

Friendship, Honor, and Murder

Written by

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Source: Based on my published novel -- Murder Takes Time.

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**A BLACK SCREEN**

**Super:** "It is not the oath that makes us believe the man, but the man, the oath. ~ Aeschylus."

**FADE IN:**

**INT. DINER -- BROOKLYN -- DAY**

A lone WAITRESS (20s, pencil behind her ear, red hair, a gum-chewer) waits on the few customers at the counter. She shuffles across a worn linoleum floor and refreshes their coffee.

NICKY FUSCO (30s, focused and intense, the kind of man you don't cross) sits in a booth and stares across the street at a used-car lot, watching NINO (30s, big, heavysset, always smiling) lock up the lot and get in his car.

NICKY  
It's time, Nino.

He scans the booth, plucks a few strands of hair from a torn cushion and fingernail clippings from the windowsill. He puts them into a bag and wipes everything with a napkin, then pays the check and exits.

Nino leaves the car lot and stops to get pizza.

**EXT. RANCH HOUSE -- DAY**

Nicky drives to a small, brick ranch house and parks a block away. He checks the surroundings to see if anyone is watching and then walks to the front door.

**INT. RANCH HOUSE -- DAY**

Nicky opens the door and sets a canvas bag on the kitchen counter. He removes a pair of tongs and a shot glass and sets them on the coffee table, then spreads the contents of the bag from the diner on the floor.

He removes a baseball bat from the canvas bag and sits on the couch behind the door. A car pulls into the driveway. Nicky sits up and grips the bat.

**EXT. RANCH HOUSE -- DAY**

Nino talks on a cell phone as he gets out of the car. He's carrying a box of pizza and a bottle of wine.

NINO  
It's only Thursday, and I'm above  
quota for the month. Maybe I'll buy  
Anna that coat she wants.

**INT. RANCH HOUSE -- DAY**

Nino walks into the house, sees the black sports bag on the counter and the tongs and shot glass on the coffee table. Confused, he starts to turn, but a bat slams into his right kidney and sends him reeling.

Nicky swings the bat again and hits Nino's arm just above the wrist. The sound of bone cracking is heard amid more screams.

NINO

FUCK!

Nino reaches toward his coat pocket, but Nicky slams the bat into his ribs. Blood gurgles from his mouth. Nino looks up and recognition lights his face.

NINO (CONT'D)

Anything you want. Just kill me quick.

NICKY

I got Renzo last month.

Nino nods, and Nicky taps Nino's pocket with his foot.

NICKY (CONT'D)

If you reach for the gun, I'll hit you again.

Nino nods again. Nicky stands above him, staring.

NICKY (CONT'D)

You've got one chance to give a name.

When Nino doesn't answer, Nicky kneels next to him. He takes the shot glass from the coffee table and puts it to Nino's lips.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Open your mouth.

Nino shakes his head. Nicky shoves the tongs into the side of Nino's mouth, pries it open, and squeezes the shot glass inside. Then he stands and swings the bat.

Nino's lips split apart. His teeth shatter. The shot glass digs gouges into his tongue, severing the front of it. Shards of glass pierce his flesh. Blood drips from his lips and mouth and pools on the floor.

NICKY (CONT'D)

You shouldn't have done it, Nino.

Nicky blesses himself with the sign of the cross.

NICKY (CONT'D)

*In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti.*

Nicky shoots Nino -- once in the head and once in the heart, then sprinkles the rest of the plastic bag atop the body.

He removes protective covers from his shoes and exits. He turns his collar up and tucks his head into his chest as he walks.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Forgive me, Father, for what I have done.

(a beat)

And what I still have to do.

**EXT. CATALDI'S RESTAURANT (BENSONHURST) -- DAY**

A gold Lexus pulls to the curb in front of Cataldi's. PAULIE 'THE SUIT' PERLANO (30s, big man, barrel chest, always looking for approval) steps out wearing a Brioni suit.

FOUR MEN (one with big ears, one a crooked nose, one bald, and one chewing a cigar – all 30s and 40s) stand outside the restaurant by the stoop. Bulges show under their jackets where their guns are.

Paulie straightens his blue silk tie, runs a comb through his hair, and walks up to the men standing by the entrance.

BIG EARS

Hey, Suit.

CROOKED NOSE

Hey, Paulie.

Paulie nods to them and stops.

PAULIE

Anyone tell Tony yet?

Four heads shake at once.

BIG EARS

You fuckin' tell him, but he's not gonna like it.

Paulie stands on his toes and peeks through the window. TONY "Ts another sip of espresso.

Paulie shakes his head and enters the restaurant.

**INT. CATALDI'S RESTAURANT (BENSONHURST) -- DAY**

ANNA CATALDI (20s, short, all smiles) greets Paulie.

ANNA

*Buongiorno*, Paulie. Beautiful day, huh?

PAULIE

Every day it ain't raining is beautiful.

(a beat)

How you doin'? How's the new baby?

Anna's smile widens, and she leads Paulie to Tony's table.

ANNA  
Good, Paulie. And your kids?

Paulie shrugs and follows her.

PAULIE  
Kids are kids. They're always good.  
Pains in the ass, but good.

As they near Tony's table, Paulie taps her arm.

PAULIE (CONT'D)  
He in a good mood?

Anna raises her eyebrows and shrugs.

ANNA  
It's February.

PAULIE  
Ah, shit.

Paulie sits at Tony's table, his gut rumbling. Tony scratches in one of the remaining answers on his crossword.

TONY  
When are you gonna dress like the rest  
of us? Nobody wears suits anymore.

Paulie fidgets with silverware as Tony finishes the puzzle.

PAULIE  
Tony, me wearing suits is the least  
of your worries. Somebody killed  
Nino Tortella last night.

Tony slaps the table with his palm.

TONY  
Shit! Same as Renzo?

PAULIE  
Yeah, so you know what this means.

TONY  
I know, and there's no way Nino didn't  
talk. Might be a couple of guys tough  
enough, but not Nino.

Anna brings two more cups of espresso and gives them to Tony and Paulie. Tony waits for her to get out of earshot.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Anybody seen Donnie Amato?

PAULIE  
I called. No answer.

TONY

Send a couple of guys to warn him.  
You know how hardheaded Donnie is.  
He thinks he can handle himself.

Paulie stands and tosses a few bills on the table.

PAULIE

Fat chance of that.

Paulie starts to walk away, then turns back.

PAULIE (CONT'D)

You didn't have nothin' to do with  
this, did you?

TONY

You know who's doing this.

Paulie lowers his head and nods.

PAULIE

Where'd it go wrong, Tony?

TONY

Christ, Paulie. Does it matter? The  
important thing is, it did go wrong. And  
we've got to do something about it.

PAULIE

We shouldn't have done it, Tony. It  
was wrong from the get go.

Tony slugs the last of his espresso and gets up from the table.

TONY

Tell me about it. Lot more people  
are gonna die now.

**EXT. RANCH HOUSE -- DAY**

A car pulls to the curb. FRANKIE DONOVAN (detective's badge, 30s, exceptionally well dressed, cocky) gets out. He carefully avoids the slush as he makes his way to the house. He nods to a PATROLMAN (40, solidly built) at the door.

PATROLMAN

Neighbors didn't hear anything, and  
it looks the same as Renzo's.

FRANKIE

I wasn't at Renzo's, but I heard  
about it.

PATROLMAN

They ever get anything from that scene?

FRANKIE

Got a dead male, shot in the head and heart. Damn near every bone in his body broken. And they found hairs, blood, and other DNA from a bunch of people.

**INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY**

Frankie walks into the living room. KATE BURNS (medical examiner, 30, a woman dedicated to her profession, and loaded with sarcasm) is kneeling next to a body, her back facing Frankie.

FRANKIE

Got anything on this one, Kate?

Kate shakes her head, wraps up her kit, and tucks it into a bag. She stands and faces Frankie.

KATE BURNS

I'm sure we have his DNA, but it's mixed with the rest. I'll process what we have, but unless you get me something else, it won't do you a damn bit of good.

Kate glances around, as if checking the scene, and then she leaves.

Detective LOU MAZZETTI (50s, wearing a detective's badge and looking almost as unkempt as his clothes) enters. His cuffs are frayed, and his shoes are scuffed.

FRANKIE

Kate just left. She said we've got nothing.

LOU MAZZETTI

Tell me who the hell would do this. All these murders have been Tito's men. You think there's a mob war?

(a beat)

If it's not a war, what? Who's got the balls to kill Tito's guys?

Frankie shrugs, walks around, checks the body, and looks at the mess on the floor. He then looks into the kitchen.

**INT. KITCHEN -- DAY**

Frankie walks to kitchen counter, examining small specks scattered about. He pulls a knife from his pocket, separates them, and looks closer.

FRANKIE

What's this?

LOU MAZZETTI

It looks like rat shit. We found it at all the scenes.

FRANKIE

You said there were no clues.

LOU MAZZETTI

It's not a clue; it's rat shit. If this is like the other scenes, we got cat hairs in the sink, but he doesn't have a cat. There's probably dog shit in the bedroom but no dog. And we'll have enough DNA to represent half the cons at Rikers.

Frankie opens the fridge and pulls out a bag. He opens it, and pulls back quickly, a disgusted look on his face.

LOU MAZZETTI (CONT'D)

What's in there?

FRANKIE

A dead rat. In the fuckin' fridge! You gonna tell me this ain't a clue?

LOU MAZZETTI

Who the hell knows? Maybe the psycho eats 'em.

FRANKIE

Mazzetti, I want everything you've got on these murders. Every scrap of information. Every photo.

LOU MAZZETTI

I told you. We got nothing. What the fuck? You know something?

Frankie walks toward the front door and turns to Lou.

FRANKIE

I think somebody's sending a message, and if I'm right, you don't want to know.

LOU MAZZETTI

Now I really want to know. Is the guy nuts or just crazy?

Frankie stares at a blank wall, thinking.

FRANKIE

I don't know. Gotta give it thought. I'll catch up with you tomorrow.



**INT. DINER (SOUTH BROOKLYN) -- NIGHT**

Nicky sits in a booth by the window, staring across the street. He sees a man, DONNIE AMATO (45, struts when he walks, over-confident) leave the building, so he gulps the rest of his coffee and stands.

NICKY

Miss, I need the check please.

He shifts weight from foot to foot as he waits, and he continually checks on Donnie. When Donnie opens a car door to get in, Nicky tosses a ten-spot on the table and rushes out.

**EXT. DINER (SOUTH BROOKLYN) -- NIGHT**

Nicky mumbles as he quickly moves to his car and gets in.

NICKY

Be seeing you soon, Donnie. It won't be long.

**EXT/INT. FRANKIE'S APARTMENT -- EVENING**

Frankie parks the car, gets out, and walks to his apartment building — a four-story with a set of concrete steps outside. He goes upstairs, unlocks the door, and undresses as he makes his way to the shower.

**LATER**

He returns, clad in shorts and a T-shirt, then sits at his desk. He leans back in his chair, takes out a smoke, turns it in his hand and stares. The phone rings and he answers.

FRANKIE

Donovan.

LOU MAZZETTI

Frankie, I'm at the café about a block from Cataldi's. Why don't you find your way here so we can talk. You got me worked up today, and I want to know what's going on.

FRANKIE

All right, Mazzetti. I'll be there, but it'll be twenty minutes. And you better keep it short.

**INT. CAFÉ (BENSONHURST) -- NIGHT**

Frankie enters, looks around, and spots Lou sitting at a table in the back. He walks over and joins him.

FRANKIE

What's so damn important?

LOU MAZZETTI

You need to tell me what's going on. You definitely knew something today, but you didn't say much.

FRANKIE

(sighs)

I didn't say much to protect you. The way I see it, it has to be one of two guys, and they're both dangerous. One is a crew boss for Tito, and --

LOU MAZZETTI

A crew boss! Are you shittin' me, Donovan? You can't be havin' friends like that.

Frankie shakes his head.

FRANKIE

Lou, I've been friends with these guys since I was eight years old. I can't just 'unfriend' them. This isn't social media.

The WAITRESS (20s) brings espresso, and Frankie takes a sip.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

Like I said, the way I see it, this is one of two guys, and they're sending me a message. I'm pretty sure it's Nicky, and it's probably about this damn oath we swore to, but it could be about a girl. Nicky was a romantic when it came to girls. He wouldn't even curse in front of them.

Frankie lights a smoke and stares.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

If it is a girl, I don't know who it is. Angie's married . . . though there is that other one.

**INT. NICKY'S HOUSE (WILMINGTON) -- DAY**

**SUPER: "24 YEARS AGO"**

YOUNG FRANKIE (8, dressed immaculately) and YOUNG TONY (devilishly charming smile, quick witted) open the front door to a row house and run inside.

YOUNG NICKY (8, respectful and polite) is in the kitchen fixing breakfast.

YOUNG FRANKIE

Time to go. We need to steal some cigs.

YOUNG TONY

We'll go down to Johnny's; it's easy to steal from there. But you have to help me clean before I can go.

YOUNG NICKY

You prick. You knew that before you got here. I'll let you slide this time but only because I want coffee.

**INT. TONY'S HOUSE -- DAY**

The front door opens to a small living room and the sound of a vacuum running. Nicky raises his head and sniffs the air.

YOUNG NICKY

What smells so good, Mamma Rosa?

MAMMA ROSA (late 40s, plump, eternal smile on her face) shuts off the vacuum and pulls a dust cloth from a pocket on her old plaid dress. She wipes beads of sweat from her forehead.

MAMMA ROSA

You know what smells good -- the garlic in my sauce.

YOUNG NICKY

Any coffee, Mamma?

MAMMA ROSA

It's in the pot, Nicky. And while you're there, taste my sauce.

Nicky pours a cup of coffee and dips a finger in the sauce.

YOUNG NICKY

*Perfetto*, Mamma.

MAMMA ROSA

You better be right 'cause it's for your birthday.

She walks to the pot, tastes the sauce, and adds a pinch of garlic and a sprinkle of cheese, then tastes it again.

Tony races down the steps into the kitchen.

YOUNG TONY

Ciao, Mamma. We're done already, so we're off to find some work. Maybe stack boxes at the grocery store.

The boys head out the front door, down three worn steps and across the yard. Six more steps takes them to the sidewalk.

**INT. JOHNNY'S SUPERMARKET -- LATER**

Two steep hills lead to Johnny's Supermarket, a store that caters to the ethnic neighborhoods. The kids walk inside and Tony bumps into a stand with bags of chips, knocking them over.

While the cashiers clean up, Frankie jumps onto the counter and grabs packs of cigarettes. The MANAGER (late 40s) grabs him. Nicky rams into the manager in an attempt to break his hold on Frankie; instead, the manager grabs Nicky too, then he and one of his workers haul them to the cop station.

**INT. POLICE STATION INTERVIEW ROOM (WILMINGTON) -- DAY**

SEAN MOYNIHAN (50, tall white cop, rigid, sour look on his face) and REGGIE SMITH (late 30s, black cop, relaxed, soft eyes) grill Nicky and Frankie. It's a hot, sticky day, windows are closed, and both kids are in the same room.

Moynihan loosens his collar, dabs sweat from his head, and hands Nicky a bottle of Coke.

SEAN MOYNIHAN  
Remember your name, kid?

YOUNG NICKY  
I gotta pee.

SEAN MOYNIHAN  
Not till we get a name.

REGGIE SMITH  
(consoling voice)  
While you're remembering your name,  
think of who you were with.

YOUNG NICKY  
Already told you. Wasn't with anyone.

Reggie leans down and looks Nicky in the eyes.

REGGIE SMITH  
(soft-spoken voice)  
We already got one kid you were with.  
Who else was there? The manager said two  
boys were with you when you stole the  
cigarettes. A customer said the same.

SEAN MOYNIHAN  
Two other dagos.

YOUNG NICKY  
I know who you mean. I think they  
were dirty micks.

Nicky gestures to Frankie, pointing a finger at him.

YOUNG NICKY (CONT'D)  
Wasn't him. I don't know him.

Moynihan rears back to smack Nicky, but Reggie grabs Sean's arm and shakes his head. He steps close and whispers.

REGGIE SMITH

Johnny said the kids were dark-haired and looked Italian. He said the one who stole the cigarettes had a birthmark on his neck. The mark he described looks like your friend's.

YOUNG NICKY

No offense, sir, but they must've been black Irish.

SEAN MOYNIHAN

You little fuck.

Moynihan stretches across the table, slaps Nicky, and knocks him from the chair.

REGGIE SMITH

(raises voice)

Sean! Leave it alone.

Sean slams Nicky into a chair and jams it into the table.

SEAN MOYNIHAN

You'll tell us who you were with before you leave here, or I swear --

The door to the interrogation room opens. Nicky runs to his father, DANTE (50, muscular, barrel-chest, fearsome, the kind of man you don't cross no matter how big you are).

YOUNG NICKY

Pops.

Dante takes out his handkerchief and cleans a trickle of blood from Nicky's lip. He reaches his hand out to Nicky and Frankie, and walks both of them out the door.

Reggie moves to prevent Dante from leaving, but Sean holds out his arm and stops him.

SEAN MOYNIHAN

You know who that is? It's Dante Fusco.

REGGIE SMITH

Oh, shit.

**EXT. SMOKE SHOP (WILMINGTON) -- DAY**

Nicky and Frankie walk down Union Street toward the smoke shop. Cafés and various stores line the east side of the street and neatly kept row houses, the west.

NICKY

Come on, Frankie. We gotta get cigs.

FRANKIE  
Doggs won't sell us cigs.

NICKY  
Doggs sells cigs to anyone with cash.

Nicky grabs the door and opens it, then he and Frankie walk inside.

**INT. SMOKE SHOP (WILMINGTON) -- DAY**

Nicky and Frankie walk into the smoke shop -- a local gambler hangout. The room is small, with floor-to-ceiling shelves on three of the walls. Cartons of cigs fill them.

DOGGS CAPUTO mans the cash register (50, wiry hair, and wearing thick glasses. A man whose best friend is the 'F' word. He uses it as a noun, a verb, an adjective, and an adverb. Sometimes, he uses all of them in the same sentence).

NICKY  
Need a pack of Winston's.

DOGGS CAPUTO  
A little fuckin' young to be smoking.

NICKY  
Not your problem.

Doggs looks at Frankie.

DOGGS  
What's your fuckin' name, kid?

FRANKIE  
Frankie --

Nicky kicks Frankie in the leg.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)  
Nothin'.

NICKY  
What difference does it make?

Doggs flicks a lit cig at Nicky, almost hitting his head.

DOGGS  
So, we got Frankie fuckin' Nothin'  
and Mr. Fuckin' Nobody, huh?

He lights another cig and laughs.

PATSY The WHALE (350 lbs, a booming voice, bellows like a bull, but is as gentle as a lamb. He's so large he waddles) rushes from the back of the smoke shop. His belly brushes the sides of the small door as he squeezes through.

PATSY THE WHALE  
Everything okay, Doggs?

DOGGS

Fine. I'm having a fuckin' conversation with my new friends.

PATSY THE WHALE

Hey, Doggs, maybe lay off the language. They're just kids.

DOGGS

Bullshit. They ain't been kids since they were fuckin' born.

Patsy shrugs and goes to the back room as Doggs tousles Nicky's hair.

DOGGS (CONT'D)

You the kid Moynihan couldn't bust at the station?

Doggs bends down and looks closer, then stands again.

DOGGS (CONT'D)

Yeah, I thought so. You're Dante's boy. Got those same fuckin' eyes.

He opens the door at the back of the shop.

DOGGS (CONT'D)

Patsy, get a couple packs of Winstons. One for Frankie Nothin' and one for Nicky the Rat.

NICKY

I ain't no rat.

DOGGS

That's why you're getting the name. Not many kids your age keep their mouth shut. Got good blood though, so I'm not surprised.

Doggs tosses a pack of cigarettes to each boy.

DOGGS (CONT'D)

See me next summer if you want work.

**EXT. UNION STREET (WILMINGTON) -- DAY**

Frankie and Nicky strut down street, smoking cigarettes.

FRANKIE

The rat! I like it.

NICKY

Sounds like a goddamn squealer.

FRANKIE

Bullshit. Everybody will know.  
Christ's sake, you got the name  
from Doggs. Besides, it's like  
Johnny Viola, you know how they  
call him Johnny Handsome.

NICKY

Guess so. He's an ugly fucker.

FRANKIE

Ugly as a peach seed.

**EXT. ST. ELIZABETH'S SCHOOL (WILMINGTON) -- DAY**

**SUPER: "8 YEARS LATER"**

TEENAGE NICKY and Frankie wait on the corner. When the bell rings, crowds of kids exit and cross the street. Nicky approaches TOMMY MCDERMOTT as he passes (16, wiry, confident, with a smart-ass attitude).

TEENAGE NICKY

Hey, mick. I know you saw me steal  
those cigs the other day. Good  
thing you didn't rat.

Tommy walks toward them sneering.

TEENAGE TOMMY MCDERMOTT

You thought I'd rat? Only pussies do.

TEENAGE NICKY

You know better is why.

TEENAGE TOMMY MCDERMOTT

Fuck you, dago. I'm not scared of  
you. I just don't rat.

Frankie laughs and punches Tommy in the arm.

TEENAGE FRANKIE

I'll buy that. And if you want  
somebody to hang with, you can  
hang with us, but we got rules.

TEENAGE TOMMY MCDERMOTT

If any of those rules involve fuckin'  
my sister, stand in line. Everybody  
wants her, but she ain't puttin' out.

TEENAGE NICKY

(laughs)

Follow us. We'll introduce you to Tony.

They walk down Banning Street, three abreast. Brick row houses line both sides of the street. They turn left at St. Elizabeth St. and cross Broom St.



TEENAGE TOMMY MCDERMOTT  
Hey, you guys up for some action?

TEENAGE FRANKIE  
Always. What kind?

TEENAGE TOMMY MCDERMOTT  
I overheard my brother talk about a load of cigs that sounds like an easy target, but it's gotta be done tonight 'cause he plans on hitting it with the Woodside Gang.

TEENAGE NICKY  
We can make that work. Let's get to the garages and tell Tony.

**INT. GARAGES ON BROOM STREET -- DAY**

Nicky, Frankie, and Tommy walk in. Tony lounges on a sofa with torn cushions, a cigarette dangling from his mouth.

TEENAGE NICKY  
Hey, Tony, this is Tommy 'the Mick' McDermott. He just told us about a load of cigs his brother's gonna hit. But if we get there tonight, it's ours.

TEENAGE TONY  
Sounds good. But before we do this, he's gotta swear the oath.

TEENAGE TOMMY MCDERMOTT  
What oath?

TEENAGE NICKY  
Friendship and honor. That's it. Two rules.

TEENAGE TONY  
Friendship means we look out for each other. Nobody rats or betrays anyone. Honor means nobody fucks with any of us. We don't run unless we all run. If we're gonna get our asses kicked, we all get 'em kicked.

TEENAGE TOMMY MCDERMOTT  
Good by me. How do we do this oath? We cut ourselves or something?

TEENAGE NICKY  
We're not dumb micks. We swear to it on our mother's eyes, that's all.

TEENAGE TOMMY MCDERMOTT  
So you're not dumb micks, just dumb dagos.

**EXT. UNION STREET -- DAY**

Teenage Nicky, Tony, and Frankie walk down the street smoking cigarettes, laughing, and whistling.

TEENAGE TONY

Been three days, Nicky, and no interference. We fucked Woodside and Mikey both. We're rich. I say we split the money up now.

Tony stops abruptly and taps Nicky's arm.

TEENAGE TONY (CONT'D)

Across the street. It's Mikey.

TEENAGE NICKY

So what? He doesn't know.

TEENAGE FRANKIE

Bullshit! You don't steal in Mikey's territory without him finding out. We should have paid him. Let's get outta here.

MIKEY (mid 40s, heavy, obsessed with his looks, and always staring into anything resembling a mirror) holds his hand up to stop traffic and walks across the street as if he owns it.

MIKEY FAGULLO

*Ciao, ragazzi.* What are you doing up here?

TEENAGE FRANKIE

Let's go before he gets here.

The boys run before Mikey gets to them.

**INT. GARAGES ON BROOM STREET -- DAY**

Mikey opens the garage doors and enters the small area furnished with two sofas and chairs with torn cushions.

TUCKS (30s, lapdog to Mikey) and POCKETS (30s, crooked eye, Mikey's muscle) are at his side.

MIKEY FAGULLO

Why'd you boys run yesterday? I just wanted my due. You stole from my neighborhood, so you gotta pay.

Mick darts around Pockets and heads for the door. Tucks grabs his collar and tosses him back inside, then he and Pockets make a line in front of the door.

**GARAGE**

Tucks straightens his collar, then tucks in his shirt.

Pockets shoves both hands into his pockets, then shifts his weight from one foot to the other, prepped to stop any escape.

TEENAGE NICKY  
You lookin' for change, Pockets? Or just playin' with your dick?

TEENAGE TONY  
Sorry, Mikey. We didn't mean to cut you out.

Mikey laughs, slaps Tony playfully and pushes Nicky.

MIKEY FAGULLO  
You fuckin' boys make me laugh. Pay what you owe, and we'll be square.

TEENAGE TONY  
Our cut was four seventy each.

MIKEY FAGULLO  
Since it's your first time, let's see ... how about fifty percent?

Nicky lifts a sofa cushion and pulls out a paper bag. He counts out the money and hands it to Mikey.

TEENAGE NICKY  
Here's your cut.

Mikey pats Nicky on the back and turns to Pockets and Tucks.

MIKEY  
Don't leave marks.

Pockets and Tucks use rubber bats to beat the boys' upper legs and bodies. When they finish, Tucks leaves and returns with a paper bag. Mikey tosses it to Nicky.

MIKEY (CONT'D)  
Just to show you there are no hard feelings.

Mikey, Pockets, and Tucks, exit the garage and close the door. Nicky peeks out the door to make sure Mikey is gone, then empties the bag on the ground.

TEENAGE TONY  
Thirty-two packs of smokes. Not worth the beating, but something.

TEENAGE NICKY  
This was my fault. I should've paid.

TEENAGE TONY  
We're in this together.

TEENAGE NICKY  
The important thing is we stood together. We stood by the oath.

TEENAGE FRANKIE

Even if we have to die, we'll keep  
the oath.

TEENAGE NICKY

If somebody breaks the oath, they  
will die.

The kids put their fists together and raise their hands.

ALL KIDS

Friendship and honor.

**INT. TONY'S HOUSE -- DAY**

The kids come home from swimming at the park, dripping wet and wearing only shorts. As they walk up the alley, a fence on one side and a stone wall on the other, Nicky grabs Tony (both 16) by the elbow and whispers.

TEENAGE NICKY

Tony, how come that Angela girl is  
at your house all the time?

TEENAGE TONY

That's Angela Catrino, you know  
Angie. Christ sake, Nicky, she was  
in our class last year.

TEENAGE NICKY

That's Angie? I don't remember her  
looking that good.

TEENAGE TONY

Yeah, she lives a couple blocks  
over. Her mother died, so her father  
asked Mamma to teach her to cook.

TEENAGE FRANKIE

Tony, what he meant was he didn't  
remember her ass being so nice.

TEENAGE NICKY

You're one to talk. You're so busy  
drooling over Patti McDermott, you  
don't even notice other girls.

**INT. TONY'S HOUSE -- DAY**

Nicky, Tony, and Frankie walk in Tony's back door.  
ANGELA (16, long hair, flirty smile) cooks in the kitchen.

TEENAGE NICKY

Are those meatballs I smell?

Nicky reaches into the pot and grabs one. Angela swings a  
wooden spoon at him.

TEENAGE ANGELA  
Get out of there.

Nicky bites into the meatball and smiles.

TEENAGE NICKY  
Not bad; in fact, it's pretty good.

TEENAGE ANGELA  
Pretty good? What do you mean by  
pretty good?

TEENAGE NICKY  
Could use more cheese in the sauce.  
More garlic too. And a pinch of  
sugar, don't forget that.

Angela takes out a meatball and tastes it, then she looks at  
Mamma Rosa, almost apologetically.

TEENAGE ANGELA  
He's right. It needs cheese and  
garlic. And maybe sugar.

MAMMA ROSA  
Whatever you think, dear.

**INT. TONY'S BASEMENT -- DAY**

Nicky runs down the basement steps, careful not to trip.

TEENAGE NICKY  
Sorry I'm late, guys. I was --

TEENAGE TONY  
We know. You were staring at  
Angie's ass.

TEENAGE NICKY  
What I really like is how she  
twirls her hair around her finger.

TEENAGE FRANKIE  
Yeah, Nicky, we know what you like  
about her, and it's not her hair.

A 4'x8' pool table sits in the middle of the basement,  
leaving little room for anything else. Tony picks up the  
short cue, stands by the steps and takes a shot, sinking the  
eight ball into the side pocket.

TEENAGE TONY  
Nicky, if you ever get bored with  
that sweet ass, let me know.

Nicky crushes his butt on the floor and glares at Tony.

TEENAGE NICKY  
Shut the fuck up.

**INT. SMOKE SHOP -- NIGHT**

The boys enter the smoke shop with Paulie Perlano. Nicky walks behind the counter and rings a buzzer. Patsy the Whale opens a door which leads to a room filled with pool tables, and card and dice tables. A roulette wheel sits on the side.

DOGGS

About time you fuckin' got here. I was just gonna assign players.

Doggs hands out slips of paper to each of the boys.

DOGGS (CONT'D)

Tony gets Paulie Shoes and Knuckles.  
Frankie gets The Nose and Pockets.  
Nicky gets Mikey the Face and me.  
And Paulie gets Tucks and Patsy.

Mikey takes a seat next to Doggs and stacks his chips.

MIKEY

Hey, Doggs, you hear about Moynihan gettin' clipped?

DOGGS

That surprise you after what he did to little Nicky? I'm shocked he lasted this long.

Doggs walks to the back room and comes back holding a coffee can with a plastic lid on it.

DOGGS (CONT'D)

Today, I caught eight fuckin' cockroaches in the back room. I'm gonna let the fuckers go. Whoever kills the most, wins ten bucks.

Doggs kneels on the floor, turns the can upside down, then slides the lid out. Eight roaches run like hell.

TEENAGE FRANKIE

That ten bucks is mine.

Nicky turns to CHARLIE KNUCKLES (40, big belly, serious, and bets on anything).

TEENAGE NICKY

That ten bucks is Frankie's.

KNUCKLES

Two bucks says Tony beats him.

TEENAGE NICKY

Make it five.

Frankie goes into action, stomping, whacking, and using the broom handle to kill bugs.

Within seconds, Frankie kills every roach before anyone else gets one. Mikey laughs uncontrollably and slaps his palm on the table.

MIKEY FAGULLO

What the hell was that? You see that shit? Frankie killed them fuckin' roaches like he had a machine gun.

Doggs peels two fives from a wad of bills and pays Frankie.

DOGGS

Frankie, hell. Gentlemen, meet "Bugs" Donovan.

Mikey peels a five-dollar bill from his wad and gives it to Bugs. He is followed by Tucks and Pockets.

MIKEY THE FACE

Here's five more, Bugs. Helluva job.  
(a beat)  
Now would somebody fuckin' deal so  
I can win some money?

Knuckles laughs and hands Frankie a five, then tosses Tony a ten-spot and a leash.

KNUCKLES

Take Pisser for a walk and take your time. Make sure he does it all.

PAULIE SHOES (40s, fanatic about shoes, always cleaning them off) crushes his cigar in the ashtray, then reaches down and brushes off his shoes.

SHOES

Hope Pisser doesn't run into Chinski's dog. That son of a bitch is nasty, and it can run.

MIKEY FAGULLO

It's fast all right. The son of a bitch should be in a race.

Mikey looks around the room as if a light went off.

MIKEY FAGULLO (CONT'D)

That ain't a bad idea. We should get all the dogs in the neighborhood and have a race. Bet on them.

Nicky leans toward Tony and whispers.

TEENAGE NICKY

He's gonna have a dog race? I'm stuck with two losers, and he's thinking about dog races instead of cards. I wish he'd just win a pot.

Nicky lights a smoke and hands one to Tony.

TEENAGE NICKY (CONT'D)  
 You know, it just hit me. Did you see the way those roaches ran when Doggs dumped them? Maybe we should have a race, but with roaches.

**EXT. BACK YARD OF ROW HOUSE -- DAY**

All the boys sit on a stoop in the back yard of a row house, smoking cigarettes. Paulie kneels on the patio, using chalk to draw two circles.

TEENAGE TOMMY MCDERMOTT  
 Who's gonna catch the roaches?

TEENAGE NICKY  
 Bugs is. Who do you think?

Nicky hands an empty jar to Bugs. He takes the jar and returns twenty minutes later, the jar filled with roaches.

**EXT. BACK YARD OF ROW HOUSE -- DAY**

Thirty people are in the back yard with more coming up the alley. Nicky leans to the side and taps Mick on the leg.

TEENAGE NICKY  
 This is gonna be big. There are more people coming every minute.

Paulie whistles loudly.

TEENAGE PAULIE  
 Races are about to begin.

Paulie positions the coffee can on the smaller circle. He taps the bottom of the can, makes sure all the roaches are on the concrete, then slides the lid out from under it.

Paulie jumps out of the way as the roaches scatter.

CROWD OF BETTERS  
 Come on, number two. Get goin', six.

Seconds later, number five races across the line to win.

Nicky taps Tony on the shoulder. He appears anxious as hell.

TEENAGE NICKY  
 How'd we do?

TEENAGE TONY  
 Only two 50-cent bets on number five. We cleaned up on the rest.



The second race is almost a repeat. Number five wins again. The next three races run smoothly, but then the MARCOLI girl (12, skittish) gets scared and steps on two of the roaches, which ends the day.

After everyone leaves, Tony counts the money.

TONY

Son of a bitch! We made \$120 bucks each.

**EXT. OUTSIDE NICKY'S HOUSE -- NIGHT -- MONTHS LATER**

Nicky, Angela, and Frankie walk to a party a few blocks away. There are kegs of beer and plenty of weed. While others are dancing, Nicky motions for Angela to follow him as he goes up the steps.

TEENAGE ANGELA

Where are you going?

TEENAGE NICKY

Come on up. I want to show you something.

Angela eyes Nicky suspiciously but reluctantly follows him into the bedroom.

TEENAGE ANGELA

Nicky, I --

TEENAGE NICKY

Don't worry. I've got a present, and I don't want everybody to see.

He pulls a black jeweler's box from his pocket and hands it to her.

TEENAGE NICKY (CONT'D)

It's nothing much, but I thought you'd like it.

Angela opens the box slowly, then stares, mouth agape. Inside is a gold bracelet with six small diamonds.

TEENAGE NICKY (CONT'D)

If you don't like it, I can take it back. I just --

Angela grabs Nicky and pulls him close, then kisses him.

TEENAGE ANGELA

I can't believe ... I mean, really can't believe. I love it! Where did you get the money?

TEENAGE NICKY

Remember when we had those stupid races?

(MORE)

TEENAGE NICKY (CONT'D)  
I saved since then, plus Doggs got  
me a deal. I've just been waiting  
for the right time.

TEENAGE ANGELA  
This is the best gift I've ever  
gotten.

She kisses him one more time, softly, deeply.

TEENAGE ANGELA (CONT'D)  
Why don't you lock the door.

TEENAGE NICKY  
Listen, Angie, I didn't give you  
the bracelet for that ... I mean, I  
don't expect you to do ...

TEENAGE ANGELA  
(commanding voice)  
Lock the door.

Nicky locks the door and climbs into bed next to Angela.

TEENAGE ANGELA (CONT'D)  
I can't believe we're doing this.

Angela and Nicky make love, then Angela rolls on top of him.

TEENAGE ANGELA (CONT'D)  
I love you, Nicolo Fusco.

Nicky kisses her forehead, then her lips.

TEENAGE NICKY  
And I love you, Angela Catrino.

**EXT. NICKY'S HOUSE -- DAY**

Nicky runs up the steps leading to his house. Mamma Rosa  
stands by the door.

NICKY  
Mamma Rosa, what's the matter? Tony  
said to come home.

Mamma Rosa pulls Nicky to her bosom and hugs him.

MAMMA ROSA  
Nicky, I'm so sorry. Your father  
passed. It must have been his heart.

NICKY  
Let me go. I gotta see Pops.

**INT. NICKY'S HOUSE -- DAY**

Nicky pulls away from her and runs inside. Mamma Rosa stands beside Nicky while he kneels next to Dante. She pats Nicky's back as he holds his father's hand.

MAMMA ROSA  
It's gonna be all right.

NICKY  
I just saw him this morning.

Sirens are heard, then an ambulance pulls to the curb. The TECHS come inside and take Dante away on a gurney.

MAMMA ROSA  
It's time, Nicky. Come with me. We'll call Jimmy, and we'll grieve. Grief is the pain the heart needs to heal.

**INT. MALDONADO'S FUNERAL HOME -- NIGHT**

Tony, Frankie, and Paulie stand beside Nicky as others pay their respect.

TONY  
You got everything for the coffin?  
You know how superstitious Mamma is.

NICKY  
Got it all.

MAMMA ROSA  
Let's see what you have.

Nicky pulls out a picture of himself when he was five years old and a picture of his mother as a young woman.

MAMMA ROSA (CONT'D)  
And the lighter and cigarettes?

Nicky takes an old lighter from his pocket and shows it to Mamma Rosa. Next he pulls out half a pack of cigarettes.

MAMMA ROSA (CONT'D)  
You did good, Nicky. When someone dies, we don't want their spirit coming back, so we put in things that they'll need to be happy in the next life: pictures of their loved ones, their favorite lighter, half a pack of cigarettes --

NICKY  
Why don't we put a whole pack in?

MAMMA ROSA

Because the spirit might think there is an endless supply and come back for more. If they see only half a pack, they will know they got all there is. I've never seen a spirit come back when half a pack is put in.

Nicky reaches over and hugs Mamma Rosa.

NICKY

You're a saint, Mamma.

MAMMA ROSA

Let's get in line. And don't forget to save your items until last.

NICKY

You think many people will show?

MAMMA ROSA

I don't know. We'll see.

The door creaks open and in walks Mikey the Face followed by Tucks and Pockets. Before the door closes, Doggs comes in with Paulie Shoes.

As they kneel in front of the casket, Patsy the Whale gets in line with half a dozen others.

Nicky turns to Bugs, beaming, and nudges him.

NICKY

Bugs, I can't believe it. Everybody who's anybody came to see pops.

Mamma Rosa taps on the back of Nicky's head.

MAMMA ROSA

Don't worry about who came. It's time for you to say your prayers, Nicky.

Nicky puts the lighter and smokes by Dante's right hand, then leans in and sings the lullaby his father used to sing to him as a baby.

NICKY

*Fa la ninna,  
Fa la nanna.  
Nella braccia della mamma.  
Fa la ninna bel bambino,  
Fa la nanna bambino bel.*

**INT. NICKY'S HOUSE -- EVENING**

Nicky is dressing for work when someone knocks on the door. He answers and sees Frankie's sister, DONNA (20, standoffish). She is crying and looks panicked.

NICKY  
What's wrong, Donna?

DONNA  
Frankie and them are fighting  
Woodside, in the clearing past the  
ball field, and they have guns.

NICKY  
Go home. I'll take care of it.

**INT. SMOKE SHOP -- EVENING**

Nicky runs inside the smoke shop. The Whale is behind the counter.

NICKY  
I need to see Doggs.

PATSY THE WHALE  
He's gone for the night. What's up?

Nicky pounds his fist on the counter.

NICKY  
Bugs and Tony are fighting  
Woodside, and they're packing.

Patsy looks around the shop, then whispers.

PATSY THE WHALE  
Tell you what. I'll take care of  
you, but know this -- your mouth's  
a fuckin' trap, you hear?

Patsy reaches behind his pants, pulls out a .22, cleans it,  
and hands it to Nicky.

PATSY THE WHALE (CONT'D)  
I never seen this fuckin' gun. Never  
heard of this fuckin' gun. Don't ever  
want to hear of this fuckin' gun.

He grabs Nicky's cheeks and makes him stare straight at him.

PATSY THE WHALE (CONT'D)  
You got me?

NICKY  
Thanks, Patsy. I won't forget this.

PATSY THE WHALE  
You're wrong already. I want you to  
forget it.

**EXT. CANBY PARK -- NIGHT**

Frankie, Tony, and Mick are fighting with a gang of young men from Canby Park -- the Woodside Gang. Nicky runs across the park and through the woods.

As he crosses the last hill, he hears a gunshot. He runs faster and then sees Tommy fall to the ground.

NICKY

Mick!

Nicky pulls the gun from his pocket and races toward Tommy. Just as he gets there, the BOY (20) who shot Tommy aims at Bugs.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Duck, Bugs!

Nicky aims the gun and shoots. The other boy goes down, blood oozing from his face.

TONY

Run! We can't stay here.

Nicky kneels beside Mick. He has a hole in his face and blood is everywhere. Nicky gives him mouth-to-mouth and rips his shirt as a cloth to apply pressure to the wound.

NICKY

Help me save him, God. Please?

Sirens wail in the distance, then the sound grows louder. Tony grabs Nicky's arm and tugs him.

TONY

Cops. We gotta go.

Nicky turns his head to the side and spits blood.

NICKY

We can't leave Mick. He needs us.

TONY

He's probably dead. You'll get caught if you stay.

NICKY

He's one of us. I ain't leaving him.

Nicky puts more pressure on Mick's face to stop the bleeding. The sound of sirens draws closer still.

NICKY

You're gonna make it, Mick. Hang on.

Tommy grabs Nicky's arm and pulls him closer.

TOMMY MCDERMOTT

Don't leave me, Nicky.

As the sirens grow louder, Nicky gets up on his knees, ready to run. He then looks at Mick and sits down.

NICKY  
I ain't goin' nowhere. We're  
getting you fixed.

An ambulance pulls up next to the cops. A COP (30s, burly) points a gun at Nicky, and the EMERGENCY TECH examines Tommy, then shakes his head as they put Tommy on a gurney.

COP  
Hands behind your back.

The cop cuffs Nicky and puts him in the back of the patrol car. Nicky leans against the door. Tommy's blood is all over his hands and face and stains his shirt. On the way to the station, Nicky presses his head against the window and cries.

NICKY  
Who's gonna tell his mom?

**INT. PRISON (SMYRNA) -- DAY**

**SUPER: "THREE MONTHS LATER"**

Nicky is fingerprinted, showers, then is led to his cell. He shivers at the sound of steel on steel when the door clangs shut.

**MONTAGE -- FIRST DAYS IN PRISON**

**WALKWAY OUTSIDE CELLS**

-- A lone guard walks past the cells. His footsteps seem abnormally loud. His nightstick clatters the bars.

-- In the yard, a group of blacks play basketball, whites play baseball, and Latinos sit on the bleachers, smoking. Nicky walks slowly through the yard, eyeing the blacks and Latinos cautiously.

-- As Nicky works out, TEDDY 'THE TANK' MORESCO (Whale's brother, 45, 350 pounds, superior attitude) offers protection.

TEDDY  
Hey, Rat. Patsy told me you were in here. Stay close and nobody will bother you. This ain't the best way to grow up, but it ain't the worst.

NICKY  
As Doggs used to say: you gotta eat some shit if you want to bloom.

**END OF MONTAGE**

When Nicky returns to his cell, he is alerted that he has a visitor.

NICKY  
Angie, how'd you get here?

ANGELA  
Tony brought me. He's waiting for me, but he said I can't stay long.

NICKY  
He's not coming in?

ANGELA  
He's running an errand for Doggs. He's picking me up in twenty minutes.

NICKY  
I can't believe he didn't come in. Now it's just you and Mamma Rosa.

ANGELA  
You know what an ass he's been.

NICKY  
Still doing drugs?

ANGELA  
Dealing them too.

NICKY  
You should stop coming. I got seven years, even with early release. You can't wait. I won't let you.

ANGELA  
Go to hell, Mr. Fusco.

**EXT. PRISON (SMYRNA) -- DAY**

Tony pulls up with two guys Angela doesn't know -- one in the back and one in the passenger seat.

ANGELA  
You don't need to be driving, Tony.

TONY  
Just get in the car.

ANGELA  
If you're driving, I'll find another way home.

Tony gets out of driver's seat and into the back. The guy who was in the back moves up front and drives away.

TONY  
This is bullshit.



ANGELA  
Are you high again?

TONY  
Shut up, Angie. Just shut the fuck  
up. You sound like my mother.

ANGELA  
Don't talk to me that way. Your  
mother --

TONY  
My mother's not here for  
protection. And neither is Nicky.

Tony continues drinking and snorting cocaine.

ANGELA  
Let me out at the next light. I'll  
find a ride.

TONY  
So you can tell my mother how badly  
I treated you? No thanks.

Tony takes hold of her hair and pulls her to him.

ANGELA  
Stop it. You're hurting me.

Tony pulls her closer and kisses her forcefully.

TONY  
Why don't you give me some of what  
Nicky got? I've always wanted a  
taste of that.

At the traffic signal, Angela tries getting out. Tony pulls  
her back. She smacks him. He yanks on her arm and hits her.

ANGELA  
Help me! For God's sake, stop him.

Tony laughs as he pulls her pants off.

TONY  
You're not getting any help from  
them, bitch. Just shut up and enjoy.

#### **LATER**

Angela pulls her pants up, slides against the door, hugs  
herself and cries. She remains silent until she exits the  
car at her house. As she exits, she turns and glares.

ANGELA  
Remember this day, Tony. One day,  
you'll pay for it.

Angela races to her front door and doesn't look back.

**INT. ANGELA CATRINO'S HOUSE -- DAY**

Angela runs straight to her bedroom. She undresses and takes a shower, then another, and another, scrubbing harder with each one until her skin turns red. Tears run down her face.

**EXT. ST. ELIZABETH'S CHURCH -- DAY**

**SUPER:** "TWO MONTHS LATER"

Angela sits on the park bench across from the church. She is counting rosary beads and mumbling prayers.

Sister Thomas exits the church and crosses the street. She sits on the bench next to Angela.

Angela stands and paces up and down the sidewalk. She thumbs her rosary beads more rapidly.

SISTER THOMAS  
Angela, you look as if something is  
on your mind.

ANGELA  
Sister, can we talk?

SISTER THOMAS  
Of course. But sit on the bench.  
It's such a nice day.

Angela sits next to Sister Thomas and cries. Sister Thomas reaches over and clasps her hands.

SISTER THOMAS (CONT'D)  
Tell me what's bothering you. We'll  
work it out together.

ANGELA  
Sister, a few months ago, someone  
forced themself on me, and now I  
I'm carrying their child.

Angela cries, leans her head on Sister Thomas's shoulder, then cries harder.

ANGELA (CONT'D)  
I feel like filth. Like I've just  
crawled through a sewer. And all the  
scrubbing in the world does no good.  
It doesn't take the sins away.

Sister Thomas holds Angie's hand and squeezes.

SISTER THOMAS  
You can't scrub the sins away  
because there are no sins. You did  
nothing wrong.

(MORE)

SISTER THOMAS (CONT'D)

The same as a person who is murdered or gets cancer. You are a victim, not a sinner.

ANGELA

What can I do? I don't want the baby. I can't love a child brought into the world this way.

SISTER THOMAS

I understand, but you know abortion is forbidden by the church.

Angela nods and sobs harder.

SISTER THOMAS (CONT'D)

There are other options though. Why don't you give birth, then wait a few months. If you still feel you don't want the baby, offer it up for adoption. There are plenty of people looking for a baby to adopt.  
(a beat)  
Does Nicky know?

ANGELA

No! And please don't tell him. He can't do anything from prison, and it would break his heart. I'll tell him when he gets out.

**INT. PRISON (SMYRNA) -- EARLY SPRING -- DAY**

Sister Thomas is admitted as a visitor to see Nicky.

SISTER THOMAS

Nicky, how have you been?

NICKY

Not so good, Sister. Angie sent a letter saying she wouldn't be coming anymore. And from your expression, whatever brings you isn't good.

SISTER THOMAS

Nicky, I ... There's no other way to say it. Rosa Sannullo is dead. She died of a stroke the night before last.

NICKY

Oh, my God! Oh, my God.

He holds onto Sister Thomas and cries. Once he composes himself, he walks to his cell and buries his head in a pillow.

**MONTAGE -- PRISON YARD**

-- Nicky runs laps around a track.

-- Nicky lifts weights on a bench (two or three people watch).

-- Nicky does pull-ups in the yard (a small crowd watches).

-- Nicky spars with a large black man in a boxing ring (a large crowd observes).

**END OF MONTAGE****INT. PRISON SHOWERS (SMYRNA) -- DAY**

Nicky finishes his workout and takes a shower. SEVERAL MEN are inside (naked) under shower heads. Nicky undresses and steps into an empty spot, water running onto him from above.

Three large white men enter, walking slowly, an ominous look on their faces. They look past everyone else and focus on Nicky. The other men grab their towels and leave. The largest of the three, approaches Nicky.

LARGEST MAN

Looks like you're alone, sweet-cake.

Nicky turns and evaluates the situation. There are three of them and him in a small room with tile floors and walls.

NICKY

That's all right. I was just leaving.

LARGEST MAN

Not so fast. We want a little something first.

Nicky smiles at the man and walks closer.

NICKY

Is that all you want? Why didn't you say so?

Nicky kicks the guy in the balls. When the man doubles over, he kidney-punches him several times. The other two men are taken off guard. Nicky grabs one of them and slams his head against the tile wall five or six times. Massive amounts of blood gush out and mix with the running water.

The third man runs, but Nicky quickly catches him and slams him to the floor. He takes a bar of soap from the rack and shoves it up the man's ass while the man screams. He walks back to the first man and crushes his larynx with his foot.

**INT. PRISON (SMYRNA) -- DAY****SUPER:** "YEARS LATER"

Nicky exits prison a free man. He stands on a corner, waiting for a bus. A car pulls to the curb and a nun wearing a habit gets out.

NICKY

Sister Thomas, what are you doing here?

SISTER THOMAS

Someone had to greet you. Now get in, and we'll get some food, then you can tell me about your plans.

Sister Thomas drives to a local diner along Route #13.

SISTER THOMAS (CONT'D)

They have good pie here and good coffee too. I'm sure you're hungry for both.

**INT. DINER (SMYRNA) -- DAY**

WAITRESS (20s, cheery) comes by the table. Sister Thomas orders coffee and pie for both of them.

SISTER THOMAS

What will you do, Nicky? Where will you go? Do you have plans?

NICKY

I'll get a job, then I'm going to see Angie. It's been a long time.

SISTER THOMAS

Nicky, I guess you don't know. Angela is married. She has a child.

NICKY

(shocked)

Married? When? To whom?

Shakes his head as he sips coffee.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Never mind. I heard Tony's in New York. Maybe I'll go see him.

SISTER THOMAS

No reason to leave Wilmington. The economy is booming. We have --

NICKY

I always wanted to see New York, and I haven't seen Tony in a long time. I need to see what he's up to.

SISTER THOMAS

Tony is up to no good. You'd do better looking up Frankie.

NICKY

I'll probably look them both up, so if you don't mind, drop me at the train station.

**EXT. GRAND CENTRAL STATION (NEW YORK) -- NIGHT**

Nicky (29) gets off the train, enters a phone booth, and dials.

NICKY

Is this Tony "The Brain" Sannullo, the dumbest fuck I know?

TONY (V.O.)

Rat, don't tell me this is you? They actually let you out? Where are you?

NICKY

Train station. Just got in from Wilmington.

TONY (V.O.)

I'll be there in a half hour. Maybe less. Stand outside.

**LATER:**

Tony pulls up in a Caddie with Paulie 'The Suit' sitting beside him. He pulls to the curb, and he and Suit get out and hug Nicky. Everyone is smiling and laughing.

Nicky stands back a few feet, admiring Paulie.

NICKY

I see you finally got that suit, Suit.

PAULIE

That I did, Nicky. Got a bunch of 'em, thanks to Tony.

TONY

Can't believe it's you. It's been a long time.

Tony turns to Paulie and tosses him the keys.

TONY (CONT'D)

Suit, open the trunk for Nicky's bag.

Nicky gets in back seat. Tony drives, and Suit sits in the front seat.

NICKY  
Where to?

PAULIE  
Let's get Bugs. He'd want to be here.

NICKY  
Well, shit. Call him. You got a number?

TONY  
We'll call him from the bar, but  
you need to know, he's a damn cop.

**INT. ANTHONY'S BAR AND RESTAURANT (BENSONHURST) -- NIGHT**

They sit at a table near the back, close to the dart board.

NICKY (ON PHONE)  
Mr. Donovan, please.

FRANKIE (V.O.)  
This is Frankie.

NICKY  
I need some bugs killed in my  
house. Are you available?

FRANKIE (V.O.)  
Who the hell is this?

Tony picks up the phone, laughing.

TONY  
Hey, Bugs. It's Tony. We're at  
Anthony's, and you won't believe  
who's with us.

Tony, Nicky, and Paulie shoot a game of darts, then drink another round. Paulie downs a shot of limoncello, tosses a dart that is way off the mark, and as he makes his way to the table, he waves his hands and shouts to Bugs.

PAULIE  
Over here, Bugs. Come see who we got.

Nicky stands and rushes over to hug Bugs.

NICKY  
Been way too long, Bugs. It's good  
to see you.

FRANKIE  
It has, Nicky. Way too long. I'm  
sorry I didn't visit but I was  
married and moved here. It's no  
excuse for not writing, but . . .

NICKY  
So you're married?

Frankie looks down and shakes his head.

FRANKIE  
Not anymore. It didn't take.

TONY  
Enough gloom and doom, Frankie.

Tony taps his glass on Nicky's and lifts it as if saluting.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Nicky, you see the Irish finally  
came out in Bugs. He's a damn cop.

FRANKIE  
Yeah, well let this cop show you  
how to play pool.

Frankie and Tony play a game of eight-ball, and Frankie  
wins. After that, Frankie beats Paulie in nine-ball.

TONY  
All right. All right. So you can play  
pool. Let's see if you can drink.

They order a round of limoncello, followed by a bottle of  
wine. Frankie plays pool with Nicky and beats him as well.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Now you see what cops do all day.  
No wonder crime is rampant.

FRANKIE  
(looks at time)  
Shit. It's one o'clock. I've got to  
get sleep.

PAULIE  
We need to do this more.

FRANKIE  
(shakes head)  
I can't be seen with you assholes.  
Nicky's okay, but not you, Paulie.  
And sure as shit not Tony. I already  
risked my ass coming here tonight.

Frankie hands Nicky a card.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)  
Call me sometime, Nicky. By the  
way, where are you staying?

TONY  
With me. He lived with me half his  
life. No sense in changing things.

NICKY  
(laughing)  
Guess I'm staying with Tony.



**EXT. TONY'S CAR (BROOKLYN) -- DAY**

Tony and Nicky (both 30 years old) are in a car riding through the streets of Brooklyn.

NICKY

Tony, it's been six months and I've still got no steady income. I need work. I'll do anything. I've got to earn enough to get Angie back.

TONY

I wouldn't worry about Angie if I were you. Hell, I heard she's married. But if that's the way you want it, don't worry. I'll introduce you to Tito. He's not like Doggs though. He's Doggs times ten. Piss him off and you're dead.

NICKY

Got it.

Tony pulls into a parking lot filled with cars surrounded by a chainlink fence. A small building sits near the back. Men stand outside the front door, smoking.

NICKY (CONT'D)

What's this place?

TONY

Union hall. Tito's place.

**INT. UNION HALL -- SAME TIME**

Tony enters with Nicky, nods to several people, then walks up to MANNY, who's sitting by the kitchen door (40s, with a reputation that says he is vicious but he seldom is. Manny is a big barrel-chested man who loves food as much as he loves life, and he has a contagious laugh).

TONY

Yo, Manny. Where's Tito?

Manny gestures toward the back, and Tony nudges Nicky toward the room Manny points to.

TONY (CONT'D)

I'll introduce you, then I'll leave. Whatever you and Tito work out is between you.

Nicky follows Tony through the kitchen and in to see TITO (50, eyes that sum you up immediately and a mind that processes it as quickly).

TONY (CONT'D)

Tito, this is my best friend, Nicky Fusco. He's someone you'll like.

Tito waits for Tony to leave, then he leans back in his chair and stares at Nicky like a jeweler assessing a gem.

TITO  
You knew Tony as a boy?

NICKY  
His mother raised me.

TITO  
And you're looking for a job now?

NICKY  
Everyone needs work, Mr. Martelli.  
Even ex-cons.

TITO  
Convicts aren't much use to me. I  
might get you a job as a union rep.

NICKY  
I need more than that. I can do  
anything. If you have something you  
need done, I can do it.

TITO  
Anything sounds ominous. Besides,  
what would I need done?

Tito grabs a biscotto from the plate and dunks it in his espresso, then nibbles on it.

TITO (CONT'D)  
And call me Tito. I hate that Mr.  
Martelli shit.

NICKY  
I said anything, and I meant it. I  
need money. But once I get enough,  
I'm quitting. You need to know that.

TITO  
I like a man who knows what he  
wants. But why do you need so much?

NICKY  
I screwed up a long time ago, and  
I've got to get my girl back.

Tito nods knowingly, then walks to the door and opens it.

TITO  
Manny, I'll be talking to Tony's  
pal. Make sure I'm not disturbed.

He returns to the table and sits.

TITO (CONT'D)

Sit, Nicky. Tell me about yourself.  
Tell me about this -- anything --  
you said you would do.

Nicky leans back in chair and rests his hands on the table.

NICKY

I killed a guy in a gang fight when I  
was twenty. I killed a few more in  
prison, and I've got no problem  
killing for you -- if they deserve it.

Tito nods and sips his espresso.

TITO

I like that, Nicky. I like a man  
with morals. Tell you what, I'll  
let Tony know. We might need to  
meet again.

Tito stands, goes to the door, and opens it.

TITO (CONT'D)

Manny's outside. He'll take you home.

Nicky walks out, and Tito calls CHICKY (40s, balding, the  
kind of man who does anything).

TITO (CONT'D)

I need someone checked out, Chicky.  
His name is Nicky Fusco. He served  
ten years in Delaware.

CHICKY

Might take a few days.

TITO

Take as long as you need.

**INT. TITO'S OFFICE -- DAY**

**SUPER: "TWO DAYS LATER"**

Chicky walks into the union hall, shaking his head. He stops  
to fill a cup of coffee, then walks to Tito's office.

TITO

Talk to me, Chicky. What have you got?

CHICKY

Took me two days to find out, but  
what you got is a bona-fide psycho.

TITO

Tell me about it.

CHICKY

He goes in at nineteen for shooting a guy in a gang fight. A few years in, three of the toughest whiteys decide to get some sweets. They follow Nicky into the shower. Ten minutes later, Nicky comes out leaving one guy dead, one with a cracked head, and the other with a full bar of 99.44 percent pure ivory shoved up his ass 100 percent of the way.

TITO

Thank you, Chicky. This is helpful.

CHICKY

I forgot one thing. They said this kid ain't scared of nothin'. Fuckin' nothin'.

TITO

Tell Manny I want to see Johnny Muck.

**INT. SMALL CAFE (BRONX) -- DAY**

Tito sits at a table by the window at a small Italian café in the Bronx. Signs taped to the windows boast of the best biscotti and the best espresso.

JOHNNY MUCK walks in. (40s, tall, cap slanting to the side, seldom smiles.) Tito stands up and calls to him.

TITO

Over here, Johnny.

Johnny sits at the table.

TITO (CONT'D)

I need some help. Got a kid that needs testing.

The WAITER (30) appears, and Johnny orders an espresso and a biscotto.

JOHNNY MUCK

And make sure the espresso is hot?

Johnny waits for the waiter to leave before talking.

JOHNNY MUCK (CONT'D)

What kind of testing?

TITO

Johnny, you should try smiling sometime. You might like it.

JOHNNY MUCK

You think I'm getting old?

TITO  
We're all getting old, Johnny, but  
this is to train your successor.

JOHNNY MUCK  
Who is he?

TITO  
Young kid from Philly. Napolitano.  
Ten years in prison, but --

JOHNNY MUCK  
You know I don't do that.

TITO  
This kid is different.

JOHNNY MUCK  
What do you have in mind?

TITO  
See what he can do. If he pisses  
his pants or fucks up -- kill him.

JOHNNY MUCK  
When?

TITO  
I'll let you know. And I'm not  
telling him what he's in for. Let's  
see how he thinks on his own.

**INT. TITO'S OFFICES -- DAY**

Nicky walks into Tito's office. He's sitting at his desk  
with a laptop open. Files are spread atop his desktop.

NICKY  
You got something for me?

TITO  
Johnny Muck needs an apprentice.

NICKY  
Who's Johnny Muck? And what kind of  
apprentice? What's he do?

TITO  
None of your business.

NICKY  
Can I assume I won't be needing my  
carpenter's hammer, or saw, or shit  
like that? I'm not too good with tools.

TITO  
That's good, Nicky. I like that.

He hands Nicky a slip of paper with an address on it.

TITO (CONT'D)  
 Meet Muck at that address in three  
 days. Be there at eleven.

**EXT. PARKING GARAGE -- DAY**

Nicky follows the directions to a garage downtown. He meets  
 Muck on the sixth floor, then gets in the passenger seat.

JOHNNY MUCK  
 Sit and listen. Three guys in this  
 building owe Tito money. Tito sent his  
 regular guy two weeks ago, and they  
 beat him half to death. One held a gun  
 while the other did the work. They  
 dumped him in front of his family. His  
 family, for Christ's sake!

NICKY  
 Tell me what to do.

JOHNNY MUCK  
 Wipe the car down. We'll wait until  
 they get back from lunch.

NICKY  
 You know their schedule?

JOHNNY MUCK  
 Murder takes time, Nicky. That's  
 the first rule of our business.  
 That means you need to be prepared,  
 study your targets, know all about  
 them and everyone around them.

Johnny eyes Nicky again. He looks at his watch, then opens  
 the door, pops the trunk, and removes two briefcases.

JOHNNY MUCK (CONT'D)  
 Another thing. Don't use the same  
 places to watch from and don't  
 watch at the same time of day.  
 Don't use the same car or wear the  
 same clothes. Remember that.  
 Sameness is your enemy. Wipe down  
 the car. Make sure it's clean.

He waits for Nicky to finish, then hands him a briefcase.

JOHNNY MUCK (CONT'D)  
 This is yours. The gun is clean and  
 the case is clean. Make sure they come  
 out with you. And don't look anybody  
 in the eyes. Keep your head lowered.

Johnny walks toward the office carrying one of the  
 briefcases. The brim of his hat protects him from cameras.

JOHNNY MUCK (CONT'D)  
 Let's go. And remember to keep your  
 head down. This city's as bad as  
 Chicago. Cameras everywhere.

**INT. INSIDE LOBBY OF LAW OFFICE -- DAY**

Double-doors open into a huge lobby with marble floors, an escalator on one side and a bank of elevators on the other. Johnny approaches the RECEPTIONIST (20s, thin, chatty, quick to smile) sitting behind a large desk in the center.

JOHNNY MUCK  
 I'm Mr. Temple. I have an  
 appointment with Mr. Steinberg.

Johnny continues to stare at the receptionist, then he points his finger at her, as if in recognition.

JOHNNY MUCK (CONT'D)  
 I know you. Don't you live over by  
 Prospect Park?

RECEPTIONIST:  
 I do. Right by the coffee shop on  
 the corner.

JOHNNY MUCK  
 I thought so. I've seen you a lot  
 when I drive by.

RECEPTIONIST  
 It's a small world, isn't it? Wait  
 one moment, Mr. Temple. I'll take  
 you to see him.

Muck bends over and whispers to Nicky.

JOHNNY MUCK  
 Remember to touch nothing.

The receptionist walks them across the lobby to a large conference room, opens the door, and announces them. Three men in suits are at a large table. The blinds on the window are closed.

RECEPTIONIST  
 Mr. Temple is here, sir.

STEINBERG  
 Mr. Temple and ... ?

JOHNNY MUCK  
 (gestures to Nicky)  
 This is my assistant, Simon.

Muck opens the briefcase, taps Nicky, and points to the gun.

JOHNNY MUCK (CONT'D)  
 And I believe to start out with,  
 Simon has something to show you.

Nicky opens his briefcase, takes out the gun, and shoots all three men. Blood splatters on the table, chairs, and floor. Johnny tosses a cloth to Nicky and he uses another cloth to wipe the table and chairs.

JOHNNY MUCK (CONT'D)  
 Clean yourself off and be quick.

He leaves the conference room and walks toward the exit. Nicky follows closely behind.

RECEPTIONIST  
 Meeting over so soon?

JOHNNY MUCK  
 I'm afraid it is, but don't worry,  
 I'll see you around, now that I  
 know where you live.

NICKY  
 That's supposed to guarantee her  
 silence? The fact that you know  
 where she lives.

JOHNNY MUCK  
 Without a doubt, it will. Now,  
 let's get out of here.

**EXT. TITO MARTELLI'S HOUSE -- DAY**

A Fed-ex truck pulls to the curb and a DRIVER (30s, white) gets out and calls to Manny.

FEDEX DRIVER  
 Package for Mr. Martelli.

Manny examines the envelope, then takes it inside and hands it to Tito, sitting at the kitchen table, drinking cappuccino.

MANNY ROSSO  
 Tito, you got a package.

TITO  
 Who's it from?

MANNY:  
 Fedex package from Giuseppe . . .  
 Hard to make out the last name.

TITO  
 Giuseppe? I don't know any  
 Giuseppe. Open it.

Manny opens the package and reads the letter.



MANNY

It's a letter addressed to you.  
It's . . . Damn, it's from Gina.

TITO:

Gina? What the hell does she want?

MANNY

You need to look at this. She says she has the piece you used to kill Danny Zenkowski. She wants \$400,000 in untraceable bills. She included a burner phone and said she'd call in three days.

Tito grabs the box and throws it across the room.

TITO

Find this bitch, Manny. I should have killed her father years ago. I won't make the same mistake again.

**INT. TITO MARTELLI'S HOUSE -- DAY**

Tito sits on the patio and waits for GINA's (30, a woman who will do what needs to be done) instructions. When she calls, he writes them down.

TITO

Manny, the dumb bitch wants me to Fedex the money?

Tito turns to Manny. He is so angry, he's shaking.

TITO (CONT'D)

I'll Fedex it like she wants, but I want our best men on this. Find her and cut her throat.

**INT. TITO MARTELLI'S HOUSE -- NEXT DAY**

Tito's phone rings while he's at the kitchen table. He swigs the last of his coffee and answers.

TITO

Yeah, Donnie?

PAGE

Gina fucked us, boss. She picked the package up earlier.

Tito slams his palm on the table, then gets up and storms around the kitchen.

TITO

That son of a bitch.

He pokes his head out the front door and calls Manny inside.

TITO (CONT'D)

Manny, we need to find Gina. I don't care what it costs. Get the burner phone traced. Find out where she bought it. Do something.

**INT. TITO'S HOUSE -- DAY**

Manny walks into the kitchen, where Tito is drinking coffee by himself at a table meant to seat six.

MANNY

I checked out Gina's burner phone. It was bought in Hershey, PA.

TITO

She could have bought it there to throw us off.

MANNY

Maybe, but she's a devout Catholic, so I say we stake out churches. If she lives in Hershey, we'll find her.

**EXT. TITO OFFICES -- DAY**

**SUPER:** "SIX DAYS LATER"

Chicky walks up to Tito outside the door to the union hall.

CHICKY

We found her. Just like Manny said.

TITO

Good. Get Johnny Muck.

Tito goes inside as Manny comes out. Tony pulls into the lot, gets out, and joins Manny and Chicky.

TONY

Manny, ain't that Nicky leaving?

MANNY

Yeah, why? You worried?

TONY

What are you talking about?

MANNY

Tito's got himself a new boy, that's what. Better watch your ass.

TONY

Get outta here. I taught Nicky everything he knows.

MANNY

Now I know you're nuts.

Manny laughs and pats Tony on the back as he passes by.

MANNY (CONT'D)

Gotta go. I'll tell Tito you're here.

Tony enters Tito's office.

TITO

Tony, tell me we made a lot of money last week.

TONY

What's wrong? Somebody giving you trouble?

Tony walks to the bar and pours a brandy.

TONY (CONT'D)

And don't tell me nothing. I've known you too long for that. So what's going on? Who's giving my favorite boss all this trouble?

TITO

Some broad.

TONY

A broad? You get her pregnant?

TITO

God, no. She's ... I've got to take care of her, that's all.

TONY

Maybe I'm off base, but why not give the job to Nicky?

TITO

He told you what he does?

TONY

Tito! Nicky and I are best friends.

TITO

I'm giving this to someone else.

TONY

Yeah, good idea. No way Nicky would take out a broad anyway. He wouldn't do it if Jesus Christ told him to.

Tito sips his coffee and stares over the rim of the cup.

TITO

You know I can't have a guy I don't trust.

Tito stares at Tony.

TITO (CONT'D)  
 But you knew that, didn't you?  
 That's why you brought it up. Does  
 Nicky know you hate him so much?

Tito paces and nods his head.

TITO (CONT'D)  
 You're rolling big dice here. If I  
 give this to Nicky, he'll either be  
 a hero or a corpse.

TONY  
 I'm sure he'll do fine.

**EXT. NICKY'S CAR -- DAY**

Nicky is driving through Brooklyn when his cell phone rings.

TITO (V.O.)  
 We need to talk.

NICKY  
 Go to the garage on Seventh Street,  
 third level. There's a blue Camry  
 near the elevator. Keys are in the  
 rear wheel well, driver's side. I'm  
 close, so I'll meet you soon.

TITO (V.O.)  
 You're getting more cautious. I like  
 that. Keeps both of us on our toes.

NICKY  
 Glad you see it that way.

**EXT PARKING GARAGE -- DAY**

Nicky drives to the parking garage and pulls next to Tito.

NICKY  
 Get in. We'll go where we can talk.

Tito gets in the car and Nicky drives off.

NICKY (CONT'D)  
 What do you need?

TITO  
 I've got a special one. And she's  
 gotta go quick.

NICKY  
 She? I don't kill women.

TITO  
 She's not a woman; she's a thief.

NICKY

Get Johnny. I don't like it.

TITO

Get your head out of your ass,  
Nicky. This is business.

NICKY

I don't know. I --

TITO

This isn't some mom with kids in  
little league. This is a  
blackmailing thief who was smart  
enough to steal four hundred large  
from me. She knew what she was  
buying into, and she sure as shit  
knew the consequences.

NICKY

How much?

TITO

How much? Four hundred large,  
that's how much.

NICKY

That's a lot of money, Tito. But I  
meant how much for me.

TITO

So that's what this is about. I  
forgot what a cold-hearted fuck you  
were. Don't worry, there's plenty  
in it for you.

NICKY

I like 'plenty,' Tito, but I need  
to know how much 'plenty' is. If  
you want me to do this, I get to  
keep whatever she has left of the  
money, and if it's less than a  
hundred, I get a hundred.

TITO

You're nuts!

NICKY

Then get Johnny.

TITO

You're a cocksucker. Know that?

NICKY

Yeah, I know. You got the details?

Tito hands Nicky a manila envelope, then gets in his car and  
calls Chicky.

TITO

Get Donny, and go to Hershey. I'm sending Nicky to take care of Gina. Make sure it gets done. But make sure to stay out of his way.

**EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (HERSHEY, PA) -- DAY**

Nicky drives to Hershey and stakes out the school where Gina works. He sees Chicky watching and calls him.

NICKY

Chicky? You can go home now.

CHICKY

Maybe we should --

NICKY

Tito gave me permission to kill anyone who interferes with my job. If you're here in twenty minutes, I'll consider that interference.

CHICKY

Yeah, all right. Fuck you. How about that?

NICKY

That's fine. But just so you know, the last guys who tried to fuck me are dead.

**EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (HERSHEY) -- DAY**

Nicky scouts the area. He waits for the kids to return from recess, then he puts Gina in his sights.

Nicky raises the rifle and scopes her in. He puts his finger on the trigger, focuses on Gina, and then she twirls her hair around her finger. Images of Angela flash in his head.

**FLASHBACK MONTAGE -- REMEMBERING ANGELA**

- Angie cooking meatballs at Mamma Rosa's stove.
- Angie twirling her hair when she grows nervous.
- Angie walking through the park with him, holding hands.
- Angie lying under him, naked.
- Angie being there for him at his father's funeral.

**BACK TO SCENE**

NICKY

Shit! Why does she have to be a twirler?

He takes his finger off the trigger and lowers the rifle. Then he packs it up and returns to the car.

**INT. GINA'S APARTMENT (HERSHEY) -- NIGHT**

The phone rings, and Gina gets out of bed and answers it. She is dressed in pajamas and her hair is in curlers.

GINA

Hello?

NICKY (VO)

Gina, don't panic. Tito Martelli sent me to kill you. Don't worry. I'm not going to do it. But you need to listen to me . . .

**EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (HERSHEY) -- DAY**

Nicky waits in the woods until Gina comes out for recess. He fires a shot, and she falls to the ground. She counts to thirty before getting up, and then she walks away slowly.

Nicky waits for her to get out of sight, then he quickly leaves the scene and calls his friend DEXTER.

NICKY

Dex, it's Nicky.

DEXTER (V.O.)

Nicky the Rat! How about that shit. What can Dex do for you?

NICKY

I need a story planted in the Hershey, Pa., paper.

DEXTER (V.O.)

Tell me how you want it to read.

**EXT. PHONE BOOTH BETWEEN (HERSHEY, PA AND BROOKLYN) -- DAY**

Nicky pulls to the curb alongside a phone booth, inserts a few coins, and dials.

NICKY

Sister, a woman named Gina will contact you. Hide her until you hear from me. I'll send a letter.

SISTER THOMAS (V.O.)

Nicky, I can't do anything illegal.

NICKY

Sister, if you trust me, please hide her for a few days, then put her on a flight to Indianapolis and tell her to call you every other day for instructions.

SISTER THOMAS (V.O.)

All right, Nicolo. I'm trusting you.

**INT. TITO MARTELLI'S HOUSE -- NEXT DAY**

Manny walks in smiling. He carries a folded-up paper and sets it on the table in front of Tito.

TITO

You check it out?

MANNY

Chicky saw it go down, and I checked the Hershey paper. Obituary was there this morning.

TITO

Anything in the paper about how she died? Or about the shooting?

MANNY

Just a statement that the Feds have it under investigation.

(a beat)

You hear that, Tito -- the Feds? It must have been a trap.

TITO

I warned Tony he was rolling the dice.

**INT. TITO'S OFFICE -- DAY**

Nicky walks in smiling. He holds his hand out, palm up.

NICKY

Time to pay up, Tito. And time for me to quit.

TITO

I didn't get my money.

NICKY

I can't help that. The deal was, what she had left or \$100,000.

Tito goes to his safe, mumbling. He removes stacks of cash, puts it in a bag, and hands it to Nicky.

TITO

You're a heartless prick.



NICKY  
That was our deal.

**MONTAGE -- Concealing Gina**

-- Nicky drives to Philly airport and gets a rental car.  
-- He drives to another lot and rents a car using a fake ID.  
-- He drives to Indianapolis and parks at a motel.  
-- He climbs the stairs and knocks on room #245.

**END OF MONTAGE**

**EXT/INT. MOTEL (INDIANAPOLIS) -- NIGHT**

A young woman with an olive complexion answers.

NICKY  
You're as pretty as your name.

GINA  
Who are you? Are you --

NICKY  
Yeah, I'm Nicky. Pack a bag. We're going to Chicago.

GINA  
Chicago? What for?

NICKY  
Need to get you new identities, and the best guy I know is there.

**MONTAGE -- NEW IDS**

-- Nicky and Gina drive to Chicago to get new IDs.  
-- Nicky exits I-65, drives to the Hyatt, and checks in.  
-- He and Gina take a boat tour around the city.  
-- He tours the museums and walks along Lakeshore Drive.  
-- He returns to the hotel, eats dinner, and goes to bed.  
-- In the morning, he drives Gina to see the Tailor at his print shop to get new IDs.

**END OF MONTAGE**

**INT. PRINT SHOP (CHICAGO) -- DAY**

Nicky walks in and is greeted by SAL (50, heavysset, with a discerning eye and no hair on his head).

SAL  
Nicky! Long time, my friend.

NICKY  
Sal the Tailor. How's it going?

Tommy rubs his stomach and smiles. Nicky returns the smile.

NICKY (CONT'D)  
Looks like life's been good.

SAL  
I don't know about life, but my  
wife's cooking has. So tell me what  
I can do for you.

Nicky looks around to make sure no one is there, then leans forward and whispers to Sal.

NICKY  
I need two new IDs for my friend  
beside me and one for me. And I need  
the works: licenses, passports, and  
clean credit cards. And you better  
figure on birth certificates and  
social security cards too.

SAL  
No problem. Let's go in the back  
and get the pictures. I'm not busy,  
so it will only take me a day to  
get you the finished product.

**INT. TOMMY'S PRINT SHOP (CHICAGO) -- NEXT DAY**

Nicky drops by Sal's print shop and picks up the IDs, then he and Gina head back to Indianapolis.

**EXT. CAR (INDIANAPOLIS) -- DAY**

NICKY  
Gina, you need to live by new rules  
if you want to stay alive.

GINA  
I did all right for a long time.

NICKY  
But now Tito's out to kill you.  
(a beat)  
If you want to be safe, you can't  
have contact with anyone from the  
past. No phone calls and no  
letters. You can't work at the same  
job. Everything must be new, or  
they'll track you down.

GINA

I thought Tito thinks I'm dead.

NICKY

He does for now, but that might not last. To be safe, do as I say.

GINA

I don't like Indianapolis.

NICKY

It's a good place to hide. Big enough but not too big. And four interstates that can zip you to a lot of places in a hurry: Chicago, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Detroit, Louisville, and more.

**INT. CATALDI'S RESTAURANT (BENSONHURST) -- DAY**

Tony and Paulie sit at a table and order lunch while drinking coffee. Tito comes in and joins them.

TITO

Hey, Paulie, why don't you watch the car. Let me talk to Tony.

Tito waits for Paulie to leave, then leans close and lowers his voice.

TITO (CONT'D)

That thing we talked about before? It went good. Your boy did okay.

TONY

You mean Nicky? With the broad?

TITO

Yeah, the same Nicky you introduced me to.

TONY

If you didn't see the body, you paid for something you never got. But who cares? If it took care of your problem, that's all that matters.

TITO

My men saw it. And it was in the papers.

TONY

Don't believe everything you read in the papers, Tito. Stories are easy to plant. And eyewitnesses are often mistaken. All I'm saying is, Nicky didn't kill no broad.

TITO

I'm gonna check this out. In the meantime, have Nicky watched. I want to know where he goes, what he does, what he eats, everything. If he fucked me ...

TONY

I'm sure it had nothing to do with you, Tito. It's the broad thing.

TITO

Find out, Tony. If he didn't kill this broad, kill them both. Get anyone you need.

**EXT. CATALDI'S RESTAURANT (BENSONHURST) -- DAY**

Paulie stands by the car waiting for Tony. Tito storms out of the restaurant and rushes by. Tony is right behind him and joins Paulie.

PAULIE

What happened? Tito stormed out of there like he wanted to kill someone.

TONY

Just the normal.

PAULIE

Hey, Tony, don't give me that shit. What happened?

TONY

All right, Paulie, but this stays between us.

(a beat)

Nicky was supposed to take out one of Tito's problems -- a woman down in Pennsylvania -- but he didn't do it.

PAULIE

You tellin' me Nicky is a shooter?

TONY

You heard it right. The problem is he didn't do the job. Now Tito's pissed and Nicky's fucked.

PAULIE

What are we gonna do? We can't let anything happen to Nicky. I don't give a shit about Tito. This is Nicky we're talking about.

TONY

You don't give a shit about Tito? Who the fuck pays for your house? Who sends your kids to private school?

(MORE)

TONY (CONT'D)

(a beat)

Don't worry. I got a plan. If we get the girl, we can convince Tito to leave Nicky alone.

Tony pats Paulie's arm, then heads for his car.

TONY (CONT'D)

I'll call you later.

**INT. TITO'S HOUSE -- DAY**

Manny enters carrying a folded newspaper. He opens it and shows it to Tito.

MANNY

I been checking the papers every day like you said, and today -- bingo -- a retraction on Gina's murder. I don't know how it happened, but I'll get on it.

TITO

I want Tony in charge of this. Give him four guys and make sure Johnny Muck is one of them.

**INT. JERRY'S BAR -- DAY**

Nicky enters and waves to the bartender, then he joins Tony at a table in the corner.

NICKY

What's up, Tony? Why'd you call?

TONY

I needed someone to talk to, so who better than my oldest friend.

NICKY

What can I help with?

Tony is silent for a few seconds, then he lowers his head and sighs, a grief-stricken expression on his face.

TONY

Nicky, when I was young and addicted to drugs, I did a lot of things I'm not proud of -- things I wish I'd never done. Some of them still haunt me. I think of them every night and wish they never happened, but no matter how much I wish, the memories don't go away.

NICKY

Talk to me. All of us have skeletons buried somewhere. Whatever it is, you can get over it.

TONY

I don't know. I've tried. This is something that can't be forgiven.

Nicky leans forward and lowers his voice.

NICKY

Tony, try me. I can forgive anything -- well, almost anything. If somebody hurt you or Bugs or Angie, I'd find it tough to forgive. I can't think of anything else.

Tony nods, then orders another round of limoncellos. He closes his eyes and looks at the ceiling.

TONY

This might be as bad, Nicky. The night Mick got shot, you did the right thing. You stayed and helped. I ran like a coward, and I can't get that out of my head.

Nicky takes a sip of his drink and pats Tony's hand.

NICKY

I held a grudge for a while, but it's long ago been forgiven. Hell, we were barely more than kids. Don't give it another thought.

Nicky slugs the rest of his drink and stares.

NICKY (CONT'D)

If that's all you wanted, I've got to get back to work.

Nicky tosses a twenty on the table and starts to leave, but Tony grabs his arm and stops him.

TONY

Hang on, Nicky. That's not the only reason I invited you. Sit down. You've got to hear this.

Nicky sits back down, a confused look on his face.

TONY (CONT'D)

I'm not supposed to know this, but that broad you were supposed to take care of -- Tito knows it didn't happen.

NICKY

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

TONY

Forget what I know or don't know. Just listen. She's been spotted by one of Tito's men. I don't know where, and I don't know anything else. What I know is that Tito is going nuts.

NICKY

Are we on camera or something? Not that I don't appreciate your concern because you really seem upset, but trust me, there's nothing to worry about. I'm a union rep. And speaking of that, union reps have to work, so I'll see ya' later.

Tony dials the phone as Nicky exits the bar.

TONY

I want to know where he goes.

Nicky drives to the airport and books a flight. He calls Gina while he's waiting to board the plane.

NICKY

Gina, it's Nicky. Get out, now!

GINA (V.O.)

What? Why?

NICKY

Tito knows where you are. Pack a bag with your money, the evidence, and whatever else you need. Go to the airport and meet me at the United gate for Chicago.

GINA (V.O.)

They'll look at the airport.

NICKY

Maybe. But they can't get guns through security. You'll be safe until I see you. If anyone approaches you, scream as loud as you can.

GINA (V.O.)

But the evidence is a gun, and it's not with me.

NICKY

Don't worry. We'll get it later.

GINA (VO)

Hurry, Nicky. I'm scared.

**INT. TONY'S HOUSE -- DAY**

Tony is sitting in his living room. When the phone rings, he answers right away.

UNKNOWN CALLER (VO)  
He got on a flight to Indianapolis.

TONY  
Okay, thanks.

Tony makes a call.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Get help and go to the Indianapolis airport. I'll fill you in later.

**INT. INDIANAPOLIS AIRPORT -- DAY -- LATER**

Gina jumps when her cell phone rings, but then answers it.

GINA (VO)  
(meek voice)  
Nicky?

NICKY  
Walk calmly from where you are and exit the airport. I'll pick you up at the entrance.

GINA (VO)  
I'll have to leave security.

NICKY  
I know. I'll meet you there. Walk slowly. And remember what I said. If anyone bothers you -- scream.

Nicky watches from the ticketing area as Gina enters. He walks up behind her and grabs her arm. She gasps.

NICKY (CONT'D)  
It's all right. It's just me. You did good. No one followed you.

GINA  
Thank God, you're here. I'm scared.

NICKY  
Stay scared. This is far from over. We have to get out of here.

GINA  
I feel safe now. They wouldn't --

NICKY  
We're not safe. We'll never be safe. This is the mob, Gina. Our only hope is to stay hidden.



GINA  
Where will we go?

NICKY  
We'll get a rental and drive  
somewhere. Probably Cincinnati. I'd  
like to go to Chicago, but Tito has  
a lot of friends there.

And while we drive, you need to think about where you'd like  
to go. No big mob cities. So no New York, Philly, Boston,  
Baltimore, Chicago, San Francisco, St. Louis, Kansas City --

GINA  
Is there any place decent?

NICKY  
That leaves plenty of choices:  
Denver, Houston, Phoenix, San  
Diego, Dallas, Seattle,  
Minneapolis, Portland ...

GINA  
I can't live in Minnesota.

NICKY  
Me neither. Too cold. And Houston,  
Dallas, and Phoenix are too hot.  
Seattle and Portland are too rainy.

GINA  
How about Cleveland? It's not far.

NICKY  
That's on the 'off' list.

GINA  
You didn't mention Cleveland.

NICKY  
You didn't let me finish. If you  
had, I would have said: Buffalo,  
Cleveland, New Orleans and more.

GINA  
You think you're a clever fuck,  
don't you?

NICKY  
I think you've got a filthy mouth.

Gina draws her knees up and cries.

GINA  
I wish you killed me in Hershey.  
Why didn't you?

NICKY  
Gina, I'm sorry. Really.

He arrives at the Cincinnati airport, parks in a long-term lot, and takes a shuttle to the Marriott.

**INT. MARRIOTT HOTEL -- NIGHT**

Nicky checks into a room using fake IDs. The room has two queen-sized beds. After settling in, Gina takes a shower and comes out wrapped in a towel. She ties her hair in a bun.

NICKY  
What can I do to convince you that  
I'm sorry, Gina?

GINA  
Why didn't you kill me in Hershey?

NICKY  
I was gonna lie, but the truth is I  
came close. At the last minute you  
did something that reminded me of a  
girl I loved.

Gina leans forward and kisses Nicky on the forehead.

GINA  
That's sweet. See, you're not as  
bad as you pretend to be.  
(a beat)  
Now hand me that lotion.

Nicky gives the lotion to Gina, and she rubs it on her feet.

NICKY  
Want me to do that? I give a good  
foot massage. At least, I once did.

GINA  
Do your best, Mr. Fusco, but be  
warned, I'm a taskmaster when it  
comes to foot massages.

Nicky dabs lotion on his hands and rubs them together, then he massages it into her skin. She rolls over, her foot brushing against him. He lies next to Gina and kisses her passionately. She returns the kiss and wraps her legs around him.

Nicky continues to kiss her, then he and Gina make passionate love, twice. Lying on the bed, Nicky runs his fingernails up and down Gina's side. He stares into the distance as he does.

GINA (CONT'D)  
What are you thinking about?

NICKY  
I'm wondering how Tito found us.

GINA  
So it's us now?

He kisses her, then kisses her again, and runs his hand between her legs. He rubs her gently.

NICKY  
Maybe it is.

GINA  
How do you think he found us?

NICKY  
I think it may have been my fault.  
If I were Tito, I'd have let it  
leak that I knew where you were,  
then I'd have me followed, hoping  
it would lead to you.

GINA  
And you think that's what he did?

NICKY  
Maybe so. My friend told me Tito  
found you. Now I have to wonder if  
he was in on it.

GINA  
Now that you're under my spell, do  
me a favor.

NICKY  
Name it.

GINA  
I want to live in Philly. My father  
lived there for years, and I know the  
area -- the restaurants, the churches,  
the stores and where to shop.

Nicky shakes his head vehemently.

NICKY  
Philly is a definite no.

GINA  
Then how about Boston?

NICKY  
Another no.

GINA  
Okay, out of NY, Chicago,  
Cleveland, and Baltimore, which one  
is safest?

NICKY  
None of them are safe.

GINA  
I didn't ask that. I asked which of  
those were the safest.

Nicky thinks, then shakes his head.

NICKY

Of the ones you mentioned, Cleveland is a reasonable compromise, but I still don't like it.

GINA

I could be happy in Cleveland. It's not high on my list, but it could do. My father and I spent a couple years there and it wasn't bad.

Nicky looks at her for a long time.

NICKY

Why did you live in so many places?

GINA

It wasn't that many, but the reason is because my father was on the run.

NICKY

From the locals or the Feds?

GINA

From Tito.

Nicky turns and stares in surprise.

NICKY

Tito? Why?

GINA

Dad worked for Tito, but he wanted out, so one night, he took off with copies of Tito's books, copies which would be damning in the hands of the district attorney. Tito came after him just for leaving.

(a beat)

If he knew my father took his books or had his gun, he'd have looked a lot harder.

NICKY

His gun?

GINA

That's what I blackmailed Tito with. Tito gave my father a gun he used to kill an accountant who wasn't compliant. He asked my father to get rid of it, but he kept it for insurance.

NICKY

Now I know why he wants you so badly. That gun could do him in.

Nicky laughs, then he stands and paces. He pours himself a drink and paces some more.

NICKY (CONT'D)

All right. Here's the deal. I don't like it, but if we go to Cleveland, you have to do everything I say, and I mean everything. No calls to anyone you ever knew. No job that is even remotely related. No letters to family or friends. No social media. No publicity of any kind.

GINA

Okay. You've got a deal.

**EXT. RANCH HOUSE IN CITY (CLEVELAND, OHIO) -- DAY**

Gina stands outside of a ranch house and talks to a Realtor. Nicky walks up to Gina as they speak.

NICKY

Is this the one you like?

GINA

It's perfect. We can walk to the fruit stand, and there's a butcher and a bakery nearby. It's the one I want.

NICKY

I'll go along with you, but only because that bakery has sfogliatelle.

REALTOR

I'll have the paperwork tomorrow. You can move in within a week.

**INT. RANCH HOUSE (CLEVELAND) -- DAY**

Nicky walks in the door carrying several bags from the bakery. He grabs a few plates from the cabinet and sets them on the kitchen table.

NICKY

Guess what? I brought you cannoli. And on the way home, I was thinking that maybe we should get that Catholic wedding you wanted.

GINA

Are you proposing again?

Nicky gets on his knees and looks up.

NICKY

I know it hasn't been long. And I know you've probably got a lot of questions, but yeah, I guess I am.

Gina looks down at him and gives him her sexiest smile.

GINA

I'll think on it. But there are other positions I'd rather have you in.

Nicky gets up and kisses her, then leads her toward the bedroom. After plopping on the bed, they make love.

**INT. NICKY'S HOUSE -- DAY**

Nicky enters the bedroom, carrying a breakfast tray. Gina is lying on the bed, just stirring from sleep. She rubs her eyes when he turns the lights on.

NICKY

Wake up, lazy. Room service.

GINA

What? What's this?

Nicky sets a breakfast tray on her lap. The tray contains bacon, eggs, toast, and a cup of coffee. It has a small vase in the corner holding one red rose.

NICKY

Your favorite breakfast, plus a red rose for a beautiful lady.

Gina props herself up and situates the tray on her lap.

GINA

Oh, my God, Nicky. I can't believe it. No one's ever done anything like this for me.

NICKY

Get used to it. I'm tired of giving foot massages for sex.

GINA

Nicky, you know I love you. And if you're serious about that proposal, I'll make a deal. Go with me to confession, and I'll give it real consideration. I just don't want to rush into things.

Nicky nods and kisses her cheek.

NICKY

I'll go. Now, sit. I've got another surprise but first, tell me where the gun is.

GINA

In a safe deposit box with my money.

NICKY  
We could put Tito away for good  
with that.

GINA  
No way. He'd kill us.

NICKY  
He already wants to kill us. If we  
put him away, he won't be able to.  
Besides, I know a cop in Brooklyn  
who can help.

GINA  
I told Tito if he paid me, I'd  
forget him.

NICKY  
And where has that gotten you? On the  
run, hiding, afraid to do anything.  
We need to put this to bed.

GINA  
Can you trust this cop?

NICKY  
Definitely. We can get the gun on  
Friday.

GINA  
I'm not testifying.

NICKY  
You may have to. But first we'll  
turn the gun over.

Nicky calls Bugs. The phone rings three times before he  
answers.

NICKY (CONT'D)  
Bugs, it's me.

FRANKIE  
Nicky, where the hell are you? You  
had me worried to death, you prick.

NICKY  
Sorry, Bugs, but listen, I need help.

FRANKIE  
Anything. Name it.

NICKY  
Good old Bugs. You don't even ask  
what I want, and you're ready to  
help. The situation is, I'm with a  
girl, and she's in trouble.

FRANKIE  
What can I do?

NICKY

Tito's after her. He tried killing her already because she has evidence that would put him away. Give me an address, and I'll mail it to you.

FRANKIE

I'll get you the address. And don't worry, I've got your back.

NICKY

Me too, Bugs. Me too.

**EXT COFFEE SHOP (BROOKLYN) -- DAY**

Frankie drives to a local coffee shop and calls Tony.

FRANKIE

Tony, I know Tito's looking for Nicky. I need to know why?

Tony looks from side to side and sighs.

TONY (VO)

I'll tell you, but I don't want any cop shit. This is between friends.

FRANKIE

That's fine. Tell me.

TONY

Some broad's got something on Tito, and Nicky's helping her. Tito put out a hit on both of them.

FRANKIE

And you didn't tell me?

TONY (VO)

There's nothing I can do. That's why I've been trying to find Nicky. The last I heard, he was in Kansas City, but I don't know where.

Frankie shakes his head.

FRANKIE

He's not there now. He called me from Cleveland the other night.

TONY

Bugs, can you get him a message? Tell him Tito's looking for him, so he needs to be careful.

FRANKIE

I'll get it to him. In the meantime, if you hear anything, let me know. I'll do the same.



**EXT. TONY'S CAR -- DAY**

Tony gets in his car and dials the phone.

TONY  
Bobby, take down this number -- 555-4624. Tell our guy to get phone records of all calls to or from Cleveland, and I want the address too.

**INT. CATALDI'S RESTAURANT (BENSONHURST) -- DAY**

Anna Cataldi seats Tony when he enters. She shows him to the back room, and he sits at the table next to Tito.

TITO  
Any news?

TONY  
All we know is they're in Cleveland.

TITO  
Staking out churches worked in Hershey.

Tony shakes his head.

TONY  
Too many churches in Cleveland. We'd need a hundred men.

Tony slaps his hand on the table.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Sfogliatelle!

TITO  
You know they don't serve it here.

TONY  
Not here. But it's Nicky's favorite. He can't go a week without it. And I'd bet there aren't too many places in Cleveland that sell it, so we stake them out and wait.

TITO  
You're a genius, Tony. Get it done. And make sure to tell everyone if they have a chance to get Gina, do it. We can get him later.

TONY  
I don't know, Tito. I wouldn't piss Nicky off like that.

TITO  
He's one man, for Christ's sake.

**INT. NICKY'S HOUSE (CLEVELAND) -- DAY**

Nicky exits the front door and turns to holler to Gina.

NICKY  
Hey, babe. I'll see you shortly.

GINA  
Where are you going?

NICKY  
To the bakery, then we're leaving  
for church.

GINA  
I'm dressing now, but I'll be ready  
when you get back. And don't forget  
to pick up cannoli.

NICKY  
Promise sexual favors, and I might.

GINA  
The favors I'll promise, but don't  
act like this is for me. You're  
only going for sfogliatelle.  
Sometimes I think you like eating  
that more than other things.

NICKY  
Goddamn. That hurt.

GINA  
Because I'm right?

NICKY  
I guess I'd choose you, but  
sfogliatelle comes in close.

GINA  
Really? I'll remember that tonight.

**EXT. BAKERY BY NICKY'S HOUSE -- DAY**

Nino Tortella sits in the back of a car. Two others are up  
front. He leans forward and taps Tommy Devin on the shoulder.

NINO TORTELLA  
Tommy, what's your take? That him?

TOMMY DEVIN  
No doubt. I saw him at the hall.

Nino sits back and dials his phone.

NINO  
Bingo!

JOHNNY MUCK  
Where?

NINO  
Bakery. Like you said.

JOHNNY MUCK  
Don't let him spot you.

NINO  
Don't worry, he --

JOHNNY MUCK  
And don't try anything. If he suspects something, he'll kill you ten times before you can think of what to do. Believe me, you don't want him on your ass. Just follow him. I want to know where he lives, and I need to find the girl.

Johnny Muck drives to meet Nino and the others. He parks his car, then gets in the other car with Nino and the rest of them.

JOHNNY MUCK (CONT'D)  
Park around the corner. And keep the car out of sight.

TOMMY DEVIN  
Johnny, Tony said to wait until we could get them both.

Johnny turns to the other passengers: Nino, Donnie and Renzo.

JOHNNY MUCK  
I've got other orders from Tito. If we can get her, we do it.

**EXT./INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH (CLEVELAND) -- DAY**

Nicky parks the car, and he and Gina walk toward the church.

GINA  
By the way, I'm going to confession first. That way, I won't have to wait soooo long for you to finish.

Gina goes up the steps, turns, and points to Nicky.

GINA (CONT'D)  
Wait out here, and don't chicken out.

Nicky watches as she walks into the church, head up high. While Gina is inside, Nicky paces up and down the sidewalk. Finally, she comes out. Nicky rushes to her and hugs her.

NICKY  
Get all those sins absolved?

GINA  
 (whispers)  
 Now that I'm cleansed of sin, maybe  
 we should do something nasty to  
 taint our souls.

NICKY  
 You're a bad influence on me. At  
 least wait for me to confess.

GINA  
 I'm staying out here to smoke. I  
 have a feeling you'll be a while.

As Gina smokes, a car pulls to the curb. Three men get out.  
 The tall one wears a hat and scarf. Gina nods and smiles.

TALL ONE  
 Good morning.

Gina turns to say hello and panics when she sees other men.  
 She runs toward a neighbor's house.

JOHNNY MUCK  
 Now!

**INT. CHURCH CONFSSIONAL — DAY**

Nicky jumps up and runs out of the confessional when he  
 hears gunfire.

**EXT. CHURCH -- DAY**

Bullets streak past as he opens the church doors. He dives to  
 the ground and fires back, possibly nicking one. The assailants  
 run to two waiting cars and continue to fire at Nicky.

The car pulls away and Nicky runs to Gina, who is lying on  
 the ground. He checks her pulse at the wrist and neck, but  
 she's dead -- shot in the head and heart.

Nicky cries as he kneels next to her. He holds her in his  
 arms and squeezes as he embraces her. Her blood smears his  
 clothes. He leans down, kisses her on the lips and whispers.

NICKY  
 I love you, Gina.

The priest walks up and puts his hand on Nicky's shoulder.

PRIEST  
 The cops will be here any minute.

NICKY  
 Do what you need to. It makes no  
 difference.

**MONTAGE -- TIME TO PAY**

-- Nicky gets in the car and drives off. Screeching tires can be heard, and he punches the steering wheel as he rounds the corner.

-- Nicky goes to his house and gets guns.

-- Nicky rummages through drawers to get IDs.

-- Nicky drives east and north until he gets to NY.

**END OF MONTATGE**

**INT. DONNIE AMATO'S HOUSE (BROOKLYN) -- CURRENT DAY**

Nicky opens Donnie's door and goes inside. He hammers holes in the drywall two feet apart and puts a thick rope through the holes.

He hears a car pull up as he finishes, and sits on a sofa behind the door.

Donnie enters the house, glances to his left and sees holes in the wall, chest high, two feet apart.

DONNIE AMATO  
What the hell?

Nicky hits Donnie with a bat, knocking him to the floor. He drags him to the wall and ties him with a thick rope. When Amato stirs, Nicky puts a knife to his throat.

NICKY  
I need a name.

DONNIE AMATO  
Fuck you. Who do you --

Nicky uses a heavy three-pronged fork and shoves it into Donnie's mouth, breaking several front teeth.

NICKY  
If you don't answer, I'll shoot you.

Donnie spits blood, then nods.

DONNIE AMATO  
Got it.

Nicky squirts lighter fluid between Donnie's toes.

DONNIE AMATO (CONT'D)  
What the fuck are you doing? I don't know what kind of freak you are, but I got friends.

NICKY  
And I only want the name of one.

DONNIE AMATO

I told you. I don't know.

Nicky lights a match and drops it on the floor. He waits through several seconds of screaming, then puts the fire out and waits for Donnie to stop.

DONNIE AMATO (CONT'D)

What the fuck? Are you nuts?

NICKY

I'll ask again. Don't lie to me or it will be worse.

DONNIE AMATO

Okay, what do you want?

NICKY

I already told you. The name of the one who planned it.

DONNIE AMATO

All right. All right. Nino T.

Nicky shakes his head, then jams the prongs into Donnie's mouth, busting more teeth.

NICKY

You shouldn't have lied.

He squirts lighter fluid on Donnie's balls.

DONNIE AMATO

Johnny Muck. It was Muck! That's all I know.

NICKY

Johnny Muck? Now I believe you.

Nicky soaks a rag in lighter fluid and shoves it into Donnie's mouth, then throws a lit match on Donnie's balls. The flames rush up and catch onto the rag in his mouth.

NICKY (CONT'D)

I'll set your soul free, Donnie. How about that?

He waits for Donnie to die, then smothers the flames and spreads evidence. He shoots Donnie -- once in the heart and once in the head, then makes the sign of the cross.

NICKY (CONT'D)

An eye for an eye, and then some.

**EXT/INT. DONNIE AMATO'S HOUSE -- TWO DAYS LATER**

Frankie is sitting on the stoop when a car pulls to the curb. Lou gets out and walks slowly to the house.

FRANKIE  
I knew it was you, Mazzetti. You  
drive like an old woman.

LOU MAZZETTI  
Didn't figure Donnie was in any rush.

Lou sits on the stoop and holds his hand out.

LOU MAZZETTI (CONT'D)  
Hit me with a smoke, Donovan.

FRANKIE:  
You just threw one out.

LOU MAZZETTI:  
Yeah, well I'm old.

FRANKIE  
What the hell does that have to do  
with anything?

LOU MAZZETTI  
Old people smoke a lot. We don't  
give a shit.

Frankie hands Lou a cig, then gestures toward the curb.

FRANKIE  
Looks like Kate pulling up.

Kate opens the car door, and walks confidently to the house.  
Lou starts to follow Kate inside, but stops abruptly when  
she opens the door.

LOU MAZZETTI  
Christ, that stinks.

He ducks back out and covers his mouth and nose.

KATE BURNS:  
Sissies.

LOU MAZZETTI  
She's right, Donovan. We're pussies.

One minute later, Lou walks in with a handkerchief covering  
his mouth.

KATE BURNS  
Covering your face and holding your  
breath will only help for a moment.  
And if your lungs are as bad as I  
suspect, probably less.

LOU MAZZETTI  
Screw you, Kate.

KATE BURNS  
I don't think you have the stamina.  
I've seen you climb stairs.

LOU MAZZETTI  
Well fuck you, then.

KATE BURNS  
Here we go -- male genital response  
mechanism.

LOU MAZZETTI  
Fuck you twice now.

KATE BURNS  
And that's pure fantasy.

FRANKIE  
Did he set Donnie's balls on fire?

KATE BURNS  
He set everything on fire -- feet,  
genitals, mouth.

LOU MAZZETTI  
Whoever did this was a sick fuck.

Frankie walks around the house, searching.

FRANKIE  
You find anything, Lou?

LOU MAZZETTI  
If I knew what you were looking  
for, I'd know.

FRANKIE  
Anything.

Lou pokes Frankie's chest with his finger.

LOU MAZZETTI  
Donovan, we got a shitload of  
reporters gathering outside, and  
you're walking around looking for  
things that ain't here. You want to  
tell me what's going on?

FRANKIE  
All right. But this is you and me.

LOU MAZZETTI  
Convince me of something.

FRANKIE  
When we were kids, my friend Nicky  
used to leave rat shit to let  
people know we were the ones who  
did the crime. Another time, Tony  
put a rat in a guy's fridge.



LOU MAZZETTI  
That's it? Rat shit? There's rat  
shit in every home in New York. I  
got it in my house.

FRANKIE  
There was also a dead rat at  
Nino's -- in the fridge.

LOU MAZZETTI  
If you're basing your hunches on dead  
rats? You're too stupid to be a cop.

**EXT. AMATO'S HOUSE -- DAY**

Frankie storms out and walks into a wall of reporters . He holds his hands up to block the camera lights and pushes away the mics. One of the reporters, TOM MASON (50s, Channel 3 News) shoves a mic in front of Frankie.

TOM MASON  
Detective, is this a mob hit? Is it  
connected with Nino Tortella's murder?

FRANKIE  
Can't say and won't say. When we're  
ready, we'll make a statement.

Kate catches up to Frankie just as he is getting in the car.

KATE BURNS  
Donovan, I know you've got a lot on  
your mind, but if you ever want to  
just chat, call me.

Frankie looks at Kate and shrugs.

KATE BURNS (CONT'D)  
I talk to dead people all day,  
Detective. When I get someone who  
talks back, I listen.

FRANKIE  
You up for dinner?

KATE (V.O.)  
As long as you realize I can't do  
any favors -- work-wise or sexual.

FRANKIE  
I just need you to listen. I'm in a  
messy situation.

KATE (V.O.)  
Listen, I can do. I'm good at it.

**INT. SENZU RESTAURANT -- NIGHT**

Kate enters and looks for Frankie. He is sitting at a private table near the back. She walks over, and sits across from him.

KATE BURNS.  
I'm surprised you got here so early.

FRANKIE  
I guess that tells you how eager I am to get started.

KATE BURNS.  
No time like the present.

Kate and Frankie both order wine, then Frankie starts.

FRANKIE  
Kate, you know how I don't like talking to people about problems. You're the only one I've ever felt comfortable with.

KATE  
I'm flattered, Frankie. But if you remember, it was you who broke off our relationship. I felt we had a good thing going.

FRANKIE  
I realize that, and I take the blame, but right now, I've got a different problem. In fact, it's more of a dilemma.

KATE BURNS.  
Explain.

FRANKIE  
This may sound stupid, but when I was a kid, I swore an oath with several other kids to be friends forever. We've stuck by it all these years, but now I think one of them is breaking that oath, and I believe the murders we're looking at are the results. The dilemma part is that going after him puts me in conflict with my oath as a cop.

KATE BURNS.  
Frankie, I know what you're saying, but I can't understand how you see it as a problem. Somebody is killing people. It's your job to catch them.

FRANKIE  
I know it sounds simple, Kate, but it's not. At least, not to me.  
(MORE)

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

Maybe if you grew up like we did,  
you'd understand. Swearing an oath  
in our neighborhood was meaningful.

KATE BURNS.

Frankie, why did you become a cop?  
Think about that?

FRANKIE

I don't even know why. I married  
young and was about to get divorced.  
My two best friends were on the  
wrong side of the law, and I think I  
just made up my mind not to go  
there. Maybe it wasn't because I  
wanted to be a cop, more that I  
didn't want to be a criminal.

Kate reaches over, holds Frankie's hands, and looks into his  
eyes.

KATE BURNS.

Frankie, I like you. We had great  
times when we went out. And my  
judgment is usually good about people.  
When it comes down to it, I'm sure  
you're going to do the right thing.

(a beat)

Just keep in mind that technically,  
you'd be breaking the law if you  
didn't bring him in.

Frankie sighs and nods.

FRANKIE

Tell me what I don't know. But  
thanks, I appreciate the confidence.

**INT. POLICE STATION -- DAY**

Frankie sits at his desk and searches the files. He suddenly  
stops, picks up the phone and dials Lou.

FRANKIE

Mazzetti, I've been thinking since  
we left Amato's house. We're missing  
something.

LOU (V.O.)

I don't know what we're missing.  
We've been over it a thousand  
times, and the same questions go  
unanswered. 'Why were the victims  
tortured like they were?' and 'How  
did they know each other?'

FRANKIE

Yeah, but Tommy Devin wasn't  
tortured. Why?

Lou cocks his head to the side.

LOU (V.O.)  
 Maybe we're asking the wrong question. We should look at what Devin had in common with the others -- he was shot once in the head and once in the heart.

FRANKIE  
 Goddamn, Lou. That's it! That's why he's doing it. I've got to call Carol.

Frankie disconnects the call with Lou and dials Carol.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)  
 Carol, get me the number for Cleveland homicide.

Frankie is still searching files when Carol walks in and hands him a slip of paper with a name, number, and address.

CAROL  
 One of their best detectives -- Eddie Pollard.

FRANKIE  
 Thanks. You're a doll.

Frankie dials the number Carol gave him.

EDDIE POLLARD (V.O.)  
 Homicide.

FRANKIE  
 Detective, this is Donovan, Brooklyn Homicide. I've got reason to believe one of our cases ties to Cleveland. Got any unsolved cases with female victims?

POLLARD (V.O.)  
 Which doll do you want, Detective? You just hit my number-one pain-in-the-ass case.

FRANKIE  
 What have you got?

POLLARD (V.O.)  
 It was about six to eight months ago. Woman shot in front of a church. Age 34. Mary Krasner.

FRANKIE  
 How was she killed?

POLLARD (V.O.)  
 Multiple shots to the head and chest -- .38s and 9 mms.

FRANKIE  
Any witnesses?

POLLARD (V.O.)  
A priest with nothing to say.

FRANKIE  
All right. Thanks.

**EXT/INT. FRANKIE'S CAR -- DAY**

Frankie calls Tony on the way home.

FRANKIE  
Someone tried killing Nicky.

TONY (V.O.)  
What? Tell me.

FRANKIE  
You fucked up, Tony. You missed him.  
Now he won't stop until he gets you.  
And he'll save you for last.

TONY (V.O.)  
Let him try. I'm not Nino Tortella.

FRANKIE  
Tony, you're dead. You're dead, and  
you don't even know it. Did you  
forget who you're fucking with?

**EXT. POLICE STATION -- NEXT DAY**

Frankie pulls up to the station and sees Lou standing on the sidewalk near the curb. He rolls down his window.

FRANKIE  
Lou, what are you doing outside?

LOU  
It's our lucky day, Donovan. We got  
a body in Valley Stream. I know it's  
not our jurisdiction, but we got a  
special invitation from the shooter.  
He asked for you specifically.

Forty minutes later Frankie pulls up to the victim's house.

**INT. RANCH HOUSE (VALLEY STREAM) -- DAY**

Frankie and Lou brush aside the crime-scene tape and step inside. A local cop is standing duty.

COP ON SCENE  
You Donovan?

FRANKIE

Yeah, and this is my partner, Lou Mazzetti.

COP ON SCENE

I'm Bobby Tilton. And if you follow me, I'll introduce you to the late Gianni Mucchiatto, also known as Johnny Muck. I didn't know him but he must have pissed somebody off.

Frankie steps into the room and gags.

FRANKIE

Jesus Christ!

Johnny Muck's wrists and ankles are bound, and he is nailed to the floor. A nail is hammered into his face also.

LOU

Some friend you got there, Donovan.

BOBBY TILTON

You know who did this?

FRANKIE

I know one of the suspects.

BOBBY TILTON

You plan on sharing, Detective?

FRANKIE

I'll send the files. We've got five.

BOBBY TILTON

Five? How come we haven't heard shit about this?

FRANKIE

FBI thinks there are ties to bigger fish and want us to keep quiet. Shouldn't have even told you that. Anything on this guy? Any connections?

BOBBY TILTON

Not even a parking ticket.

FRANKIE

Then he was a shooter, and he must have been good to stay so clean. Let me know if you get anything.

BOBBY TILTON

You got it. And you do the same.

FRANKIE

Lou, I'm dropping you off and going to see Tony.

LOU  
And I'm not invited?

FRANKIE  
Not a chance. He probably won't talk to me. If you're there, he definitely won't.

But don't forget to ask the lieu for a surveillance team on Tito. And tell him it needs to be more than two guys.

**EXT. CATALDI'S RESTAURANT (BENSONHURST) -- DAY**

Frankie walks in and joins Tony and Paulie at a table.

FRANKIE  
I came to see if you heard about Johnny Muck.

TONY  
Don't know any Johnny Muck.

FRANKIE  
How about you, Paulie? You know him?

PAULIE  
Can't say I do, Bugs. Why?

FRANKIE  
Guess it doesn't matter since you don't know him. But I'll tell you this -- if he was the last link between you and the dead girl, I'd leave town.

Frankie throws a twenty on the table and stands.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)  
See you guys ... I hope.

As Frankie walks out door, Tony calls Tito.

TONY  
Something happen to Muck?

TITO  
I haven't heard from him, although I wasn't expecting to. But this isn't a good line. See me later.

**INT. TITO'S HOUSE -- DAY**

Tony parks the car and rushes into Tito's house.

TITO  
Tony, glad you made it. Something happened to Muck all right. He was butchered. Jesus Christ. Tell him, Manny. Tell him what happened.

MANNY

Nicky tied him up and nailed him to the floor. Crucified him on his own floor.

TITO

Tell it all, Manny. Tony's a big boy.

MANNY

He put nails in his hands, feet, and face.

Manny shakes his head and points a finger at Tito.

MANNY (CONT'D)

I warned you about this. Remember that shit in WWII about waking a sleeping giant? I think you woke won when you killed Gina.

TONY

He's one man, for God's sake.

MANNY

Tell that to Renzo, Tommy, Nino, Donnie, and Muck. Johnny Muck, for Christ's sake! He was a legend, and Nicky killed him.

TITO

Don't worry. I'm gonna kill that fuck.

Tito throws a glass across the patio.

TITO (CONT'D)

Get everybody here. We're gonna find him.

**EXT. PAULIE PERLANO'S HOUSE -- DAY**

Paulie sits at the table, finishing his coffee when the doorbell rings. He gets up and answers it.

PAULIE

Nicky, what are you doin' here?

NICKY

You going to invite me in, Suit?

PAULIE

Come on in.

NICKY

I saw your family leave, or I wouldn't have come.

PAULIE

Yeah, I appreciate that, Nicky. You want coffee?



NICKY  
I could use some.

Nicky follows him to the kitchen, checking everything. He lays his gun on the table.

NICKY (CONT'D)  
You hear what they did, Paulie?

PAULIE  
If you mean about Gina -- I heard.  
I'm sorry. I know she meant a lot.

NICKY  
Meant a lot? She was my wife!

PAULIE  
Shit, Nicky, I didn't know.

NICKY  
As long as I find out you didn't  
have anything to do with it, I  
won't kill you. But keep quiet.

PAULIE  
Can't do that if you're going after  
Tony. I'd do the same for you. I  
swear, Nicky, we never wanted this.  
Tony fucked up. Got in a jam.

NICKY  
Got in a jam?

Nicky picks up the gun and shoves it against Paulie's head.

NICKY (CONT'D)  
Tony killed Gina!

He smacks Paulie in the head with the gun, drawing blood. Paulie falls, bringing his hands to his temple.

PAULIE  
Christ's sake. Don't kill me. I  
don't mind for me, but my kids ...

He blesses himself after standing.

PAULIE (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry about what happened.

Nicky keeps his finger on the trigger, but after about five seconds, he puts the gun away.

PAULIE (CONT'D)  
Tony didn't mean this.

NICKY  
We'll see. Give me the phone.

Nicky takes Paulie's phone and dials the number for Tony.

TONY (VO)  
Suit, where are you?

NICKY  
It's me, Tony.

TONY (VO)  
(weak, pleading)  
That you, Rat?

NICKY  
I'm here with Paulie.

TONY (VO)  
Is he okay?

NICKY  
Did you forget the oath? I didn't.

TONY (VO)  
Fuck you and your stupid oath. That  
was thirty years ago. Grow up.

NICKY  
Wrong answer. But you get a chance  
to give the right one. Did Paulie  
have anything to do with this?

TONY (VO)  
Is he there? Is he hurt?

PAULIE  
I'm okay, Tony, but he's serious.

TONY (VO)  
He didn't know anything.

NICKY  
I'm coming for you, Tony.

TONY (VO)  
Yeah, I know. But don't think I'm  
going down like Nino or Muck.

NICKY  
I'll see you soon.

Nicky hangs up the phone, wipes it clean, and hands it to Paulie. He gulps down his coffee and heads toward the door.

NICKY (CONT'D)  
You're off the hook. I'm glad.

PAULIE  
Can you let Tony off -- for old times?

NICKY  
Can't, Paulie. And you ought to get  
out of here. They got cops all over  
the place.

PAULIE  
Been thinking that anyway. Thanks.

NICKY  
Tell the kids good stories about me,  
will you, Suit? I wouldn't want them  
knowing the bad stuff. And, Suit,  
leave the door unlocked when. I  
might need the house for a few days.

Paulie gives Nicky a hug.

PAULIE  
You got it.

**INT. SURVEILLANCE HOUSE ACROSS FROM TITO'S -- DAY**

Frankie walks up the stairs to where the men are watching. It's a small living room with two men manning surveillance cameras at the windows and one man monitoring a listening device connected to a wire.

FRANKIE  
Any news? What's going on?

SAPPERSTEIN (40s) gestures behind him.

SAPPERSTEIN  
Morreaux broke down and gave us  
more help. We wired Tito's house  
this morning after he left. And  
we've also got Tony Sannullo wired.

FRANKIE  
I can't believe he went for it.

SAPPERSTEIN  
I think he saw that he had little  
choice, Detective.

FRANKIE  
What about Tony's wire? Get anything?

SAPPERSTEIN  
Nothing yet, but we will. Wait! I'm  
getting something.

NICKY (V.O.)  
(heard on wire)  
Get in, Tony.

TONY (V.O.)  
Nicky, what are you doing here?

FRANKIE  
It's Nicky. He's got Tony. Get some  
bodies over there. Shit! Do we know  
where they are?

SAPPERSTEIN  
The 43rd St. parking garage.

Frankie dashes for the door.

FRANKIE  
Get people there. I'm on my way.  
Hang on, Tony.

**EXT. TONY'S CAR -- PARKING GARAGE -- DAY**

Nicky stands behind a concrete pillar, waiting. Tony walks down the ramp and opens his car door. Nicky steps behind him and presses a gun to his back.

NICKY  
Get in and move to the passenger seat.

Nicky climbs behind the wheel, still holding the gun.

TONY  
Get the fuck out of my car.

NICKY  
Don't talk. Just shut-up and enjoy  
the ride.

TONY  
Why are you going this way? Cataldi's  
is left. Where are we going?

NICKY  
You'll see.

**INT. PAULIE PERLANO'S HOUSE -- DAY**

Nicky takes Tony into Paulie's house, now empty.

NICKY  
Don't try anything. I'm not going to  
torture you like I did the others.  
Maybe it's Mamma Rosa. Maybe it's  
the friendship we once had. You  
should thank God for whatever it is.  
(a beat)  
Decide how you want it, Tony. I  
don't have a lot of time.

Tony spits on the floor and scowls.

TONY  
You pitiful fuck. You lived your  
life in my shadow: raised by my  
mother, relied on me for grades,  
got a job with my boss, then you  
fall for a girl you're supposed to  
take out. Well, fuck you, Rat. This  
is the real world.

Nicky lays his gun on the counter and punches Tony.

NICKY  
You dirty fuck. Shooting is too  
good for you. I'm gonna kill you  
with my bare hands.

Tony yanks Nicky's legs from under him.

TONY  
You're not killing anybody today.

They struggle, rolling on floor. Tony hits Nicky with an ashtray and gets on top, pummeling him. Nicky uses his foot as leverage and pushes against the counter to roll Tony off. Nicky grabs the gun and stands. He points it at Tony.

NICKY  
Don't move. Don't even blink.

Nicky starts to pull trigger, but stops.

NICKY (CONT'D)  
Tony, you're --

Tony charges, going for the gun. Nicky instinctively fires. Tony falls to the floor, bleeding badly from the gut.

TONY  
Guess I'm going out the way I want,  
Rat. Had to make it easier for you.  
I knew you'd do it anyway.

Nicky grabs a towel and kneels next to Tony.

NICKY  
Apply pressure. I'll call an  
ambulance.

TONY  
Just get out of here, Rat. You  
can't let them find you.

NICKY  
As much as I hate you for what you  
did, I can't let you die alone.

TONY  
Get outta here. Remember the good  
times we had. I'll be okay.

NICKY  
Why'd you do it?

TONY  
Too many things went wrong, Nicky.  
You'd have killed me anyway. I was  
on drugs then. I didn't mean it.

NICKY  
What are you talking about?

TONY  
Never mind. But you gotta know,  
Bugs didn't do anything. He kept  
the oath. Sorry, Rat. I Didn't want  
it to go like this.

NICKY  
You swear Bugs didn't know.

TONY  
He was trying to give me a heads-  
up, and I traced his calls. I swear  
on my mother's eyes.

NICKY  
On Mamma's eyes? You swear it?

Tony nods.

NICKY (CONT'D)  
You want a priest?

TONY  
Not even if I believed. I don't  
want Mamma seeing me. Shame on me  
for what I've become.

Nicky wipes his eyes with his sleeve.

NICKY  
Shame on both of us, Tony.

Nicky holds Tony in his arms until he dies.

NICKY (CONT'D)  
*Mi dispiace*, Mamma Rosa. I'm so  
sorry.

**EXT. FRANKIE'S CAR -- DAY**

As Frankie drives through Prospect Park, his phone rings.

FRANKIE  
Yeah, Lou.

LOU  
Tony Sannullo's dead.

FRANKIE  
What? Where?

LOU  
Ambulance picked him up at  
Perlano's house.

FRANKIE  
That doesn't make sense. Never  
mind, I'll see you there.

**INT. PAULIE PERLANO'S HOUSE -- DAY**

Lou is already at Paulie's house when Frankie arrives.

LOU  
So where the hell is Perlano? Your  
buddy kill him too?

FRANKIE  
Is his family around?

LOU  
Nobody's seen 'em.

FRANKIE  
Good. It means he's still alive.  
Nicky would never kill his family.

LOU  
I don't know if Nicky did this.  
Looks like there was a fight, and  
Sannullo was shot. But he was shot  
just once in the gut. No head shots  
and no torture. It doesn't fit.

FRANKIE  
That's something, but I don't know.

LOU  
Something else, Donovan. The  
ambulance was called from the house,  
like the shooter made the call.

FRANKIE  
If the shooter made the call, and  
if Tony was still alive, it must  
have been an accident.

LOU  
That's how I see it.

FRANKIE  
Maybe Tony and Paulie fought and  
the gun went off.

LOU  
Whatever you say.

**INT. SURVEILLANCE HOUSE ACROSS FROM TITO'S -- NIGHT**

Frankie parks on the next block. He and Mazzetti walk to the  
surveillance spot above the deli.

A cab drives slowly past Tito's house and parks near the curb. Nicky hides in the back seat. A passenger sits up front.

NICKY  
Any cars parked on the street?

PASSENGER  
All the way up and down.

NICKY  
(to passenger)  
Okay, you're gonna get out here, walk slowly down street and turn right at the corner. Cabbie, you pick him up on the next block.

CABBIE  
What are you doing?

NICKY  
That's my business. Do your part.

The door opens and the passenger gets out. Nicky sneaks out and gets under the car, then crawls up the street to the next car. He continues until he is under Tito's car.

Nicky stays there until the front door to Tito's house opens. It is early morning.

**EXT. TITO'S HOUSE -- DAY**

Nicky hears the doors to the car unlock. The driver starts the car, then beeps. When the back door opens, Nicky rolls out from under the car and opens the back door. He shoves a gun into Tito's face.

NICKY  
Manny, lock the doors and hit the gas. Now!

MANNY  
Where to?

Nicky draws a second gun and presses it against Manny's head.

NICKY  
Just move.

TITO  
You're dead!

Nicky pops Tito with a tranquilizer dart.

MANNY  
What the fuck? You kill him, Nicky?

NICKY  
Just put him out. Take the first right.

(MORE)



NICKY (CONT'D)

If you try anything, you're dead. If we get caught, you're dead. If anything goes wrong, you're dead.

MANNY

We're not getting caught. I been doing this too long.

NICKY

I know. I'm just reminding you. Now, take a right at the second corner, then a quick left. Make sure you lose any tails. You know how to do it.

MANNY

Sorry what they did to Gina.

Nicky stares into the rearview mirror and looks at Manny.

NICKY

That true? About you being sorry?

MANNY

I liked her. She had balls.

NICKY

(laughing)

Yeah, she did. Manny, I don't want to kill you. Do I have to?

MANNY

They won't get a word out of me.

NICKY

If you talk, I'll find you. It'll be worse than Johnny Muck.

Manny holds up his right hand as if swearing.

MANNY

I don't even know you.

NICKY

Do as I say, and you'll be safe. Drive to Red Hook. I've got a car.

MANNY

Just tell me when to stop, Nicky.

**EXT. RED HOOK -- DAY**

Manny pulls into an empty parking lot near a warehouse.

NICKY

Help me get Tito out, then give me your cell and your keys.

MANNY

That all?

NICKY

Manny, look at me. I wasn't fucking with you earlier. You say anything, and I'll find you.

MANNY

You lettin' me go?

NICKY

I said I would.

Nicky opens the car door and gets in.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Manny, if I were you, I'd get out. And if the other bosses get an idea to come after me, tell them I'm through with it. This was between me and Tito.

MANNY

Hey, Nicky. Thanks.

NICKY

Take care, Manny.

**EXT. JOHNNY MUCK'S STREET -- DAY**

Nicky puts Tito in a wheelbarrow and covers him with a blanket. He takes him down to the cellar, then ties him to a table and gags him.

He gets rid of the car and walks back. Tito is lying spread-eagle on the table. Nicky puts on a raincoat and a plastic cover, then drills into Tito's hands. Tito's screams can be heard through the gag. Nicky attaches screws to Tito's hands and feet, then positions a 55-gallon drum above Tito's ass.

Nicky removes the gag.

TITO

I'm gonna kill you.

NICKY

You shouldn't have come after us. But since you did, you should have finished the job. That was Johnny's most important rule.

TITO

Yeah, well I finished the job on that bitch. I hear she died on her back like the whore she was.

Nicky grits his teeth.

NICKY

I'd almost made up my mind to be merciful, but you just ruined that.

Nicky grabs a hammer and spike and puts the gag back in. Afterward, he tapes Tito's mouth.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Tito, you asked if anyone fucked me in prison. I figured you were curious, so I thought I'd let you see what it feels like.

Nicky places a spike into Tito's ass, then positions a 55-gallon drum above it. Nicky fills the drum with water.

NICKY (CONT'D)

That drum is filled with water, making it weigh about 500 pounds. It's held in place by being tied to another drum, equalizing the weight. I'm going to drill a small hole in that other drum. As the water drains,, the drum above you will lower, driving the spike further into your ass. Enjoy.

Nicky watches for a while, then dials Bugs. He's listening to a voicemail from Paulie when the phone rings.

FRANKIE (V.O.)

Yeah?

NICKY

Hell of a way to answer, Bugs.

FRANKIE (V.O.)

Nicky, where are you?

NICKY

Doesn't matter where I am, and I don't even know why I'm calling except maybe to say I'm sorry. Sorry about a lot of things, but mostly I'm sorry about Tony. That was an accident. He came at me.

FRANKIE (V.O.)

You okay? Sounds like you're crying.

NICKY

Jesus Christ, Bugs, he died in my arms.

FRANKIE (V.O.)

Where are you?

NICKY

Right in my arms, and I couldn't save him.

FRANKIE (V.O.)  
Where are you, Nicky?

NICKY  
I'm with Tito. I'm not coming for you, Bugs. Tony told me you had nothing to do with it. Sorry I thought different, just . . . shit, I don't know. I'm fucked up.

FRANKIE (V.O.)  
Nicky --

NICKY  
How did it go so wrong? Everything went so wrong --

FRANKIE (V.O.)  
If you think it went wrong before, believe me, it hasn't started. I'm coming to arrest you.

NICKY  
You won't arrest me, Bugs. I'm done. Tito was the last one.

FRANKIE (V.O.)  
Where are you, Nicky?

Nicky hangs up the phone and Frankie calls Lou.

**INT/EXT. FRANKIE'S CAR -- DAY**

FRANKIE  
Mazzetti, I'm on my way to pick you up. We've got to find Nicky.

LOU (V.O.)  
I'll wait in the parking lot.

The tires squeal as Frankie's car rounds the corner to pick up Lou. He comes to a quick stop.

FRANKIE  
Get in quick, Lou. Nicky's got Tito.

LOU  
Good. I hope he finishes before we get there. Got any idea where he is?

FRANKIE  
Knowing Nicky, he'd go somewhere we wouldn't think to look, somewhere we've already looked.

LOU  
Like a previous murder scene?

FRANKIE  
 Jesus Christ, Lou! That's it. He's at  
 one of their houses. I bet it's Muck.

Frankie does a U-turn and flips on the siren.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)  
 You better run, Rat. I'm comin'.

**INT. JOHNNY MUCK'S HOUSE -- DAY**

Nicky waits until Tito is dead, then he plants the gun Gina had given him. He sees cars pull up and blocks the street.

Nicky runs across the backyard, through a breezeway, then across another street. He ducks into a garage with the door open. He finds gasoline, pulls out his phone and dials 9-1-1.

9-1-1 OPERATOR  
 9-1-1. What's your emergency?

NICKY  
 I'd like to report a fire.

**CUT TO**

Nicky lights the garage on fire, waits for it to catch, then exits.

**CUT TO**

Nicky hides behind shrubbery and watches the firetrucks race past. He then joins a growing crowd of people and makes his way to the subway.

FRANKIE  
 Where the hell is he?

LOU  
 I'd go to the mall. Lots of people  
 and it's only a few minutes away.

FRANKIE  
 That's it! Green Acres Mall is only  
 half a mile from here. I want three  
 men with me.

**INT. GREEN ACRES MALL -- DAY**

Bugs, Sapperstein, and Mazzetti rush into the mall.

FRANKIE  
 Sapperstein, take somebody and go left.  
 Lou, go right. I'm going upstairs.

Nicky sees Bugs coming up the escalator. He makes his way toward the restroom.

Frankie gets off the escalator and scans the crowd in the food court. He sees a man heading toward the rest rooms that looks like Nicky. He follows but doesn't see him. He draws his gun and flashes his badge.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)  
Everyone out. This is police business. Do it now!

After everyone leaves, one stall door remains closed.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)  
Come on out, Nicky. It's over.

NICKY  
I'm unarmed.

Nicky exits the stall with his hands raised.

FRANKIE  
I ought to shoot you right here.

Frankie shoves him against the wall and frisks him.

NICKY  
You won't find anything.

FRANKIE  
I bet I'll find gunshot residue. Washing your hands won't get it off your clothes.

NICKY  
Maybe. But maybe those clothes burned in the fire I heard about.

FRANKIE  
Fuck your maybe, Rat. You're caught.

NICKY  
Caught? For shooting a gun? If you can even prove that.

FRANKIE  
What gun? You don't have a gun. Where's the gun?

NICKY  
I guess I lost it.

FRANKIE  
Turn around, asshole.

Bugs drags him to the sink and places a gun against his head.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)  
You fuck, killing Tony like you did.

NICKY

Don't push this, Bugs. You don't want to push it. I don't need a gun to kill you. But go ahead and shoot me if that's what you want. You already ruined my life.

FRANKIE

Ruined your life? Don't try to put that shit on me. You're the one who turned into scum. It was your choice.

NICKY

My choice?

Nicky moves closer to Bugs.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Nino, Renzo, Tommy, Donnie, Johnny Muck. All those bodies are on you. I wouldn't have killed them if they didn't get to Gina.

(a beat)

And who led them there? You're to blame. Just like everything else.

FRANKIE

What do you mean 'everything else'?

NICKY

Everything. Woodside, prison, me being a shooter. I was clean, Bugs. Me and Angie, we --

FRANKIE

What are you talking about with Woodside?

NICKY

Guess you don't know. Donna came to me that night when I was going to pick up Angie. She told me you were going after Woodside and that they had guns. She begged me to help.

Frankie lowers his gun, and his knees buckle.

FRANKIE

Donna? How did she know they had guns? Jesus Christ, Nicky, why didn't you tell me this?

NICKY

When was I gonna tell you? When you didn't visit me in prison? Or in answer to the letters you didn't write? Besides, it was over. I was in prison.

Nicky shakes head.

NICKY (CONT'D)

We weren't raised like that.  
Besides, you have nothing on me.  
There's more of your DNA on the  
scenes than mine, not to mention  
Tony's, Paulie's, and Tito's.

FRANKIE

Are you done with it?

NICKY

There's nobody left.

FRANKIE

I'm making a judgment call. I don't  
think we have enough evidence, but  
who knows what somebody upstairs  
might think. If I were you, I'd get  
the fuck out of here. In fact, I'd  
disappear for good.

NICKY

Might be hard to disappear with  
cops all over the place.

FRANKIE

Right now, they have nothing on  
you. Even if they find your DNA,  
they have a dozen other people's,  
so you'd be one of many.

Bugs pulls out a smoke and puts it in his mouth. He takes a  
few more drags on his cigarette, then crushes it out.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

You know, you're leaving me in a  
rough spot. I've got no one to pin  
these murders on.

NICKY

Suppose you had Tito's gun, with  
Tito's prints?

FRANKIE

That would be nice, but I don't  
have that.

NICKY

I bet when they search Tito's coat  
they'll find it.

FRANKIE

Another of those damn coincidences?

NICKY

Yeah, and to top it off, I'd bet  
this gun was the one that killed a  
guy named Danny Zenkowski.



FRANKIE  
So who killed Tito?

NICKY  
Must have been a grieving family member of someone he killed. Who knows? You're the detective.

FRANKIE  
Yeah. But how did you know I'd get assigned the cases?

NICKY  
I didn't, but I knew Tito and Tony would pay attention to their guys getting whacked. And I knew as soon as Tony saw the clues, he'd tell you.

FRANKIE  
He didn't.

NICKY  
Yeah, well, you know what Sister Thomas used to say -- the Lord works in mysterious ways. Besides, I never counted on Tony being the one to betray me.

FRANKIE  
Just a suggestion, but you should leave. Maybe go on a vacation. Or better yet, find Angie.

NICKY  
She's married, or did you forget?

FRANKIE  
I was married once. Didn't take.

NICKY  
Maybe I will, Bugs.

Frankie goes back to the food court and sees three of his men.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)  
Find anything?

**EXT. ROW HOUSE (WILMINGTON) -- DAY**

Nicky drives to Angie's old house. An OLDER WOMAN (70s, gray hair) answers.

OLDER WOMAN  
May I help you?

NICKY  
I'm looking for Angela Catrino.

OLDER WOMAN

Angela lives a few blocks away. Let me think ... 1022 --

NICKY

Clayton Street?

OLDER WOMAN

Yes, that's it. About a block from the school. Are you from around here?

NICKY

Yeah. Long time ago; in fact, I used to live in that house. I appreciate your help and sorry again to have bothered you.

OLDER WOMAN

No trouble. Tell Angela I said hello.

**EXT. ANGELA'S HOUSE BY PARK -- DAY**

Nicky pulls to the curb by the park and watches the house, afraid to knock on the door.

Nicky starts the engine, prepares to leave, then turns it off. He punches the dashboard, shakes his head, then starts the engine again. This time, he drives down the block to Angie's house and knocks on the door. It is opened by a woman wearing a green-and-white apron stained with red sauce.

NICKY

Hi, Angela. Is that garlic and meatballs I smell?

**INT. ANGELA'S HOUSE -- DAY**

She squints, then steps back. Her hands fly to her mouth.

ANGELA

Nicky! Nicky Fusco. Oh, my God. Come inside. Please?

NICKY

Angela, I --

Angela turns her head and cries, then she wipes her tears and faces Nicky.

ANGELA

Don't say anything. Not a word. I need to know it's real.

Nicky wraps his arms around her and squeezes.

NICKY

Angie, I'm sorry. I didn't want to upset you.

ANGELA

Sorry? Where have you been? I heard you got out. Why didn't you come? I thought you didn't care. I thought you hated me.

NICKY

How could I ever hate you?

ANGELA

Why didn't you call?

NICKY

I didn't feel it was right ... you being married and all.

ANGELA

Nicky, I haven't been married for a long time. After we got divorced, I bought your old house.

NICKY

What about your child?

ANGELA

You know about her?

NICKY

Sister Thomas told me.

ANGELA

And that's what kept you away? You thought I'd been with someone else?

NICKY

Angie, I loved you so much I couldn't take it. I thought you left me for someone else. I --

She smacks his face, then again, then breaks into tears.

ANGELA

All this time we could have been together. Oh, God, Nicky, how could you do this?

NICKY

Angela, if it's any comfort to you, I -- never mind. I'm a goddamn idiot. Sorry I came.

Nicky heads for the door. He grabs the doorknob but before he opens it, Angela yells at him.

ANGELA

Nicky Fusco! Get your ass back here. You're not walking out on me again.

NICKY

I've been afraid to come by. I sat at the park for an hour or more.

ANGELA

Sit, Nicky. There's a lot you should know. First, the man I married is her stepfather, not father. Actually he's not her stepfather anymore. And no, Nicky, there has never been anyone else. I may have had to share my bed temporarily, but I never shared my heart.

NICKY

I'm the stupidest man alive.

ANGELA

There's something else you need to know, and you won't like it.

NICKY

What? You can tell me anything.

ANGELA

Remember that day I came to see you in prison, the last time?

NICKY

I remember, Tony drove you.

ANGELA

(sobbing)

Yes, Tony drove me, and he was high on drugs. On the way home, he ...

Nicki nods and listens intently. As Angela talks, he occasionally grits his teeth or grimaces. Then he reaches out and holds her hands. When she finishes, he hugs her.

NICKY

You don't have to worry about him anymore. He's dead. I shot him.

ANGELA

(shocked)

You knew?

NICKY

No, and it's a long story, so I'll tell you later.

ANGELA

I want to be with you forever.

NICKY

Then let's plan on it.

ANGELA

I think we should go upstairs.

NICKY  
What about your daughter?

ANGELA  
It's our daughter, remember. And she won't be home for hours.

NICKY  
I intend to make up for lost time. It may take hours.

ANGELA  
Promise?

NICKY  
Promise.

**INT. BEDROOM, ANGELA'S HOUSE -- DAY**

After making slow passionate love, Angie lays her head on Nicky's shoulder, her arm draped across his neck.

ANGELA  
I love you, Nicolo Fusco.

NICKY  
And I love you, Angela Catrino.

**INT. FRANKIE'S APARTMENT (BROOKLYN) -- NIGHT**

Frankie calls Kate. Her phone rings, then goes to voice mail.

KATE (V.O.)  
This is Kate. Leave me a message.

FRANKIE  
Hey, uh, Kate, this is Frankie. I was checking to see what you were doing. Thought maybe ... I don't know ... thought maybe I'd take you up on that offer to chat.

Frankie pours a glass of wine, turns on some music, then while changing clothes, his doorbell rings. He answers in his boxers. When he opens the door, he sees Kate standing in the hall holding pizza and wine.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)  
Kate! What the hell are you doing here?

KATE  
Do I get to come in? You sounded like you needed company, so I canceled all my dates, and here I am.

FRANKIE  
Damn, excuse me. Let me slip some pants on.

KATE

I've seen you in less. We've got hot pizza and slightly chilled wine. The pants can wait. Sit down and tell me about the case you closed. It's all over the papers.

FRANKIE

It was a tough one, Kate. It involved all my old friends. And it involved the oath we had.

KATE

The oath you told me about?

FRANKIE

Yeah, when we were kids we used to put our fists together and raise them in the air and holler 'Friendship and honor.' It was kind of stupid, but it worked for a long time.

KATE

What ever happened with this oath?

FRANKIE

It's dead. All the guys are gone.

KATE

So tell me, Frankie, what good did all this do? You drove yourself crazy, you almost got fired -- hell, you almost got killed.

Frankie sips on his wine and looks at the ceiling.

FRANKIE

Kate, I can't explain. It would be tough to explain to anyone how Nicky and I grew up, how close we were.

Frankie sits up straighter and stares at Kate.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

Understand, when I say 'grew up together' I don't mean we spent a few summers at the beach or went camping. We did everything together. We were hauled to the cop station together when we were six; we shared our first date experiences; our first break-ups; our first gang fight.

Frankie takes Kate's hand and holds her.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

The night Nicky's father died, I walked the neighborhood with him until six in the morning.

(MORE)

FRANKIE (CONT'D)  
 Goddamn, Kate, he killed somebody  
 to save me. Killed them. And it  
 cost him ten years in prison.

No matter what people might think of him, that's who Nicky is, and who he'll always be. I almost lost that, but luckily it worked out.

Frankie leans against the sofa cushion and smiles.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)  
 You know, Kate, we swore to an oath almost thirty years ago. With most people, oaths don't last forever, but with some people they do. And when that happens, it's great. It makes you feel as if your life means something. It almost feels like immortality -- like you can live forever and nothing else matters.

KATE  
 Well, Donovan, if you're game, I'd like to give that a shot. I've never felt that way, and I think I'd like to.

Frankie kisses her warmly, then holds her tight.

FRANKIE  
 I'm game, Kate. I definitely am.

KATE  
 You know, I like you, Frankie, and not just for sex. We could be real friends. I'd even take an oath.

FRANKIE  
 You feel like watching a movie?

KATE  
 What kind?

FRANKIE  
 An old one -- black-and-white.  
 They're the best.

Kate kicks her shoes off and tucks her feet under her legs.

KATE  
 I think so too. By the way, you can put pants on now. I don't want that thing poking out during the movie.

Frankie leaves the room laughing, and Kate laughs too -- real hard. Frankie sits on his bed and just listens to her laugh.

**FADE OUT**