squad meeting first thing in the morning. We'll set up round-the-clock surveillance on every route in and out of the Run. Oh, and Lucy?

LUCY

Yes, Mr. Ness.

NESS

(a warning smile)

Don't ever leave me.

Once more buoyed, Lucy returns the smile as an up-tempo BIG BAND ORCHESTRA gets rolling and blasts us into--

INT. "VOGUE ROOM" - NIGHT - *BEGIN "MILK TO MARTINIS" MONTAGE*

CHAMPAGNE FLUTES are filled. Crisp MARTINIS are poured. SUITS and GOWNS pass in a flurry of motion, as the city's rich and famous dance furiously to BIG BAND RUMBA--

LUCY (V.O.)

He was the country's most famous crime fighter. And now he was spending his nights alone...

--as ANGLE searches out Ness in a back booth, huddled with CITY OFFICIALS, a meeting now spent out on the town. On the other side of the club, Lucy sits with a handsome SUITOR. But she's staring off...toward the unattainable...

LUCY (V.O.)
 You know what blood in the water smells
 like?

...as a familiar Redhead Model DANCES, spinning, "accidentally" bumping into Ness' table. The men all laugh. It's the Brite-a-Shine girl, the face of the Traffic Safety Campaign. Ness toasts her with his glass of spilled milk.

LUCY (V.O.)
 Neither did he.

EXT. KINGSBURY RUN RAVINE - NIGHT

While the O.S. RUMBA plays on, the Redhead Model smiles down from one last "Drive Safely, Walk Sensibly" billboard: *"Better use those headlights...or you just might miss me."*

A pack of six UNKNOWNNS, clad in their Black Jackets, descends toward a tattered boxcar beside the tracks--

INT. BOXCAR

--and BURST in, terrifying the sleeping HOBOS inside. The Unknownns roust them, lead pipes swinging. Kincannon SMASHES an elderly Hobo into the wall with glee:

KINCANNON
 Which one of you's the Torso Killer?!

INT. "VOGUE ROOM" - ANOTHER NIGHT

More SWIRLING BODIES, dressed to the nines...as Ness edges past, leading more OFFICIALS toward his table. But a dancing Redhead swirls into his view, cuts him off from his colleagues--

LUCY (V.O.)
 It's hard to watch a man...who's so
 strong, so noble, so brave. When he
 meets a certain kind of woman. And you
 know he never stands a chance.

--and they both take a step left to move past. Then they both take a step right. They share a laugh.

EXT. LORAIN-CARNEGIE BRIDGE - DAY

--as ANGLE SWEEPS down past a CROWD in a trash-strewn field beneath a bridge, where Myrlo, Simon and beat cops surround the dumped human REMAINS OF #9--

EXT. NEWSSTAND - DAY

--while a NEWSBOY hawks the latest headline: *"Torso Killer Claims Ninth Victim!"*--

INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT

--as Grolsch and more Unknowns BURST IN, rousting a DRUNK and slamming his head off the bar:

GROLSCH
That a size 12 boot, you reprobate? Tell
me you're the Torso Killer!

INT. "VOGUE ROOM" - NIGHT

Ness with more CITY OFFICIALS...as the TEMPO speeds up -- he's seeming more distracted now, intermittently glancing across the DANCE FLOOR...to where the Redhead sits in an opposite booth. Licking her lips after sipping champagne...with a smile...

EXT. SHANTYTOWN - NIGHT

...as it's all INTERCUT with the Unknowns rousting the "shadow city." Dragging the HOMELESS from their beds--

UNKNOWNNS
We got evidence, we got your prints! We
found the blood, you sign the statement!

INT. "VOGUE ROOM" - NIGHT

--as TWIRLING CROWDS spin across the dance floor...amidst which we find the Redhead...now dancing with Ness. Determination and perfection. And tonight Ness is utterly lost...

EXT. AUTOPSY ROOM - DAY

--as SHUTTERBUGS crowd around Gerber's autopsy table, as he sweeps a sheet aside with a flourish, to display the badly decomposed REMAINS OF #10. FLASH!--

INT. "VOGUE ROOM"/EXT. SHANTYTOWN - NIGHT

And now the CROSS-CUTS get dizzying: Dancing. Beatings. Skulls. The Redhead. Tuxedos. Trenchcoats. Horns. The Redhead. Help me's. Crime tape. Club lights. The Redhead. The Redhead. The Redhead. Two cities COLLIDING until--

INT. "VOGUE ROOM " - NEW NIGHT

--TEMPO QUIETS. Ness and the Redhead alone now, at his table, conspiring like lovers...

LUCY (V.O.)
'Cause the tragedy of it all wasn't that
she didn't give a damn about Cleveland.

...as Lucy watches, ignoring another SUITOR, from across the room. Drinks arrive at Ness' table, as the Redhead raises a MARTINI...and Ness raises a MARTINI too.

LUCY (V.O.)
It's that she never gave a damn about
him.

And as their lips meet in a kiss...

INT. CITY COURTHOUSE - DAY - *END "MILK TO MARTINIS" MONTAGE*

...pull back from a KISS before a JUSTICE of the peace. The Redhead and Ness, now married. ATTENDANTS cheer. And a FLASH!

INT. ENTRY - PENTHOUSE APARTMENT

MATCH CUT to a front-page newspaper: a photo of Ness and the Redhead at their wedding, beside a shot of two BOYS IN RAGS in a weed-filled lot, pointing to the human REMAINS OF #11. Headline reads "*Tale of Two Cities*."

Lucy picks up the newspaper, as FURNITURE MOVERS push past her, carrying fancy, chic, fashionable stuff...

...as Lucy follows into a huge, modernist apartment -- skylights and glass balconies, overlooking downtown. The Redhead directs the Movers with their boxes, while Ness smiles, looking slightly lost. And then another MOVER enters, with a crate--

--and the Redhead claps, excitedly, hurrying over...removing THREE SNOW-WHITE KITTENS, kissing them and letting them run.

Lucy watches Ness for a moment. The same dazed smile plastered on his face. He meets her eyes, gives a welcome wave--

--and she waves half-heartedly back. But folds the newspaper over...rather than show it to him.

As she silently backs to the doorway. And as MOVERS push by, the door swings re-shut. Leaving Lucy alone in the hall.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL CLEVELAND - LOBBY - *BACK TO ELECTION NIGHT*

RING-RING! Lucy's jarred back to the present by a phone booth:

LUCY
That's my call, I've gotta take it--
(picks up, writing)
Gimme the numbers. Since when? Which
precincts? Damn it, lemme know when
there's more.
(hangs up, grimly)
One-third in. Burke's pulled even.

She hurries toward the elevators, with Walt pursuing--

WALT

So wait, you said victim eleven -- then there was still one more--

LUCY

Sorry, Chicago -- I got business here--

WALT

Thought your life was all out of your hands.

LUCY

A woman can dream.

WALT

So what went so wrong for him? I still don't understand -- other than marrying the wrong girl...

At the elevator, Lucy stops. Turns back. Then looks to a "Vote Yes for Ness!" campaign poster nearby:

LUCY

Trust me, Chicago. No one's interested in the "truth." Not about him, or me, or you. The "truth" will disappoint you every time.

INT. LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

A clock reads "10:45." Laughing COUPLES spill out of the ballroom. They came for a free party; they're not waiting for final returns. Walt arrives again at the front desk to hear--

DESK MANAGER

(harried, on the phone)

Yes, we know, the Executive Suite, yes, we've had several calls. Rest assured it's under control--

(hangs up, yells off)

Somebody find our man Myrlo! Get him up to the Executive Suite!

INT. TENTH FLOOR HALL - NIGHT

An elevator opens and Walt peers out: the hall's empty, but there's SHOUTING from halfway down. Walt nears to see the door to the Executive Suite ajar. SLAM. CRASH.

YOUNG WIFE (O.S.)

NO, YOU LOOK ME IN THE EYES!

YOUNG HUSBAND (O.S.)

Honeybunch! You don't understand!

More CRASHES as Walt peers in to see a disheveled, crying WIFE hurling anything within reach at a white-collar HUSBAND who's grappling with Myrlo, in his bulldog overcoat--

YOUNG WIFE
What's not to understand about having a headache! A headache!

YOUNG HUSBAND
That was years ago! It was over!

YOUNG WIFE
So show me what you took for this headache!

MYRLO
(struggling, sees Walt)
Hey, kid, get in here! Gimme a hand!

YOUNG WIFE
YOU SHOW ME WHAT YOU TOOK FOR THIS HEADACHE!

Walt hustles in, trying to help grab the husband--

MYRLO
With her! Get hold of her!

--as a wine bottle sails. Walt, Myrlo and Hubby duck. SMASH!

YOUNG WIFE
'CAUSE I FEEL A MIGRAINE COMING ON!

Just then A MISTRESS IN LINGERIE darts out of the bathroom, making a break for it with an armful of clothes--

The wife ROARS WITH RAGE, charging as Walt cuts her off, pinning her arms as four BEAT COPS run in, grabbing the Mistress--

MYRLO
Get 'em outta here! All of 'em!

--and taking the whole screaming trio off Merylo's hands--

BEAT COP
Keeping busy, huh, Dan?

MYRLO
Elections. They make people crazy.

He's sweating and winded, too old for this tough guy stuff. He sinks to a couch beside some campaign balloons.

MYRLO
Go on. I'm gonna check around. Might be more girls.

The beat cops depart with their quarry. Outside the windows, RAIN still falls. LIGHTNING streaks the sky.

Myrlo muses, then turns...to see Walt's remained.

WALT

Why'd you turn me on to Torso?

Myrlo studies him. Only now does he recognize.

MYRLO

Oh Jesus. You better have that room key.

WALT

What's it matter, all these years later?

MYRLO

Maybe it doesn't.

WALT

What's it matter to you?

Myrlo says nothing.

WALT

I asked Ness, he said justice was done.

MYRLO

Is that what he said?

WALT

What did he mean?

MYRLO

Why would I know?

WALT

'Cause it was your case.

Myrlo stares out at the rain shrouding the city..

WALT

I was sent here to write an article on whether he wins a mayoral election. And to get a few quotes about why. Torso is the why, isn't it.

(beat)

I've got an hour left to file my story. And I'm here because of you.

Myrlo regards Walt a long moment. And as LIGHTNING flares--

CUT TO:

EXT. "VOGUE ROOM" - NIGHT (1938)

FLASHBULBS pop, REPORTERS clamor...as Ness hurries out, his night on the town interrupted. Myrlo and Simon clear a path--

REPORTERS

Who is he, Mr. Ness?! Who's the killer?
What's his name?!

NESS

We've a man in custody, that's as much as I know! An arrest was made and I'm on my way there--

REPORTER FROM CROWD

Can you confirm that there's been a confession?

NESS

What I can confirm, gentlemen, is that when this criminal's off our streets...I'm buying drinks for each and every one of you!

INT. CENTRAL STATION JAIL - NIGHT

Ness marches a dingy corridor with Myrlo and Simon:

SIMON

The Unknowns were sweeping the shanties -- they say the suspect tried to run. Searched his shack and found a collection of knives.

MYRLO

Plus Wellington Low Boys, Army surplus, bought secondhand.

SIMON

There's blood on the blades; we're gonna run tests--

MYRLO

There's only one part we don't like.

SIMON

Kincannon brought him in.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

A BATTERED MAN sits bound to a chair, head hanging down. He's been beaten for hours. Kincannon and a couple Unknowns are laughing casually as Ness & co. enter.

KINCANNON

Hey there, Mr. Ness. How 'bout you be handing those badges back. 'Cause here he fuckin' is.

Kincannon pulls the man's head up and back -- to reveal it's The Mad Russian from the night of the train accident.

KINCANNON

Took awhile to get him to 'fess. Had to beat the English out.

NESS

This man?

KINCANNON

Fuckin' hell. Ask him!

NESS

This man was a witness.

KINCANNON

Yeah? Take a look what we found at his shack in the Flats.

Kincannon motions to the table, where rusted KNIVES are strewn, as well as hand-bound SCRAPBOOKS, containing every Plains-Dealer Torso ARTICLE published since that night.

KINCANNON

He's been following our every move.

Ness takes the knives, warily facing the beaten man:

NESS

Are these your things? Do they belong to you? Do you recognize any of these?

KINCANNON

What the hell, Ness!

NESS

Do you speak any English at all?

KINCANNON

This ain't no frame-up! We found him!

NESS

Leave him alone. All of you.

Kincannon grumbles, but departs with his Unknowns. Ness, Myrlo and Simon remain.

NESS

Find him a translator. He's Russian--
(to the man)
(MORE)

NESS (cont'd)
 Those men won't hurt you anymore. You're safe, no one will hurt you. I'm only asking for the truth. You're not the murderer. Are you.

The frightened man finally meets Ness' eyes.

THE MAD RUSSIAN
 I keel. I keel them all.

INT. CENTRAL STATION - SERIES OF SHOTS - NIGHT

FLASH! The Russian's pulpy face stares from a mugshot. FLASH! A side profile. FLASH! The man is stripped, searched and marched into a cell in prison grays.

MYRLO (V.O.)
 All night, Ness interrogated him alone. He walked him through every killing. But his descriptions didn't match the scenes. His knives didn't match the wounds. And his size 12 boots were on his size 9 feet. And we knew.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - DAY

A wealthy MAN stands to applaud. Then his WIFE. Their whole table of DINERS. And then another. The whole room--

MYRLO (V.O.)
 But Ness still wanted to hold him. Just one week. Just a little more.

--as ANGLE reveals Ness and the Redhead being shown to their table. Ness waves off the attention.

MYRLO (V.O.)
 'Cause it was getting harder for him to remember how it felt to be the hero.

EXT. SHANTYTOWN - DAY

A CROWD of the homeless, the poor, the indigent STARE BACK at us...as Ness, in camel's hair coat and fedora, descends toward a crime scene in a gully beyond--

--where Myrlo and Simon stand beside another misshapen PATCHWORK QUILT. It's #12. Ness stops. Nods grimly. The detectives lift the quilt aside...

NESS
 It's time to let the Russian go.

INT. JAIL CELL - DAY

Where the Mad Russian stares, very dead, hanging from a bedsheet tied to the bars.

DETECTIVES mill about, as Ness sits in the hallway, head in his hands. And as Myrlo arrives--

NESS
What kind of man...

--Coroner Gerber steps out from the cell, shuts his bag.

GERBER
He was no one and he had nothing. Thanks
to you, he now has fame.
(a false smile)
I trust you will attest to its allure.

EXT. NEWSTAND - NIGHT

A NEWSBOY hawks papers for the evening RUSH:

NEWSHAWK
Torso suspect dies in police custody!
Pick up the evening edition! Police have
no answers after murder number twelve!

EXT. NESS PENTHOUSE - BALCONY - SAME

Ness stands overlooking the city, hearing the hawk's CRIES below. In the dining room b.g., the Redhead is hosting a DINNER PARTY. Laughter and revelry. But Ness is no part of it.

INT. PENTHOUSE

His GUESTS welcome Ness back as he enters, offering him a glass, but he walks right by without a word. Takes his camel's hair coat and fedora and exits the apartment. The Redhead gives her guests an apologetic but helpless smile.

INT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Some newspapers underfoot, "*Torso Suspect's Suspicious Suicide*," "*Has Ness Lost Control of Torso Case?*" as a FIGURE strides by.

It's Ness, alone, hands in pockets, approaching the Death Mask display -- now ELEVEN wax visages staring back. The "*Can You Help Your Fellow Citizens?*" banner still hangs above.

He stares a long time at mask #11. A man in his 30's. In a certain light -- it even looks like Ness himself.

Ness surveys the rest, then watches the PASSERSBY in the station. No one's troubled by the masks anymore. No one looks up or notices at all. And that's when he has the epiphany:

NESS
They were no one.

INT. NESS' OFFICE - NIGHT

Lucy has her coat on, shutting down, as Ness storms in:

LUCY
Mr. Ness! I thought you were--

NESS
Round up the men.

INT. CENTRAL STATION - SERIES OF SHOTS - NIGHT

POLICE RIFLES are snatched from armory shelves. BLUE UNIFORMS are donned, GOLD SHIELDS are pinned, NIGHTSTICKS holstered. Lights POP ON to reveal TWENTY SQUAD CARS ready.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

BANGING on the door, as sleepy Fritchey opens up--

FRITCHEY
What the hell? It's after midnight--

--to see Ness, Myrlo and Simon at his door.

NESS
Tonight you redeem yourself, Mr.
Fritchey. Spread the word.

EXT. POLICE GARAGE - NIGHT

REPORTERS trickle to the scene, wondering what's up. Then the garage doors open...and the FLEET OF SQUAD CARS revs out. No cop lights, no sirens, moving two-by-two into the night.

EXT. JACKASS HILL - NIGHT

A ridge near the Kingsbury Run shantytown. In the distance, another traffic billboard, with the Redhead smiling down:
"Check those mirrors...you never know who might be coming."

FIFTY POLICE OFFICERS stand ready, rifles held...forming a wall of manpower behind Ness, in mid-speech:

NESS
We are a city nearly one million strong.
And yet what haunts our collective
nightmares? Is it organized crime? Is
it vice and poverty? Any of the evils
which take lives in real numbers?

Before him, an audience of REPORTERS and PHOTOGRAPHERS shivers away...shades of the Harvard Club raid...

NESS

No. It is the phantom. The bogeyman.
The psychopath who strikes at random. We
must not and we will not let terror rule
our community. For the honest, hard-
working people of this city all need to
realize...his hunting ground is here.
If not for the forgotten...we'd have
never heard of him at all.

Officers lock and load RIFLES. BATTERING RAMS are revealed.
AXES. KNIVES. NETS. Fritchey and other reporters react. Even
Myrlo and Simon are caught off-guard--

NESS

And after tonight, you have my word, he
won't trouble this city again.

--as a WHISTLE blows and Ness leads the cops in a march over the
rise. A force of fifty strong, heavily armed--

NESS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! THIS IS A RAID!

EXT. KINGSBURY RUN SHANTYTOWN

HEADLIGHTS flare from both ends of the "town" as the SQUAD CARS
come CHARGING in. SIRENS wail. Officers storm. Marching over
Jackass Hill, Ness leads the way:

NESS

Arrest them and evict them. Have them
all shipped beyond city limits.

Myrlo and Simon rush to catch up, watching the HOMELESS stumble
out: drunk, insane, scared, blinded by lights--

--and the cops COLLIDE with them, crashing down nightsticks,
slamming MEN to the dirt, snapping on cuffs--

--as Ness storms into the fray, shouting orders. A hulking
VAGRANT smashes through cardboard walls, tottering toward him.
Ness blows his WHISTLE--

--and COPS converge, CLUBBING the man to the ground. Nearby, a
HOMELESS FAMILY is roused, wrestled to the dirt and cuffed--

NESS

To all of you who contribute nothing to
the future of this city! It is time to
say farewell!

It's chaos and confusion, with flashlight BEAMS arcing wildly as
Cleveland's poorest run for cover and get BEATEN DOWN--

--as an UNMARKED CAR skids to a stop, popping a trunk with TORCHES inside. The staffs are distributed and LIT AFLAME. Several Unknowns stand ready, awaiting Ness' order--

NESS

Relay the message.

Kincannon grins, exhorting his men into the shanties, lighting the cardboard and scrap wood and tinder AFIRE...

...as Myrlo and Simon converge, FLAMES now rising beyond them--

SIMON

Jesus, Ness, these are innocent people!

NESS

They're his food supply, Detective!
Without them, he withers and dies!

SIMON

Are you out of your fucking mind?!

NESS

Stand down, Detective--

SIMON

What's happened to you?!

MYRLO

Sam, don't--

SIMON

You were no one just like them. You had
nothing just like them--

MYRLO

Sam, leave him alone--

SIMON

And you hate them just like he does.

Ness's stare never wavers. Beyond, all struggle and screams.

NESS

Your gun and your badge, Detective.

MYRLO

Aw, Ness look--

NESS

His gun and your badge. I won't ask him
again.

MYRLO

Ness. He's one of our own.

NESS

He's not the kind of man we need.

Simon returns Ness' dark stare...and unstraps his gun, dropping it and his badge in the dirt.

SIMON

After you "save" this city, you sonofabitch, I hope there's a city left.

And he walks away, Myrlo surveys the raid, watching COPS beating the hell out of more DERELICTS attempting to flee.

NESS

The way to stop this killer is to take away his victims. Are you with me.

Ness' eyes reflect the fire. Myrlo's just a worn-down old man.

MYRLO

I'm with you.

Ness nods.

NESS

Burn it all.

EXT. SHANTYTOWN - NIGHT - BEGIN SEQUENCE

The SHADOWED FIGURES of Unknowns and New Untouchables alike carry TORCHES through the mist...

Dirt-poor, sad-faced men and women are loaded into PADDY WAGONS, shoved, mocked and harangued...

Eliot Ness marches at the fore, raiding through warrens and alleys, whistle blowing, BADGE held high...

AXES slam through plywood and cardboard. FAMILIES huddle as DETECTIVES scatter their possessions, scouring for Torso evidence in vain...as more shanties are SET AFIRE, with FLAMES racing up the ramshackle homes...

Myrlo wanders the SMOKY HAZE, not helping, just wandering, as SHADOWS with axes and torches race on ahead--

The Depression's destitute stare out from the paddy wagons, watching the destruction of whatever they had left...

A WALL OF FIRE rises from the shanties, as the Redhead on the distant billboard still smiles and watches over...

From the top of Jackass Hill, REPORTERS and SHUTTERBUGS watch in awe. It's a massive conflagration. Fritchey watches, guilty, disgusted...then drops his notebook and walks away...

As finally, ANGLE closes on Ness, a silhouette against an inferno. An iconic hero watching his triumph...

MYRLO (V.O.)

That was Ness. He knew what mattered.
The ends, not the means. He really
thought there'd be a medal for it.
Thought they'd name him a fuckin' street.
Time to hail the conquering hero.

(beat)

He was wrong.

EXT. SHANTYTOWN/JACKASS HILL - THE NEXT MORNING

A smoldering wasteland. Nothing left. Just scorched earth, and downtown in the distance. As a shutter CLICK-CLICKS-CLICKS!

INT. NESS' OFFICE - DAY

MATCH CUT to the wasteland image on the Plains-Dealer's front page: "*SHAME OF THE CITY.*" The byline: Clayton Fritchey. As we hear a CROWD CHANTING...from somewhere outside...

CROWD CHANT (O.S.)

No More Ness! Down With Ness! No More
Ness! Down With Ness!

INT. PLAINS-DEALER NEWSROOM - DAY

Ness stares dead ahead, marching in...with his entire 25-man squad of New Untouchables. Myrlo too. Astounded EDITORS and REPORTERS watch...as Ness arrives at Fritchey's desk--

NESS

Who the hell do you think you are?

FRITCHEY

Jesus Christ. Did you bring the torches?

--as Ness snaps up the morning paper, reading from it:

NESS

"Mr. Ness seems to believe all human failings are created equal. He has violated property rights, privacy rights and human rights in pursuit of an adversary who may never be found. He has no sympathy for the misfortunes of the common man. He believes wrongly that we control our own fates. These too are indecencies, Mr. Ness, and they are yours entirely. And so, for the safety -- yes, the safety of Cleveland -- this newspaper calls upon you to resign."

FRITCHEY

Am I under arrest? Is it finally my turn?

NESS

I made you.

FRITCHEY

The feeling is mutual.

Ness surveys the newsroom, and his squadron of cops:

NESS

I have a final "exclusive" for you, Mr. Fritchey: if I resign, they resign. The entire Torso Squad. For the "safety" of the gangsters, the bangsters, the prosties, the thieves, the chizzers, the rapists, the perverts, the punks and every other criminal who ran this city before I came to town.

(beat)

Like it or not, this is how it works. This is how we got Capone--

FRITCHEY

You got Capone with a calculator.

Ness hesitates, thrown off stride.

FRITCHEY

Maybe a typewriter's gonna get you.

INT. TORSO HQ - DAY

Ness and his force march back into the HQ garage...to see Mayor Bolton and his SECURITY DETAIL standing amidst the mock-city.

NESS

Mr. Mayor, I wasn't expecting--

BOLTON

Thought it was time I saw for myself, Eliot: all this work, the manpower, the expense. Truly...it's remarkable.

INT. TORSO HQ - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Ness and Bolton stand alone, atop a catwalk, high above the garage. Myrlo and the New Untouchables hard at work below:

BOLTON

Hope there's no hard feelings about what I said for the papers. Just can't have the Mayor authorizing burning down a chunk of the city, can we?

NESS

No sir, I understand -- politically--

BOLTON

Oh now, don't say it like it's a dirty word. How else would civilization function? How else would you tell us from the apes?

NESS

Apes don't drive motor vehicles, sir.

BOLTON

Eliot. That's my Eliot. You know, I was the most popular mayor in America the day I hired you. And now they're out there calling for our heads.

NESS

Let's remind them violent crime is down seventy percent. Juvenile crime eighty percent. Traffic fatalities ninety--

BOLTON

Son. History lionizes men for solving complex problems. Voters only give a shit about the simple ones.

Bolton claps him on the shoulder, turns to watch the cops below now dismantling the mock-city's "shantytown":

BOLTON

We've been through so much together, Eliot. I'd just never want it to have to come down to a question of you or me.

INT. NESS PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Late. The Redhead sleeps soundly, tangled sexily in the satin covers. Ness watches the ceiling, wide awake.

INT. TORSO HQ - NIGHT

The lights FLICKER on as Ness enters, alone, still in his pajamas. The walls are covered floor-to-ceiling with crime photos and mugshots. The chalkboards are covered with theories. The scale-model city on the floor is complete.

In a series of DISSOLVES, Ness walks the room and the streets of the "city", poring over every photo, every clue...

We see GLIMPSES of evidence: the patchwork quilt from #1, the bottlecap from "Royal Crown Cola" from #5, the Wellington bootprint from #2, etc.

Ness positions his rolling DISPLAY BOARDS of morgue photos in a semicircle around his desk. The boards are labeled #1 through #12. Grisly shots of each BODY PART.

Ness sits at his desk, surrounded by the pictures. Staring intently. And then...a look in his eye. Something.

He springs from his chair, starts stripping photos off the boards. All of them. Every one. They fall to a pile on the floor, scattered, haphazard...

As Ness takes a marker and scratches out the board's heading labels: #1, #2, #3, etc.

And now he re-posts the photos, giving each board a body part. Left arm, left arm, left arm, etc. Right calf, right calf, etc.

Until he's left with twelve displays. Studies in repetition. Same pieces displayed together, independent of body or crime.

And now Ness stands back. Regards the completely dehumanized tableau. And nods.

INT. MERYLO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

RING-RING! Awakened, grumpy Myrlo answers his phone:

MYRLO

This is Myrlo--

NESS (O.S.)

They're all the same.

INT. TORSO HQ - MINUTES LATER

Ness BANGS through the door, with Myrlo trying to catch up--

NESS

Victim One and Victim Twelve. Victim Nine and Victim Two--

MYRLO

You're still in your pajamas, sir, you're aware.

NESS

--there is no variation in the pattern of mutilation!

MYRLO

I know. He's a killing machine.

NESS

That's right, Detective. A machine. An assembly line machine.

--and as they enter the main garage space, Myrlo stops short:

NESS

Now tell me where'd you want to find a man with a mind like that?

All over the walls there are now DISTINCTIVE RED CIRCLES. Something flagged on countless evidence photos...

...and now Myrlo steps closer, to see the words on a BOXCAR has been circled: "*Cuyahoga Meatpacking.*" The words on a BUSTED CRATE: "*Cuyahoga Meatpacking.*" The words on a paper bag: "*Cuyahoga Meatpacking.*"

NESS

It's forty miles away in Brunswick. They process a thousand animals a day. They cut the throats, they drain the blood, preserve the rest...and leave them in pieces.

EXT. CUYAHOGA MEATPACKING PLANT - DAY

PIGS come bumbling down a ramp from an off-loading train. Burly WORKERS prod them into chute-gates...on a course that leads three stories upward, into the building.

A long death march procession of pigs...as a suspender-busting fat PLANT MANAGER walks Ness and Myrlo by:

NESS

How many men work at your facility?

PLANT MANAGER

Over a hundred. Tough, strong boys.

NESS

And you'd vouch for their character?

FOREMAN

Well now, look, I just hire 'em on. We get more than a few been through the penal system. Fair share of military boys. Plus when we're strapped for extra labor, we'll send a truck into Cleveland. Hit up Skid Row and such, y'know. Why spend a dollar when you can spend a dime.

Ness and Myrlo trade a look...

EXT. SLAUGHTERHOUSE - RECEIVING AREA - DAY

A LIFTGATE rolls up on a delivery truck to reveal a BLOOD-SPATTERED cargo hold and bloated PIG CARCASSES hanging from riggings. Ness promptly doubles over, stifling a retch--

PLANT MANAGER

Whoa now, this ain't right, this ain't right. Who parked this truck here? These pigs are tubercular!
(to Ness, apologetic)
We clean these trucks up real good, Mr. Ness, don't worry, 'fore we go putting people in there.

MYRLO

And who'd drive a truck like this, on one of your extra labor runs?

PLANT MANAGER

We got a coupla guys: name of Hogenboom and Pitts. They're good at talkin' immigrants down.

NESS

(doubled over, muffled)
Be possible to speak with them?

PLANT MANAGER

You got it, Mr. Ness. Hey, mind if I get that autograph for my kid first?

INT. SLAUGHTERHOUSE - TOP LEVEL - MOMENTS LATER

At the mouth of the ramp chute, the parade of PIGS creeps one-by-one into the building. WORKERS grab each one, affix a CHAIN around an ankle and the other end to a rung on a loudly-turning IRON WHEEL. The wheel lifts the squealing pig into the air--

--as the Manager leads Ness and Myrlo to a foreman's office. Knocks on the door of GERHARD SUNDHEIM (blond, big, 42):

PLANT MANAGER

Hey Ger, you see Hogenboom or Pitts?

SUNDHEIM

I sent them into the city. We're a few slots short.

NESS

You're responsible for their whereabouts?

SUNDHEIM

Every man who works my floor.

NESS

I'm Eliot Ness, this is Daniel Myrlo. We're with the Cleveland Police.

SUNDHEIM

What's this all about?

NESS

A murder investigation.

SUNDHEIM

(friendly, leans back)

What, murderin' pigs?

NESS

These men, uh, Hogensen and Pitts, would you have their employment files on hand?

PLANT MANAGER

Those are down in my office. It'll just take a moment--

The Manager leaves. Ness and Myrlo remain. Sundheim sits at his desk. The o.s. SQUEALS of panicked pigs is deafening:

NESS

Would you mind if I--?

Sundheim shrugs. Ness shuts the door, unnerved...

NESS

May I ask you, Mr. Sundheim...what kind of man works well here? What's the kind of man you seek to hire?

SUNDHEIM

I'm not sure I understand.

NESS

To work -- in these conditions. Must take a certain constitution. A certain character.

SUNDHEIM

In what way.

NESS

Well, I mean -- I mean all the blood.

SUNDHEIM

It's just pigs.

NESS

Yes, I know.

SUNDHEIM

They have no souls.

NESS

Well, yes, naturally.

SUNDHEIM

Unlike men.

NESS

Right.

Sundheim nods. A small shrug. Ness smiles back, awkwardly.

SUNDHEIM

Haven't seen one, though, I'm thinking.

NESS

I'm sorry?

SUNDHEIM

A man's soul.

Ness hesitates. Looks to Myrlo. Sundheim stays affable:

SUNDHEIM

I knew soldiers in the war, when they killed a German, said they saw his soul. Not "see" it like you see me, more like a power, getting strong, something deep at the core, passing through 'em. Said it wasn't a thing that happened to anyone. Only the man who did the killing. Point is that doesn't happen with pigs.

Ness and Myrlo say nothing. They just wait.

SUNDHEIM

We'll get guys off the street, they're not used to the work, that's a story I'll tell them. You prove me pigs have a soul, you show me there's some righteous power, well you will be one famous man. But if there's no soul then there's no harm, and if such a wretched thing was put on earth in the first place...you'd have to say its slaughter was its purpose.

Beat.

SUNDHEIM

Plus the money here's good. That's what sways them in the end.

The door opens as the Manager returns with personnel files--

PLANT MANAGER

Got the files for you, Mr. Ness--

NESS

Thank you. When the two men are back at work, I'd like to talk with them. And...thank you, Mr. Sundheim.

SUNDHEIM
Honor to meet you, Mr. Ness.

Ness and Myrlo head for the door. Sundheim can't help himself:

SUNDHEIM
Y'know, I've been reading what they say
about you -- in the papers. It must be
hard to have them all misinterpret...the
work you're trying to do.

EXT. CUYAHOGA MEATPACKING - DUSK

As WORKERS empty the plant, Sundheim, now in coat and fedora,
climbs into a Plymouth and departs the lot...to reveal Ness and
Myrlo in an UNMARKED CAR. Now on surveillance:

MYRLO
Gerhard Sundheim, 43, no wife, no
children. Nine years' work at the plant.
Lives here in Brunswick. Address 450
Beacon Street.

NESS
Tell the men to meet us there.

EXT. COUNTY ROAD - DUSK

Sundheim's Plymouth bypasses a sign for "Cleveland -- 32 miles."
At a distance, Ness and Myrlo's car follows.

EXT. 450 BEACON STREET - DUSK

A nondescript ROWHOUSE on a lamp-lit street of elms. Sundheim's
car pulls to the curb and he strides up the walk--

--as Ness and Myrlo pull up at block's end. They watch Sundheim
enter. Then a second UNMARKED CAR on the street FLASHES its
lights. As does a third at the block's far end. Ness nods.

EXT. BEACON STREET - NIGHT

Ness and Myrlo, still waiting. Two fresh-faced New Untouchables
in each of the other two unmarked...

...and they all react as Sundheim exits, in coat and fedora, but
now with a BURLAP BAG under his arm. He marches to his car,
surveys the street, then gets in and starts the engine. He
drives past Ness and Myrlo, who duck till he's out of sight...

NESS
Move.

The third surveillance car rolls into pursuit from block's end.
Meanwhile, Ness, Myrlo and two New Untouchables leap out--

--and race up the walk to Sundheim's rowhouse front door:

MYRLO

We have no warrant, sir. Sets us up for
illegal search and seizure.

NESS

Detective. This is our man.

Myrlo gives a grimacing nod to a New Untouchable, who works to
pick the deadbolt. And they're in--

INT. ROWHOUSE

--as Ness CRASHES into a spare, modest two-level rowhouse.
Shadowy, floorboards creak. A stairway into darkness.

NESS

Search it.

BOOM! CLOSETS are searched, CUPBOARDS are scoured, DRESSERS are
hunted through. With a quick sweep of the first floor--

--Ness charges up a landing...and stops still. There's a window
to a wire-fenced overgrown backyard backing to an ALLEY. Where
a rusted-up "Cuyahoga Meatpacking" delivery truck sits on rims.

EXT. ROWHOUSE BACKYARD

Ness charges out with one of the New Untouchables, slipping on
the steps and landing in some muck. He strips off his coat,
charges on -- and races to the delivery truck. There's a
PADLOCK on the liftgate. And BLOODSTAINS beside.

NESS

GET ME INTO THIS TRUCK!

INT. ROWHOUSE BEDROOM

Where Myrlo sweeps in with the other New Untouchable,
searching...and now noticing a SCRAPE MARK on the floor, beneath
the bedposts. As if it's been frequently slid a few inches.

Myrlo pulls the mattress aside...to reveal a BOX SPRING beneath
that appears to have a sliding wooden cover.

EXT. BRUNSWICK STREETS/INT. UNMARKED

The two surveillance Untouchables watch Sundheim's distant car:

NEW UNTOUCHABLE #1

Huh. That's two right turns.

EXT. ROWHOUSE BACKYARD

An Untouchable tries to pick the liftgate padlock to no avail:

NESS
Get it open! GET IT OPEN!

In frustration, he takes the officer's nightstick and shoves him aside, bringing down one ferocious ECHOING WHUMP! It does no good. But in the silence...a WHUMP responds from inside.

Ness and the young officer nearly leap into the air. Ness grabs the nightstick, gives TWO WHUMPS this time. A moment's stillness. And then two WHUMPS respond from within.

NESS
Oh my God, someone's in there...

EXT. BRUNSWICK STREETS/INT. UNMARKED

NEW UNTOUCHABLE #2
That's three right turns...

INT. ROWHOUSE BEDROOM

Myrlo pulls the box-spring cover aside, to reveal a storage compartment. Filled with World War I memorabilia. Photos, papers, gear. And an ARMY UNIFORM with a RED CROSS patch.

MYRLO
He served as a medic...

EXT. ROWHOUSE BACKYARD

As Ness, now desperate, pulls his REVOLVER from his holster. Feels its unfamiliar heft, then aims it at the lock:

NEW UNTOUCHABLE #1 (OVER RADIO)
He's heading back, he's driving back!
Get out of there! HE WENT IN A CIRCLE!

Ness can't move...as FRENETIC SCRAPING now sounds from inside--

EXT. 450 BEACON STREET

--as the headlights of Sundheim's Plymouth return to the street--

INT. ROWHOUSE

--and Ness bursts in the back door as Myrlo hurtles downstairs--

MYRLO
We can't be here! We'll blow the case!

NESS
He's got someone in the truck outside!
Everybody out the back! Out! OUT!

He shoves everyone out the back...and then sees the front door at hall's end. Not deadbolted. He hesitates, then races ahead--

EXT. 450 BEACON STREET

--as Sundheim walks up the front steps, BURLAP BAG tucked under his arm, and puts his key in the deadbolt lock--

INT. ROWHOUSE

--just as Ness is about to re-lock it. Too late! It CLICKS as the key turns. Now locked. A THUMP from outside as Sundheim presses, expecting it to open.

EXT. 450 BEACON STREET

Sundheim frowns. Turns the lock the other way. The deadbolt clicks -- but open. Sundheim stops still.

INT. ROWHOUSE

Ness takes a slow step back. Gun now drawn. Aimed at the door.

EXT. 450 BEACON STREET

Sundheim takes his hand off the door. Stares darkly:

SUNDHEIM
Is that you...Mister Ness?

INT. ROWHOUSE

Ness says nothing, heart in his throat. Then hears FOOTSTEPS hurrying off the front steps--

EXT. 450 BEACON STREET

--as Sundheim hustles back into his car, slams the door and GUNS the engine. Peeling out as he speeds away. A moment later, Myrlo and the New Untouchables appear around the corner. Meeting Ness as he bursts out the front door:

NESS
Alert all units and locate him! First
take the truck -- get to the truck!

EXT. ROWHOUSE BACKYARD

BANG! BANG! BANG! Myrlo SHOOTS the lock away, as the New Untouchables heft up the liftgate, and Ness scrambles in--

NESS
Hold on, you hear me?! Just hold on--

--just as a MASSIVE PIG CHARGES HIM, wheezing and pawing, held by a COLLAR and CHAIN! Ness scrambles back! The animal's terrified, skittish, WHUMPING its hooves on the wall.

Its body is covered with strange SCARS and SUTURES. Its vocal cords have seemingly been cut.

Ness catches his breath, as his officers shine FLASHLIGHTS around the strange backyard "chamber." For a pet or a prisoner? It's impossible to tell. But for Ness, there's no doubt:

NESS

We have him.

INT. NESS' OFFICE - NIGHT

Lucy's at her desk, working away when the phone rings:

LUCY

Mr. Ness' office.

SUNDHEIM (O.S.)

Hmm. Hmmm. Mr. Ridiculous-ness...? Mr. Defenseless-ness...?

LUCY

Who's calling? Who is this?

EXT. BRIDGE TO CLEVELAND - NIGHT

Sundheim's Plymouth is parked at a gas station's phone booth. He stands in sinister silhouette, staring toward downtown...

SUNDHEIM

Please inform Mr. Ness I've had enough of his harassment. Tell him the soul he has to save...will be his own.

EXT. BRUNSWICK STREETS/INT. UNMARKED

Ness and Myrlo's car races back to Cleveland. A VOICE squawks:

LUCY (OVER RADIO)

City switchboard says it came in from a filling station -- just past the 52nd Street Bridge!

NESS

He's headed into Cleveland. Send men to my home, get Mrs. Ness somewhere safe. All cars, be on the lookout: Ohio license plate Victor Three-Five-Niner.

EXT. CENTRAL STATION - SQUAD CAR LOT - NIGHT

OFFICERS hurry into vehicles, heading out to canvas the streets.

INT. TORSO HQ - NIGHT

New Untouchables at their desk, frenetically radioing in:

NEW UNTOUCHABLE #3	NEW UNTOUCHABLE #4
State's got no tax or payroll	He's got no record with the
records on "Gerhard Sundheim!"	Army neither, Mr. Ness!

EXT. CLEVELAND STREETS/INT. UNMARKED

Now racing through downtown, scanning streets:

NESS
Well, find him! He's a living man!

PATROL OFFICER (OVER RADIO)
Copy all units, we've got a license
Victor Three-Five-Niner. Sitting on
Euclid past Brockway Avenue.

NESS
That's ten blocks from here--

Myrlo SKIDS the car into a turn, cutting off traffic -- as their
unmarked SPEEDS through the streets--

EXT. EUCLID AVENUE - MOMENTS LATER

--and SKIDS around the corner, now in a tree-lined neighborhood
with ROWHOUSES on one side, and an ivy-fenced STONE WALL on the
other. A PATROL CAR idles near Sundheim's Plymouth--

--as Ness and Myrlo leap out, guns drawn, to see the car empty.
They survey the deserted street--

NESS
Get the Torso Squad down here. Have 'em
sweep every one of those buildings.
(motions to wall)
And let's get dogs searching this park.
We're on Euclid where again?

PATROL OFFICER
It's not a park, Mr. Ness. That's the
south wall to the Mayor's estate.

Ness stops still. Trades a look with Myrlo--

NESS
Find Bolton! Surround his house! Now!

--and immediately jumps to scale the wall. He scrambles to get
feet over. Myrlo tries to pursue, but he's too short to reach--

MYRLO
Ness! Wait for officers! NESS!

PATROL OFFICER
Main gate's on Brockway! On Brockway!

Ness is over and gone. Into silence and shadows. So Myrlo and the Patrol Cop sprint off, splitting up--

EXT. GROUNDS OF BOLTON'S MANSION - NIGHT

--as Ness charges through the pitch-black grounds, strafed by branches, gun drawn, racing for the darkened house.

EXT. FRONT GATE OF MANSION

--while Myrlo and the Patrol Cop round to find the main gates locked. No trace of the Mayor's security detail.

MYRLO

No security...where's his security?

INT. BOLTON'S MANSION

WHUMP! A servant's pantry DOOR gets rammed in, as Ness stumbles through, holding his shoulder. The house is totally dark.

NESS

Mayor Bolton! John! It's me--

Ness searches the back hall, the sitting room, living room -- and as he rounds toward the stairs...he hears VOICES. And notes a HIDDEN DOOR in the paneling, below the stairs. He opens the door, gun ready. And starts down...

EXT. BOLTON'S MANSION - FRONT DOOR

While Myrlo huffs and puffs to the steps, plants a foot in the door and BREAKS his way in--

INT. HIDDEN HALLWAY

Ness creeps through the darkness, gun drawn, toward the VOICES. A door at hall's end, with DIM LIGHT beneath...and now he hears a man ROAR with rage. So he crashes forward--

INT. BOLTON'S "SPEAKEASY" STUDY

--into a handsomely-appointed room, rich woods and red curtains. A bar and a billiard table, a sitting area and a desk. In one of the chairs sits an aggravated Gerhard Sundheim, being restrained by Bolton's three-man SECURITY DETAIL--

--who all look surprised to see the sweaty, desperate, wild-eyed Ness now facing them, holding his gun--

--while Bolton stands at his desk, in a disheveled tux, holding up a "just a moment" finger. He's on the phone:

BOLTON

He's right here. Yes, we have him. I understand, sir. We'll be waiting.

SUNDHEIM
HIM! This -- this is the man-- he was
after me! He was in my house!

Bolton hangs up. Ness stands frozen, gun aimed. It's surreal.

BOLTON
I asked you to inform me, Eliot. The
first moment you had a name--

NESS
Do you know who he IS?--

BOLTON
He says he came here because he had
something to show me.

Bolton indicates the BURLAP BAG on the billiard table. Ness
opens it to see a framed PHOTO. Of "Gerhard Sundheim," (age 22)
in a WWI Army medic's uniform. Standing next to smiling Senator
Harlingen, an arm around him.

BOLTON
He's the Senator's nephew, Eliot. I just
spoke with him on the phone. Shipped
home, apparently, during the war. As
some soldiers had died...while in his
medical care--

SUNDHEIM
(an enigmatic smile)
The Army misunderstood my work.

INT. BOLTON'S MANSION - FRONT HALL

Meanwhile, Myrlo searches the level upstairs. Notes a walk-in
closet...and as he enters, he hears VOICES a floor below...

BOLTON (O.S.)
The Senator says he sought to help him
start over. Found a place for him to
live. A job at some factory. And had
his given name...changed. It was during
the Senator's first campaign, you see...

INT. "SPEAKEASY" STUDY

Ness seems to alert now. Surveys the security men. And Bolton:

NESS
I'm arresting this man, sir.

BOLTON
He says you were in his house without a
warrant--

NESS

I am arresting this man--

BOLTON

He says he can prove he was denied his rights--

NESS

I AM ARRESTING THIS MAN!

A silence. Bolton steps forward, offering a glass of scotch:

BOLTON

Eliot...let's talk about this--

--and Ness sweeps his free hand, bashing it to the ground. His shaking gun arm remains on Sundheim. Sundheim SNICKERS. Bolton nods to a security man, who grabs Sundheim by the hair and snaps his head back to the chair. Sundheim snarls.

NESS

He's after their souls...he thinks somehow...he's taking their souls...

BOLTON

His house is in the Senator's name. They will say that the Senator knew. Surely you see the ramifications...

NESS

We have done nothing wrong!

And now Bolton charges him, like a desperate, cornered creature, gripping Ness by the front of his shirt:

BOLTON

What makes you think we have time for this? A trial, is that what we want? The Senator's name in the papers for years? Where's the evidence, you still haven't told me. Is it a trial we could even win? When the Senator ends his term, he intends me to run in his place. And I intend you to run in mine--

It's the first time Ness has heard these words...

NESS

You want me to betray everything I am.

BOLTON

Eliot...you've abused the press, you're in league with criminals, you run surveillance on everyday citizens.

(MORE)

BOLTON (cont'd)
 You've burned women and children out of their homes and you caused the death of an innocent man. Now I'm not saying anyone in your position wouldn't have done the same...but my God, Eliot. Who exactly do you think you're better than?

INT. HALLWAY CLOSET

Upstairs, Myrlo hears all. His gun returns to his holster... as he hears the faint sound of SIRENS outside...

BOLTON (O.S.)
You caught him. You stopped him. And the Senator's men are on their way...

INT. "SPEAKEASY" STUDY

BOLTON
 He'll be placed in a mental institution. He'll never harm a living soul again--

SUNDHEIM
 ...a living soul...

BOLTON
 We'll make you Mayor of this city one day. You'll build the city you believe in. And all I'm asking you to give up...is a single day's headlines. For your future. Your party. Your country.

From his chair, Sundheim settles now, and snickers...

SUNDHEIM
 There's a word for it, Ness.
Untouchable.

--which sends Ness over the edge. He charges Sundheim -- the Security Men step to intervene -- but Bolton waves them off. Ness PISTOL-WHIPS Sundheim's jaw, keeps him planted in his chair, again and again, BEATING HIM mercilessly. Sundheim just grins, face getting bloodied, and then ROARS--

--startling Ness, as he plants his pistol between Sundheim's eyes. Bolton clears his throat:

BOLTON
 The murders will end. Cleveland will forget--

NESS
I won't.

And now, from outside, the sound of SIRENS rise. Bolton nods.

BOLTON
Then kill him. Kill him now. The
Senator understands.

SUNDHEIM
Wait-- what? WHAT?!

BOLTON
If it's the only way to save you. From
yourself.

SUNDHEIM
YOU'RE LYING! HE'S LYING! GET THE
SENATOR ON THE FUCKING PHONE!

BOLTON
If it's the victory you need.

SUNDHEIM
Tell the Senator! THIS IS MURDER!

BOLTON
For you still are so destined for so many
great things...

Ness remains, all troubled fury, finger on the trigger...

BOLTON
There's the way the world is...and the
way we want it to be.

Bolton nods to his Security Men -- who step aside...

BOLTON
It's now, Eliot...or never...

Sundheim sweats, gun to his head...and Ness never breaks his
gaze...as his nemesis stares down the barrel...in defiance...

SUNDHEIM
One soul for you.

INT. BOLTON'S MANSION - SAME

BANG! The FRONT DOOR is blown open by New Untouchables STORMING
IN. Guns ready, searching the house -- as Myrlo STUMBLES out of
the closet, hands raised--

MYRLO
Detective Myrlo! Hold your fire!

--and he joins the searching officers, as they find the hidden
panel leading to the "speakeasy" hall downstairs--

INT. HIDDEN HALLWAY

--and COPS come charging through the hidden hallway--

INT. "SPEAKEASY" STUDY

--to find the room now empty, except for Ness. He stands alone, his back turned. Gun in hand. Facing the empty chair.

COP VOICES (O.S.)
Had a call from the Mayor's office! They
say he's there, everyone's alright! Keep
searching the house!

The cops spread out, searching, as Myrlo alone stops mid-room. Ness meets his eyes. Doesn't know what he's heard. Ness silently holsters his gun. And then turns and walks away...

...past all the cops, down the hall. And into darkness.

CUT TO:

INT. EXECUTIVE SUITE - *BACK TO ELECTION NIGHT*

Outside, the storm has passed. The lights of downtown shimmer.

MYRLO
The next day, I was reassigned. Never
worked the Torso case again. As for the
victims...there were never anymore...

WALT
What happened to Ness?

MYRLO
He's here tonight, isn't he? Truth is, I
only ever talked to him one other time...
'bout a full year after that night...

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL CLEVELAND - BALLROOM - NIGHT (1939)

A VICTORY PARTY is in full swing, BALLOONS and STREAMERS flying, JAZZ MUSIC in the air. But this party is for Bolton. Signs tout "*Cleveland's Hero: Mayor John Bolton!*", "*Re-Elect Cleveland's Future!*", "*Four More Years of Safe Streets!*"

Bolton, his Wife and CAMPAIGN AIDES and their FAMILIES are all on stage, waving to the room of supporters. Bolton sees the Redhead beside him, and then scans the audience--

--where he sees Ness alone at a banquet table, in a tired tuxedo. Bolton waves for Ness to come join the revelers. But Ness just sits there, staring at the party -- glass of scotch in hand. Bolton shrugs, too buoyant to care.

From the back of the room, Myrlo is watching. A hotel dick now.

WE'RE WATCHING FROM MYRLO'S POV

As a moment later, the Redhead comes to coax Ness up--

--but instead, he hands her her coat. She resists but he grabs her arm, points toward the door, says something sharply. He downs his glass of scotch and leads her out.

She resists, bickering all the way, as they near Myrlo--

MYRLO
Congratulations, Mr. Ness.

Ness looks up, only now recognizing him.

MYRLO
Four more years.

Ness holds the stare a moment. Then leads the Redhead on.

EXT. HOTEL CLEVELAND - NIGHT

An early SNOW has started to fall, as Ness and the Redhead are shown into their sedan. Ness takes the wheel.

EXT. STREETS OF CLEVELAND - NIGHT

As SNOW keeps falling, Ness drives past City Hall. The Redhead's still yelling at him, but he's not listening. He drives past Central Station. It's late, the streets are quiet. With the falling snow, there's a magical quality...

EXT. INTERSECTION - NIGHT

And ANGLE watches Ness' car drive away from us, on a deserted city street, amidst the lovely snow--

--toward an empty intersection and a hanging TRAFFIC LIGHT--

--as it turns from green. To yellow. To red.

And Ness's car drives right through.

And broadsides the rear half of a passing car with a SMASH.
Both cars skid to a stop, beneath the changing light.

There's a snowy silence.

MYRLO (V.O.)
A month after Bolton's re-election, Ness
resigned as Safety Director.

A door opens and Ness stumbles out. Drunk or dazed, he totters to the other car. He talks hurriedly to the other DRIVER, surveys the intersection, sees no one...

MYRLO (V.O.)
A hit-and-run charge, a drunk driving rap, sometimes a guy you'll see politically survive. Depends how holier-than-thou he carries himself. For Ness, it was just his time.

Ness stumbles back to his car, starts the engine and DRIVES away. Flees the scene.

MYRLO (V.O.)
He left Ohio, left public service, got another divorce, and one more wife. Traveled the country for awhile...

ANGLE closes on the scene, as the second DRIVER staggers out, to see only bent metal and shattered glass...

MYRLO (V.O.)
And say what you will about the Mayor and the Senator, at the end of the day they were true to their word. When they needed an opponent to go up against Burke eight years later, they put the Machine behind Ness like they said they would. 'Course they couldn't really be sure which "Eliot Ness" the world was gonna remember.

...and a fallen LICENSE PLATE labeled "EN-1."

MYRLO (V.O.)
Well, they know now.

CUT TO:

INT. EXECUTIVE SUITE - *BACK TO ELECTION NIGHT*

WALT
What do you mean?

MYRLO
I mean the numbers. The polls. You've seen 'em.

WALT
Uh, no, this was all last-minute--

MYRLO
Ness was running two-to-one against. He hasn't got a chance.

Walt stops scribbling. Puts his pen down.

MYRLO
Cleveland hates him, kid.

WALT
But--

MYRLO
He came in and promised 'em glory...and
he couldn't even get it for himself.

Myrlo shrugs, puts a champagne bottle in his pocket. Then takes his hat and rises...and tips the brim low at the door:

MYRLO
And just so you know, it's my town. I
still live here. You never heard a word
from me.

And now a crestfallen Walt remembers the clock...and sees it's five minutes to midnight. His deadline!

INT. CHICAGO TRIBUNE - PRINTING ROOM - NIGHT

The presses are HUMMING. Walt's editor back on the phone:

ALLENBY
Let's hear it, Cahill. Whaddya got? I'm
hearing landslide--

INTERCUT INT. HOTEL CLEVELAND LOBBY

It's emptying out now, with Walt in a phone booth:

WALT
Sir, the election's not the story! His
whole campaign was a payoff!

ALLENBY
Well, no shit, Cahill: that's politics.
Just gimme the numbers and what the guy
had to say--

WALT
Sir, just hold the presses for an hour.
It's not about the votes. He traded that
night for this one--

ALLENBY
Jesus, kid. You kidding me? You still
on your unsolved murder case?

WALT
But he solved it! And no one knows!

ALLENBY

You have numbers for me or don't you?!
He either won or he lost here, Cahill!
Did he win or did he lose?

Walt stares off at a Ness campaign poster...

WALT

You'd have to ask him, sir.

ALLENBY

Kid, I don't know who you think you are,
but this ain't the way you make a name
for yourself--

(shouts off)

Agnes, get me numbers outta Cleveland and
clip me quotes off the wire. I'll write
the goddamn thing myself--

WALT

But Mr. Allenby--

ALLENBY

And as far as twelve murders go, Cahill,
that's a slow day in Metro. Don't bother
coming in tomorrow. And don't bill me
for your ticket home.

INT. HOTEL CLEVELAND - LOBBY

Click. Walt stares at the phone.

He exits the booth, tucking his scattershot notes away. The
mood in the lobby is subdued, even funereal. A few STRAGGLERS
but the party's over. JANITORS sweep. As an elevator opens--

--and there's a brief burst of energy as Senator Bolton, his
Wife and his retinue head for the exits--

BOLTON

Before we fly back to D.C., let's go
congratulate that sonofabitch Burke. And
I want to see an early list of candidates
for '51.

BOLTON'S AIDE

Ness sure took a hell of a beating--

BOLTON

Like a man.

(to some stragglers)

A fight well fought, my friends! Four
more years, we'll win it back!

At the door, he sees Walt watching...

BOLTON

And you, young man -- Chicago Tribune, wasn't it? Did you find out anything more for your story?

WALT

Yeah. Yeah, I did.

BOLTON

Well, I'll be keeping my eye on you.

And with a senator's smile, Bolton is gone.

INT. BALLROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The orchestra is packing up. Hotel staffers are clearing tables, stacking chairs. Lucy's still there, frenetically informing the last leaving guests--

LUCY

He'll make an announcement in the morning! There's still votes coming in! Let's all hold our heads high! No one's writing a concession speech tonight!

As the room clears, she sinks into a banquet chair. Sotto:

LUCY

'Cause I wrote it weeks ago...

She looks up to see Walt standing nearby. He's heard her. And now that the night's over, she no longer minds...

WALT

Hi.

LUCY

Hi.

She pats the empty chair beside her. Walt sits down.

LUCY

Kingsford four-five-one.

WALT

Sorry?

LUCY

That's my number. If you've got a pen.

Walt fumbles to find one, has no luck. Lucy sighs...

LUCY

Not much of a reporter, are you?

WALT

I'm more a fact-checker by trade.

LUCY

Yeah? Me, I'm more of a secretary.

...as she finds her own pen, writes her number on his hand.

LUCY

I still like you, Chicago. You listen.
(meets his eyes)
Lemme know if you hear of any jobs out there.

And as she rises...to head on with her life...

WALT

Lucy? Why'd you stick with him?

She considers. A small smile.

LUCY

Why did you?

With that, she's gone. Walt surveys the clean-up. He's starving. Looks for scraps on the nearest table. And then notices the nearby kitchen door...

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

...and enters to find it empty, all the staff gone. Except for a figure hunting in a huge refrigerator. There's a ham sandwich-in-progress on a counter.

The fridge closes to reveal Eliot Ness, his jacket gone, tie askew, white shirtsleeves rolled up. Scrounging for food to take back to his room.

Walt just stands there. Finally Ness looks up--

NESS

Oh. It's you.
(a weary smile)
Just down here looking for a few more votes.

He keeps making his sandwich. Has a glass of scotch beside.

NESS

They're all out of milk.

WALT

Who are you, Mr. Ness?

Ness stops.

WALT

I've heard a hundred stories about you, there's not one that matches up. In one you're the hero, another the hypocrite. One day you're the coward, the next the crusader. They call you a fraud, they say that you're fearless -- the most selfish selfless man the nation's ever known. So I'm asking you: who are you?

NESS

Yes.

WALT

That's your answer?

NESS

Which one of those men are you?

WALT

This is not about me--

NESS

No?

WALT

No--

With a small nod, Ness finishes making his sandwich.

NESS

Why'd you say you were from Kensington, Mr. Cahill?

Walt stops. Now he's thrown.

NESS

"The old neighborhood," that's what you said. I mean, you're not -- we did make the calls. Born in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, only moved to Chicago two months ago. Found a job with the Tribune -- good paper.

Walt's silent as Ness approaches.

NESS

But what's it matter -- a lie. Just one. Betray a source. A bribe or two. What's it matter...when you're after the truth.

Now face to face.

NESS
 Who are you, Mr. Cahill.
 (beat)
 Who do you want to be?
 (then)
 I hope whatever truth you find was so
 important.

And with his scotch and sandwich, he's gone.

INT. BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ness leaves the kitchen, midnight snack in hand. The ballroom is totally empty...as Walt emerges behind him...

WALT
 Mr. Ness...listen, I--

NESS
 How long are you staying in Cleveland?

WALT
 I...I don't know...

NESS
 Well, before you leave, you take a walk through town and along the river down to Kingsbury Run. Those streets are safe because of me. This city works because of me. People say it was progress. Or it would've happened on its own. Well, I say no. A great city is made by great men. And how those men are remembered... falls to those who were never there.

From outside, somewhere on the street, there's the sound of distant CHEERING. As Ness heads off--

WALT
 Eliot.

A final turn.

WALT
 Good luck.

NESS
 Good luck to you.

Above them, the ceiling's netting is still laden with red, white and blue balloons. Still waiting for victory. Waiting to fall. Two WORKERS are up on a scaffold--

--as Ness gives them a glance, and a last smile to Walt:

NESS

Say hello to Chicago for me.

And he walks off toward the lobby.

Meanwhile, the crew of workers cuts the tethers, as they must, sending the SEA OF BALLOONS falling down. There's no one to see them, no one to celebrate.

And thus obscured, Eliot Ness walks off into history. In a blur of red, white and blue.

And the man from Chicago is gone.

CUT TO BLACK.