

THE LAST JEWISH GANGSTER

TV PILOT FOR LIMITED SERIES
(AMAZON, HULU, NETFLIX 3-ACT FORMAT)

By David S. Larson

Based on True Events from the unpublished memoir/biography
The Last Jewish Gangster

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www.TheLastJewishGangster.com

A retired hit man, the godson of Bugsy Siegel, who's disabled and living in San Diego Section 8 housing, gets an early morning call about an unfinished contract from 40 years ago. He must put Christ aside, buy a gun, and take a cross-country trip with his unwitting wife as his accomplice to complete the hit.

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FADE IN:

EXT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT 2012 - SAN DIEGO - 3 AM -
ESTABLISHING

Run down housing neighborhood, old cars on lawns.

Cottages form a U-shape around a withered grass courtyard
with a lone tree in the middle and an inoperable fountain.

Flickering blue light from a front cottage window is
accompanied by indistinguishable sound from a TV and a
repetitive HISS and CLICK noise.

INT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT - SAME

A cell phone rests on a tray full of orange plastic
prescription meds. Half a joint in a roach clip sits in a
makeshift ashtray.

A TCM movie on TV gives off some light, a red lava lamp
casting a glow over everything. A lone wooden crucifix hangs
on a wall.

The HISS and CLICK comes from a oxygen generator in a corner.
We follow a breathing tube from the machine across a dull
blue rug, weaving its way across a littered coffee table,
ending in the nose of HARDY (68, huge like Jabba the Hut,
large Star of David around his neck).

He BREATHES hard. A MOAN escapes his mouth - probably
struggling with a memory.

The BUZZ from a cell phone on vibrate mixes with the movie.
The prescription bottles VIBRATE and dance on the tray when
the phone BUZZES.

CU Cellphone: "Unknown Caller" is on the screen with the time
3:03.

Hardy reaches over and grabs the phone. He sits up in his
wing chair and rubs his eyes awake. He looks at the caller
I.D., pauses, then answers anyway in his thick Brooklyn
accent.

HARDY
Yeah?

JOEY
Hardy?

HARDY

Yeah.

JOEY

Michael Hardy?

HARDY

Yeah. Who's this?

JOEY

Doesn't matter. (beat) Lorenzo
Conti - he's out.

HARDY

(looks to his phone
confused)

Who?

JOEY

Lorenzo Conti. You took the
contract, remember?

Hardy perks up, mutes the TV, leans forward, alert. CHANCE
(his Doberman) sits up.

HARDY

Yeah. So who's this?

JOEL

Joey Milito. (beat) Louis' son.

Hardy stares at the phone, wheels turning - he pulls the
oxygen tube out of his nose.

HARDY

Conti got life - how the fuck did
he get out?

JOEY

Overcrowding, blew the warden - who
knows.

HARDY

Where's he doing halfway?

JOEY

I ain't his fucking travel agent.
(beat) You got three months.

Hardy looks down at the open Bible on his lap.

HARDY

Don't know if--

JOEY

That's all right. Repay the twenty-five hundred - plus the vig and we're even.

HARDY

What's that come to?

JOEY

At ten points a week, that's a million after 5 years. You owe me for 40 years.

Hardy's mind spins - looking around his apt trying to find something to anchor himself.

JOEY (CONT'D)

Well?

HARDY

Yeah.

JOEY

90 days.

HARDY

I said yeah.

CLICK

The DRONE from the end of the call adds to a confused rage that builds in Hardy.

Hardy glances at his Bible again. Looks to the bedroom.

He stares straight ahead, the next steps formulating in his mind. He struggles out of his chair, grabs his cane, and shuffles to the bedroom door - Chance following.

He looks in on THERESA (wife). She stirs in bed.

Hardy flexes his left hand slowly like he trying to remember what it's like to hold a piece. He winces. The eagle tattoo on his forearm is nothing but an unrecognizable blob.

He looks back at his phone. A barely-perceptible nod of determination crosses his face.

CUT TO:

CU: TV SCREEN UNKNOWN IMAGE.

BUZZ (white noise) from a grainy TV screen, too close to see clearly.

The image moves. A voice speaks, we pull out to eventually see the lips and then the face of GERALDO RIVERA (a video tape recording of a 1989 broadcast).

GERALDO

We're back with hit men - men who took contracts for the Mob. One of our guests is in disguise, because reportedly, he killed fourteen men for the Mafia.

INT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT - MORNING

Hardy sits in his wing back chair as usual.

The front door swings open. He lifts the remote control and pauses, a bearded man wearing sunglasses and a hat fills the screen.

Theresa (thin, no makeup, 57, smoker) comes in with Chance.

HARDY

Any problems?

THERESA

No. He was a good boy.

She pats Chance.

Hardy CLUCKS and Chance comes to him for a rub behind the ears.

HARDY

Good boy, Chancey. Good boy.

Theresa looks at the TV screen and smiles.

THERESA

My favorite rerun.

HARDY

Theresa, come on - it's the best part.

THERESA

You were so angry back then.

HARDY

Before you knew me. Yeah, I was,
wasn't I?

Theresa moves to the kitchen.

THERESA

Just a second, Michael. I want to
warm up your food.

HARDY

Okay.

Theresa takes a "Meals-on-Wheels" (sticker) plate from the
fridge and puts it in the microwave. She looks lovingly at
Hardy as he plays with Chance.

A DOUBLE-BEEP (O.S.) from a microwave. Food's done.

Theresa gingerly pulls out the plate, places it on a lap
tray, and moves to Hardy, handing him the tray.

They bow their heads quickly.

THERESA

Bless this food, oh Lord.

HARDY

Amen.

He digs into the steaming plate, picks up the roll and
searches his tray.

HARDY (CONT'D)

Where's the butter?

THERESA

To the left of your plate.

Chance lifts his nose to the aroma of the food.

HARDY

Feed Chance yet?

THERESA

Gotta feed the pack leader first.

He grins at her playfulness and swats her on the rump.

Hardy clicks the remote, the man on the screen with the hat,
sunglasses, and fake beard begins to speak (it's Hardy from
1989 - when he was 45).

HARDY
 (on Geraldo show)
 You think I wear this for fun?
 (shakes his head) Look at the bums
 you got up here.

Hardy (45, 6'1", 280 lbs, comb-over) stands and waves his arms at the THREE GUESTS. He points to GUEST 1 (Italian, 50s, short, paunchy).

CUT TO:

INT. STUDIO OF GERALDO SHOW - 1989

SUPER: November 1989

HARDY
 You - you ain't nothing but scum, a
 lousy bag man. You didn't kill no
 one. I know.

GERALDO
 What makes you say that?

HARDY
 His eyes. He don't have the eyes.
 Look at him. (laughs)

GUEST 1 starts to stand. Hardy charges him with a fist up. TWO SECURITY MEN from offstage rush the set and hold back Hardy.

The TV AUDIENCE erupts with HOLLERS and APPLAUSE.

Geraldo feebly tries to intercede, his arms waving between Hardy and Guest 1.

HARDY (CONT'D)
 (yells at Guest 1)
 You're nothing but a punk. (waves
 at the other TWO GUESTS) All a you.

GERALDO
 Settle down. Come on now, settle
 down.

The Two Security Men usher Hardy back to a seat on the other side of Geraldo. The stage calms but the Audience BUZZES.

GERALDO (CONT'D)
 Why do you call them punks?

HARDY
 'Cause if they did kill anyone,
 Geraldo, they'd have to wear a
 disguise - like me.

The Audience MURMURS.

HARDY (CONT'D)
 I'm not gonna sit here on national
 TV and confess to murders because,
 you know, you really aren't paying
 me enough for that.

GUEST 1
 I don't have to listen to no blow
 hard.

HARDY
 (stands)
 Blow hard? I'll show you a
 (*bleep*) blow hard.

Hardy lunges forward but the Two Security Men are at the ready to grab him and keep him from rushing Guest 1.

Hardy calms but remains standing, loving the attention. A wild thought.

HARDY (CONT'D)
 Geraldo, want to see what a real
 hit man looks like? (to the Crowd)
 Do you?

The Audience is on it feet again, poised, chanting...

AUDIENCE
 Go, go, go!

Hardy slowly takes off his hat, glasses, and pulls off his beard.

The Audience goes WILD.

Geraldo is smug - what he lives for.

Hardy looks for a camera with a red light - then stares into it.

HARDY
 (snarls and points to his
 face)
 This is what a real hit man looks
 like.

The Guests are flustered.

Hardy turns to the Audience who ROARS its approval. He glares back into the camera - the image FREEZES.

RETURN TO SCENE:

INT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT 2012 - SAME

Hardy puts down his remote and looks to Theresa. Her eyes tell him she loves him even more - as the man he used to be - even though she's seen this video a 100 times.

THERESA

Did you really kill 14 men for the
Mob?

He motions her to come to him. She gets up off the love seat, steps to Hardy, and takes the tray. He pulls her into him and onto his huge lap.

CU: TV SCREEN on Hardy's frozen face, WHITE NOISE fills the apartment.

PUSH IN until pixels fill the screen.

EXT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APARTMENT - NIGHT

Yellow light from the upper half window, the constant RATTLE from an air conditioner in the lower window half.

HARDY (O.S.)

Bless this gathering, Lord. Guide
me as I bring us into your light
and understanding. Amen.

OTHER VOICES (O.S.)

Amen.

INT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT - SAME

An air conditioner RATTLES in a window.

A Bible rests on Hardy's lap. He sits in his wing chair, his cane nearby. Chance lies by his feet. He fingers the Star of David around his neck.

The small room is filled with five Section-8 NEIGHBORS sitting on mismatched folding chairs.

Theresa sits next to Hardy and follows his lead.

Hardy eyes his group, then lifts up his Bible.

HARDY

Today we're talking about forgiveness. Good a topic as any - really the best. We'll start with Paul's letter to the Ephesians, chapter four, verses thirty-one and thirty-two.

The Attendees flip through their Bibles unsure of where to go. Hardy turns to Theresa.

HARDY (CONT'D)

Honey, why don't you help them find it? Ephesians is about half way into the New Testament.

Theresa bounces from each of them while Hardy...

HARDY (CONT'D)

There's lots the Bible has to say about forgiveness. The most famous is when Jesus was crucified - nailed to the cross. 'Forgive them for they know not what they do.' Remember that one?

A couple heads nod. Everyone has the page open and Theresa returns to her chair.

HARDY (CONT'D)

Okay then. (deep breath) Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Hardy eyes the room and settles on DARREN (60, recovering drug addict, black).

HARDY (CONT'D)

Darren, what do you think about that?

Darren sits up in his chair.

DARREN

Well, Michael, I know I done stuff that hurt people. I been angry too.
(MORE)

DARREN (CONT'D)

I guess it says be nice to each other like Jesus done.

HARDY

That's good, Darren. Anyone else?

Hardy looks around the room and no one makes eye contact.

HARDY (CONT'D)

Let's turn to Matthew six, verses fourteen and fifteen.

Hardy watches the Group struggle to find Matthew as they search their Bibles.

HARDY (CONT'D)

Don't worry about finding it. Just listen.

The Attendees still thumb through their Bibles.

HARDY (CONT'D)

Close your Bibles - please. (reads)
If you forgive others the wrongs they have done to you, your Father in heaven will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive the wrongs you have done.

Hardy looks to BRUCE and GARY (two aging gays) who share a Bible.

HARDY (CONT'D)

Gary, Bruce - what do you think?

Gary and Bruce look to each other and turn back.

GARY

It all comes down to forgiving someone who wronged you. If you can't, God won't forgive you.

HARDY

That's a pretty steep hill to climb, don't you think?

They bob their heads.

Hardy turns to HELEN (50s, Asian, plump) and her much younger lover JUAN (30, Hispanic, thin).

HARDY (CONT'D)

Bet someone wronged you two.

JUAN
How'd you know?

HARDY
You're Mexican, she's Asian, I'm a
Jew - go figure.

Helen and Juan chuckle.

BRUCE
Didn't you say you were shot eleven
times?

Hardy fidgets. Theresa places a hand on Hardy's shoulder.

HARDY
Bullets are easy to forgive.
Family's harder.

THERESA
Maybe you'd like to share about
your son?

HARDY
My son, he ratted me out for
murder. He was doing time in
Corcoran and wanted an early
release. (beat) Took me twenty
years to forgive him.

BRUCE
Glad you did?

HARDY
(nods)
Yeah.

LATER:

Theresa serves refreshments to the Group. They hold Styrofoam coffee cups in one hand and powdered mini-donuts in the other.

Hardy's still in his chair, content he completed another Bible study.

The front of his blue shirt looks like a blizzard hit it (from the powdered donuts), and he doesn't even notice.

Chance sits next to Hardy alert to anyone dropping food.

INT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT - MORNING

The TV's on - the 700 Club, Hardy watching from his wing chair - his Bible open. Theresa does her nails with a professional kit of supplies.

HARDY

What do you think we can get for my extra insulin?

Theresa looks over and raises her eyebrows.

THERESA

About twenty-five a pen. Why?

HARDY

I was thinking bout us maybe taking a trip.

THERESA

(perks up)
Really, Michael?

HARDY

Yeah. I think it'd run about a grand.

THERESA

Where'd we go?

HARDY

Back east - Brooklyn. Show you where I grew up. Might be my last time.

Theresa goes to Hardy, kneeling in front of him, newly painted green nails resting on his knees - and waits.

HARDY (CONT'D)

We'd take the train, stay with relatives.

THERESA

(smiles)
I could get part time work at a nail salon. Tips are great.

HARDY

Long as you don't forget about me.

They CHUCKLE in a shared light moment.

HARDY (CONT'D)

We could put Chance out to stud.

Chance looks up at the sound of his name.

THERESA

I'll put an ad on CraigsList. We still got his papers?

HARDY

(shakes his head)
Don't think so - but I know where I get can some.

THERESA

When you wanna go?

HARDY

In a month, maybe two. Soon.

Theresa smiles, stands and walks toward the bedroom, a bounce in her step - she looks back at Hardy and smiles.

Hardy flexes his left hand as if he's trying to remember how it feels to hold a piece again.

INT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT - NEXT MORNING

Theresa stands by the kitchen sink cleaning up from breakfast.

Hardy watches Fox News on TV.

THERESA

It's beautiful out, Michael. You wanna go to Balboa Park with the kids - get some fresh air?

HARDY

You go. My joints are killing me.
And take Chance.

Theresa grabs her purse, leashes Chance, and gives a quick peck on Hardy's cheek.

THERESA

See you later.

HARDY

Bye, baby.

LATER:

Hardy is alone, the TV muted. He's exasperated.

HARDY (CONT'D)
 C-O-N-T-I ... Lorenzo, maybe Larry
 or Lawrence. (beat) Yeah.

While he waits, Hardy unmutes the TV, something on the History Channel about the Roman Empire gets his attention. He snaps out of it and mutes the TV when he hears a voice on the phone.

HARDY (CONT'D)
 Brooklyn? (beat) With his daughter?
 (beat) You got an address? Wait a
 minute, let me get a pen.

Hardy snatches an "OVERDUE" envelope off an end table, picks up a pen.

HARDY (CONT'D)
 Go ahead.

Hardy shakes a cramp out of his hand as he writes, interspersed with...

HARDY (CONT'D)
 Uh-huh. (beat) Uh-huh. Good.
 Thanks.

Hardy hangs up, then holds his phone to his mouth.

HARDY (CONT'D)
 Siri, call Amtrack.

SIRI
 I found three places called
 Amtrack. Tap the one you want.

Hardy pokes his phone with a fat finger. He waits with the same envelope and pen out. He listens, then presses a number on his phone - waits, and presses another - finally a person from customer service.

HARDY
 Yes. I'm looking for a round trip
 from San Diego to Brooklyn - for
 two. (beat) I don't care when -
 just the cheapest. Oh, and I'm a
 senior with special needs.
 (beat) I'm diabetic with a cane.
 (beat) Yeah, I'll hold.

Hardy looks around him, grabs a large bag of Doritos and shakes it - not much left. He digs down with a spoon, coming out with crumbs and bright orange dust. He shovels it in his mouth and goes back for another.

He drops the spoon in the bag when he returns to the call.

HARDY (CONT'D)

Okay. Eight eight-four. How many train changes? (beat) Good. And you say that's with my senior and disability discount? Okay. (beat) No, not yet. I'll get back to you.

Hardy ends the call and stares at the envelope he's scribbled on.

He holds his phone in front of his mouth again.

HARDY (CONT'D)

Siri, find me car rental in Brooklyn.

A gate SLAMS. Hardy turns toward the noise.

SIRI

Okay, here are four--

Hardy ends the call, fumbles for the remote and turns the TV sound back on.

He stuffs the envelope down his huge sweatpants and straightens himself.

A CLICK from the lock on the door, the knob turns and Theresa walks in with Chance.

She has the look of someone who's ready for the demands Hardy's going to put on her. She holds a plastic bag with meager groceries.

Chance and her go to Hardy and She gives him a kiss on the cheek. He pets Chance.

HARDY

Hey, baby.

THERESA

What you been up to?

HARDY

Took a nap, you know, the usual.

THERESA

Yeah.

Theresa plops the bag and her purse down and goes about picking up their apartment.

EXT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT. - EARLY EVENING

TV light and its muffled sound come from a front window.

A phone RINGS.

INT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT - SAME

Hardy fumbles for the remote to mute the TV.

He picks up the phone, looking at the ID.

HARDY
(excited)
Theresa! It's the kids.

He answers with FaceTime. On his phone are the shaky images of his TWO GRANDKIDS (DONNA 6 and THOMAS 5 years old).

A broad smile takes over Hardy's face - a daily ritual of joy that breaks the boredom in his life.

INTERCUT IMAGES AND VOICES ON FACETIME:

Hardy holds his phone chest-high while Theresa comes to look over his shoulder, leaning into him.

HARDY (CONT'D)
Hey there, sweethearts.

THERESA
(waves)
Hi.

DONNA
Hi, Poppi. Hi, Nana.

THOMAS
Hi, Poppi, Nana.

HARDY
You been good for your mommy today?

The image disappears and Hardy only sees an ear.

DONNA (O.S.)
Thomas took my doll and wouldn't give it back - and then he threw it in the toilet.

THOMAS (O.S.)
No, I did not. I didn't, Poppi.

The image of his Grandkids is a blur as hands fight for control of the phone. GRUNTS from the struggle.

THOMAS (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Don't tell him that. Gimme the
 phone.

HARDY
 (shouts, frustrated)
 Hold the phone in front of your
 face, not your ear.

DONNA (O.S.)
 MOM! Thomas grabbed the phone
 again. It's my turn.

A struggle, Thomas CRIES (O.S.).

DONNA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 I get to hold it.

JANICE (37, hard, Hardy's daughter) appears on the screen.

JANICE
 Sorry, Dad. Long day. I took 'em to
 the park.

HARDY
 Maybe you should--

JANICE
 (to kids)
 Go brush your teeth unless you want
 to say good night to your Poppi and
 Nana.

DONNA (O.S.)
 Me first!

THOMAS (O.S.)
 No, I wanna.

JANICE
 (face fills the screen)
 Hold on, Dad.

The phone's a blur again.

JANICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 You do this every time. Now come on
 and say good night.

Janice's face reappears, the Kids on either side of her head.

JANICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Okay now. Go ahead.

Theresa's on the phone in the middle of a conversation and holds up a finger to Hardy, a pen in her hand. She writes on a scrap of paper.

THERESA

How old's your bitch? (beat) Uh-huh. You sure she's in heat now? (beat) Courtney's a nice name. (beat) Well, Chance is purebred with championship lineage who placed at Manchester. (beat) Yeah, that's the one. (beat) We're in the Normal Heights area - so not too far away. (beat) We could meet at Ward Canyon Park. (beat) Yeah, near the fifteen.

Hardy pets Chance and bends down to whisper in his ear.

HARDY

Chancey, looks like you're gonna get laid.

THERESA

Thursday at ten a.m. Sounds good. See you there.

Theresa ends the call and pumps her arm.

THERESA (CONT'D)

Yes!

HARDY

Tell me again, how much we get for stud fees?

THERESA

The usual is two, two-fifty, plus a puppy - if it takes.

HARDY

If it takes? Just look at the size of his balls. He'll get that bitch knocked up the first time, won't you, big fella?

Chance feeds off their excitement and prances around.

THERESA

Where we gonna get papers?

HARDY

(nods)
I know.

Hardy rubs the top of Chance's head and ears.

HARDY (CONT'D)
Time to make us some money.

EXT. 420 SMOKE SHOP - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

Strip mall store in a run down neighborhood.

HARDY (O.S.)
You gotta couple days, John - but
nine-thirty Thursday morning at the
latest - if you can.

INT. 420 SMOKE SHOP - SAME

Bongs, rolling papers, tobacco, paraphernalia of all sorts are packed neatly onto shelves including some occult and religious items. A curtain covers a door to a back room, a sign "ADULTS ONLY" over the entrance.

Hardy sits on a stool next to the counter, his cane nearby, Theresa at his side holding Chance by a leash.

JOHN (40s, ripped, convict vibe) stares intently at a laptop. He nods his head.

JOHN
Never made one of these. Don't see
a problem, Michael.

HARDY
We'll give you a piece of the
action - maybe the puppy.

John shakes his head and waves Hardy off like he wouldn't think of it - like he owes Hardy.

JOHN
Nah.

HARDY
Think you can move some insulin for
us?

JOHN
(nods)
I know some people. How much you
got?

Hardy looks to Theresa.

THERESA

Five or ten pens, for twenty-five each.

HARDY

We can do more, maybe twenty pens.

THERESA

(scolds Hardy)

I'm not going risk you having another episode. (to John) Make it ten pens.

Theresa takes Chance by the leash.

THERESA (CONT'D)

Call us when it's ready?

JOHN

Sure.

As Theresa heads to the door, Hardy whispers to John.

HARDY

Got something we need to talk about - something big.

JOHN

Anytime.

Hardy hobbles away.

INT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT. - MORNING

Hardy HUMS while he finishes off a plate of some kind of scrambled mess while Theresa bustles about.

HARDY

We still got to take Chance for a walk, and we should've given him a bath.

Theresa stops, hands on hips.

THERESA

We would have - if Mr. Happy didn't want to play this morning.

HARDY

(smiles, he's the man)

This trip's got me going. (motions to her) Come here.

Theresa saunters over to stand in front of Hardy. He grabs her by the waist and pulls her onto his lap.

HARDY (CONT'D)
 Maybe after we get back, we can go
 for round two.

She looks him in the eyes, takes his huge face in her hands, and plants a kiss on his forehead. She eyes his dirty plate.

THERESA
 Better get going.

She gets off his lap and he swats her ass playfully. She grabs the dirty plate and Chance follows her.

INT. 420 SMOKE SHOP - SAME MORNING

JOHN
 Here you go.

John hands Hardy a paper. Hardy squints to inspect it closely, then offers it to Theresa.

HARDY
 You seen more of these than me.
 What do you think?

CU: AKC paper.

Theresa looks it over, especially the seal and signatures. She turns to John and tilts her head in admiration.

THERESA
 How'd you do this?

JOHN
 Magic.

They all share a LAUGH.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 I just hope it gets some action
 going for you two.

HARDY
 Yeah, so do we.

Theresa reaches in her purse, pulls out ten diabetic pens with a rubber band wrapped around them and hands them to John.

THERESA

Here's ten pens. Michael and I talked - anything you get over twenty each is yours.

John takes them but waves her off.

JOHN

I don't make money off friends.
(looks closely at the pens) Sorry man, but I can't move these - way past expiration. Want them back?

Hardy SIGHS and shakes his head then grabs a Catholic prayer candle off a nearby shelf. Theresa and John both look at him curiously.

HARDY

Going to make a prayer.

Theresa and John acknowledge their approval, then Hardy grabs another candle.

HARDY (CONT'D)

Going to make two prayers.

EXT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 COMPLEX - PARKING AREA - NIGHT

A black two-door BMW pulls into a handicap spot. Theresa exits the car and brings out Hardy's cane.

Hardy opens the driver's door and rotates his huge body. They negotiate the slow and careful way he shuffles to get in position as Theresa hands the cane to him.

He takes hold and moves forward, Theresa closing the car door.

EXT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT. COMPLEX - SAME

They move past the gate entrance, across the open yard to their apt., open the door, and enter.

INT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT. - SAME

Chance comes at them wagging his stubby tail.

HARDY

(annoyed)
Get out of my way, Chance.

THERESA
 (to Chance)
 Move. Come on, move.

Hardy goes to his wing chair and plops down, putting his cane against the wall next to him - lets out a SIGH.

THERESA (CONT'D)
 I'll get the groceries. (beat) And
 we need to check you levels.

HARDY
 Yeah.

Hardy clicks on the TV, Fox News blaring, and is immediately engrossed.

SHORT WHILE LATER:

Theresa completes an injection of insulin into Hardy's huge belly. She pulls down his shirt and turns to walk into the kitchen - but stumbles over two laundry bags.

THERESA
 Jesus, Michael. The laundry's been
 here two days. I thought you were
 gonna check--

HARDY
 (annoyed)
 I'll see if we can do it now.

He looks at the wall clock, 9:10 pm, takes his oxygen tube out of his nose, gets up, grabs his cane, and moves to the front door.

EXT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT. - SAME

Hardy exits and moves toward the back of the complex and turns a corner to the outdoor laundry under an awning.

INT. LAUNDRY AREA OF HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT BUILDING - SAME

Two old washers SLOSH and two driers HUM adjacent to a table for folding clothes. A fluorescent light fixture above flickers and BUZZES.

ANDREW (19, goth) sits on the table smoking, swinging his legs back and forth, headphones on.

HARDY
 When you going to finish, Andrew?

ANDREW

Huh?

He pulls out an earphone.

HARDY

I asked, when you going to finish?

ANDREW

Whenever, dude.

HARDY

What the fuck's that supposed to mean? You've tied these up all day - and it's our day.

ANDREW

Hey, we forgot. Just chill, dude.

HARDY

Don't dude me.

Andrew flicks his butt past Hardy onto the lawn. Hardy casually looks at the butt not showing his anger, then back at Andrew.

HARDY (CONT'D)

You aren't the only ones living here.

Andrew gives Hardy a blank stare.

HARDY (CONT'D)

Check this out, man - next time you do this shit, you're going to find your clothes in the trash.

ANDREW

You ain't going to do shit.

Hardy's ire is up. He inches forward.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

(laughs)

What? What's a fat old man with a cane gonna do?

A slight grin crosses Hardy's face. He reaches under his shirt, pulls out his left hand, and points his index finger at Andrew's face. He squeezes an imaginary trigger, saying...

HARDY

BANG!

Andrew flinches, but firms up his posture, and CHUCKLES.

Hardy lunges at Andrew.

Andrew jumps off the table and easily dodges Hardy's attempts to grab him or hit him with his cane, LAUGHING like it's a game.

Hardy meagerly chases him around the small yard until Andrew positions himself on the other side of the lone tree.

Hardy's winded.

ANDREW

I can do this all night long, old man.

Hardy looks at his cane as if it's the cane's fault he's a cripple.

HARDY

(gasps)
If I didn't--

ANDREW

(laughs)
If you didn't what? (beat) Go home to your mommy.

Hardy shakily paws at Andrew with his cane, almost falling over.

HARDY

Fucking punk.

Hardy breathes heavily as he stares Andrew down and backs away toward his apartment.

Andrew saunters back to the laundry area but looks over his shoulder to check on Hardy. He stoops to pick up his butt, takes one last drag and flicks in Hardy's direction.

Hardy shakes his head and moves into the shadows, watching Andrew.

HARDY (CONT'D)

(whispers)
You have no idea...

FLASHBACK:

EXT. BROOKLYN STREET - WINTER - NIGHT - 1970

SUPER: Brooklyn 1970

In the shadows of a brownstone's stairwell. Hardy's wrist turns to reveal a watch.

CU: 2:12.

The same hand reaches in a pocket, pulls out the pewter salt shaker, and dusts the ice-covered concrete, grinding his leather-soled black shoes into the brine.

Hardy shrugs off the cold and bobs his head slightly.

HARDY (V.O.)
Watch this, Queenie.

Hardy (dressed all in black with a black beanie) peeks out from his hiding place to check a distant car's lights that bounce off the bare tree limbs above. He steps back into the shadows.

The car's brakes SQUEAL to a stop. Hardy waits. The engine idles for 10 seconds.

Hardy shuffles his feet and blows on his hands, vapor coming from his mouth.

HARDY
(whispers)
What the fuck you waiting for, a
good night kiss?

WE HEAR: A car door opens and SLAMS shut. The car pulls away.

Brown patent leather shoes on asphalt. On concrete. Coming Hardy's way on the sidewalk avoiding ice patches.

Hardy checks his surroundings then steps out of the shadows and onto the sidewalk, his silenced .22 automatic hanging from his left hand. The MAN in the brown shoes (40s, overcoat) recoils, surprised Hardy comes at him.

Hardy lifts a photo in his right hand and compares it to the Man's face.

Hardy's face lights up - a MATCH.

The Man balks and shields his face with his hands when he spots Hardy's gun - as if that'll stop bullets.

MAN
Noooo.

Hardy raises his .22. Two quick "SPUTZES" - one to the head, one to the chest. The Man crumples and THUDS to the icy ground.

Hardy looks around quickly, puts his .22 back in his coat pocket, and stoops to pick up the two brass casings from the icy sidewalk.

He pauses to look at the Man, face is frozen in anguish under the dull yellow street lights. A small trickle of blood oozes from the Man's forehead.

When Hardy puts the two shells in his pocket, he feels something else and pulls out the pewter salt shaker.

A thought hits. He glances around, stands over the Man and sprinkles him with salt.

HARDY
(whispers)
All your land is brimstone and
salt, a burning waste.

BACK TO SCENE:

INT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT. - SAME

Hardy is frustrated as he negotiates entering the apartment with the screen door and triple-locked door.

He enters to receive a greeting from Chance and pushes him aside.

Theresa asleep on the sofa, the TV on, stirs.

THERESA
Laundry ready?

HARDY
You remember where we put that
article?

THERESA
From the L.A. Times?

HARDY
No, no - the magazine.

Theresa semi-stretches then wanders over to their desk/curio cabinet and rummages through piles of paper.

HARDY (CONT'D)
We put it in a box?

THERESA

Oh, yeah.

Theresa gets down on her hands and knees to look under the cabinet and pulls out a letter-size box. Hardy eyes her ass and grins.

HARDY

Baby, did I ever tell you, you got one sweet ass.

She smiles and hands the box to Hardy. He lifts the lid, flips through piles of papers until--

HARDY (CONT'D)

Got it.

A worn copy of a seven-pages article from 1978 *Argosy Magazine* shows a picture of Hardy looking tough as he poses with a gun by a sea wall on the Long Island Sound.

A pleasant memory crosses his face as he wraps an arm around Theresa.

SOUND: A seagull CAWS, crashing waves.

MARK (O.S.)

Put your right foot up on the rock - and hold the gun by your waist.

FLASHBACK:

SUPER: Long Island Sound 1978

EXT. LONG ISLAND SOUND - DAY

Hardy (34, Fu Manchu, muttonchops, comb-over, sunglasses) stands by a sea wall of concrete and boulders, his right foot on a rock.

Seagulls CAW and waves splash, the HUM of traffic nearby in the background.

The wind whips his comb-over which he brushes back with his hand.

MARK SCHORR (writer, 30) crouches down to be in the same line of sight as a CAMERAMAN who aims his lens at Hardy.

MARK

(lifts his head up)
You left-handed?

HARDY

Yeah.

MARK

(bends down)

Okay. Hold the gun a little higher and maybe rest your right elbow on your leg.

HARDY

How long this going to take?

MARK

Give me your killer look.

Hardy glares his frustration.

CLICK, CLICK, CLICK from the camera shutter.

END FLASHBACK:

INT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT. - SAME

Hardy stares at the article, Theresa by his side. He digs down in the box and shakes his head.

HARDY

Can you make some copies?

THERESA

Fifteen cents a page, Michael. How many you want?

HARDY

Three, no, better make it four.

EXT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT. - NEXT DAY

HARDY (O.S.)

You're supposed to be the fucking dog trainer. What the fuck happened?

INT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT. - SAME

Chance hides behind Theresa like a child who's done something wrong. Two unlit prayer candles rest on an end table next to Hardy. He's standing, no TV on, this is serious.

THERESA

Remember, he spent his first three years in a cage.

HARDY

I spent 27 years in a cage and look how I turned out. (beat) What kind of dog don't wanna get laid? He a homo?

THERESA

I'll see if I can find out what's wrong. (beat) I'm going to take him for a walk - he's been through a lot.

HARDY

He's been through a lot? What about me?

As she walks by with Chance, Hardy takes hold of his leash, not harsh, but firm - and looks Chance in the eyes.

HARDY (CONT'D)

We been feeding you and picking up your shit for a year, Chancey. It's time you paid for your keep.

He lets go and Theresa exits with Chance.

Hardy's left alone with his thoughts in his wing chair. He looks to the candles, grabs one and a lighter. He bows his head and closes his eyes.

HARDY (V.O.)

God, give Chance some balls and help us make some money. (beat) Amen.

He opens his eyes, lifts his head, lights the candle, and sets it down on the end table. He picks up the other candle, bows his head and closes his eyes again - but pauses, and takes a deep breath.

HARDY (V.O.)

I know you don't get this much, but I want you to put a curse on Andrew - maybe give him some disease - something real bad. (beat) Amen.

He opens his eyes then lights the other candle with a grin.

EXT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT. - AFTERNOON

Hardy hobbles out his front door and heads toward the laundry area. He stops and looks back to check if Theresa's watching - she isn't.

He heads to a different door in the 8-unit complex.

EXT. ANDREW'S SECTION 8 APT - SAME

A few withered potted plants by the front door. Hardy BANGS on the screen door with his cane. Curtains part - it's EVELYN (58, haggard). Hardy nods. The curtains close and a moment later the door opens.

Evelyn looks at Hardy through the screen door. A cigarette dangles from her mouth.

EVELYN

Yeah?

HARDY

Hey, Evelyn. Your boy, Andrew, we spoke.

EVELYN

He told me. What do ya want?

HARDY

You really should be more respectful of the other tenants when you're using the washer and dryer. Tuesday's our day.

Evelyn gives off a cold stare. Hardy pulls folded papers from his back pocket.

HARDY (CONT'D)

Can you give this to Andrew - so he knows who he's talking to next time?

Hardy holds out the papers. She blows smoke through the screen door and doesn't move.

EVELYN

(coughs)
What is it?

HARDY

A magazine article - about me.

She steps back to close the door with--

EVELYN
Don't want nothing from you.

HARDY
Evelyn, hey, I'm trying do nice
here.

She pauses, opens the screen door.

Hardy moves forward in hope and holds out the papers.

She flicks out her cigarette butt and shuts both doors.

HARDY (CONT'D)
Bitch.

Hardy stares at the front door.

He leans over, almost falling, lifts a potted plant, and places the corner of folded papers under a plant.

He looks up - no movement from the curtains - she's done with him.

EXT. LAUNDRY ROOM OF HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT BUILDING - SAME

Hardy shuffles over to the laundry area - no sound - doors of both washing machines and driers are open.

Hardy, his jaw set, heads back to his apartment and enters.

INT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT. - EARLY EVENING

The History Channel is on TV. Theresa in the kitchen. Hardy glances at the clock and SIGHS.

CU Clock: 7:40

HARDY
They're late.

THERESA
Call 'em.

Hardy taps his phone and puts the FaceTime call on speaker. Theresa wanders over - both poised for the highlight of their day.

After four RINGS, Janice answers but we only see popcorn ceiling.

JANICE (O.S.)
(breathing hard)
Not now.

ROB (O.S.)
(yells)
That your fucking father?

JANICE (O.S.)
Leave him out of this.

DONNA (O.S.)
We wanna talk to Poppi and Nana.

ROB (O.S.)
Not today, Donna - not 'til your
mother and I get some things
straight.

JANICE (O.S.)
Donna, take your brother to your
bedroom.

ROB (O.S.)
Stay where you are. Stay and watch
your fat ass mother get hers.

JANICE (O.S.)
You're drunk, Rob. Not in front of
the kids.

Hardy stands, his ire up. He yells into the phone...

HARDY
Rob, leave them out of this.

INT. JANICE'S HOME - SAME

Used 90s furniture decor. Hardy's grim face shows on the
phone resting on a coffee table.

The Kids shirk on the sofa. JANICE (blonde, 35, heavy, tats)
stands in front of the Kids.

ROB (38, ripped, truck driver type) stands across the coffee
table from Janice.

ROB
Shut the fuck up. I'm tired of you
always interfering in my family.

HARDY (O.S.)
Your family?

JANICE
Dad, it's okay - I got this.

ROB
You got what? You think you can
handle me?

HARDY (O.S.)
Hey, back off, Rob.

JANICE
(to Rob)
He only wants to talk to the kids.
Don't you get that, you stupid
shit?

ROB (O.S.)
Stupid shit?

JANICE (O.S.)
Yeah, stupid shit.

ROB (O.S.)
(yells)
I'll show you what stupid shit
feels like!

HARDY (O.S.)
(yells)
Don't you dare fucking touch her.
You hear me, Rob?

Rob pauses to look down at the phone.

INT. HARDY'S SECTION 8 APT.

Rob's face fills the cell phone screen, his index finger
moves toward the screen. On Hardy's phone...

ROB
I'm hanging up 'cause you don't
wanna see this.

JANICE (O.S.)
Motherfucker.

Hardy's screen goes blank, the phone silent. Hardy stares at
the phone for a beat. He calls back with the speaker on,
hands shaking with anger.

A worried Theresa moves closer. The phone RINGS and goes to
voice mail with a cheery Janice...

JANICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 You're reached Janice, Rob, Donna,
 and Thomas - leave a message.

BEEP.

Hardy hangs up, pauses to collect himself, grabs his cane,
 and moves to the door with purpose.

HARDY
 I'm going over there.

THERESA
 You sure?

Hardy turns and gives a look, he's on a mission.

Theresa grabs her purse and rushes to the door.

INT. BLACK BMW - NIGHT

Hardy's at the wheel. Theresa taps on their phone, jostled
 back and forth, having trouble because he's driving so fast.

HARDY
 Keep trying.

THERESA
 I am.

EXT. CITY STREETS - SAME

Hardy's black BMW races down city streets.

HARDY (O.S.)
 If that son of a bitch--

THERESA (O.S.)
 He's all talk, Michael. You know
 how he gets when he's drunk.

HARDY (O.S.)
 Then he'll be a drunk without any
 teeth.

INT. BLACK BMW - SAME

As the BMW weaves back and forth, Hardy, without looking
 down, reaches in the driver's side door pocket and pulls out
 a 3-inch folding survivor's knife, placing it between his
 legs.

Theresa glances at the knife, looks to Hardy's fixed jaw, and turns back to the road speeding by, severe worry on her face mixed with pride.

EXT. CITY STREETS - SAME

The BMW SQUEALS around a corner, SQUEALS around another, then SCREECHES to a stop in a driveway.

EXT. JANICE'S HOME - DRIVEWAY

Hardy's black BMW idles.

INT. BLACK BMW

Theresa looks to Hardy.

THERESA
What you going to do?

HARDY
Stop him.

Hardy rolls down the driver's side window and leans on the HORN for several seconds.

He continues with the HORN in short bursts until the front porch light comes on.

HARDY (CONT'D)
(yells out the window)
Come out, you son of a bitch.

He unfolds the knife, leaving it on the seat between his legs, then blasts the HORN again.

The front door opens with Rob stumbling out, Janice not far behind. Hardy continues to honk his HORN until Rob makes it to the driveway.

ROB
What the fuck?

EXT. JANICE'S HOME - DRIVEWAY

Hardy looks past Rob to Janice.

HARDY
You okay, sweetie?

She nods but a red welt on her face says otherwise.

ROB
(to Hardy)
You got no right to interfere with
my family.

HARDY
Your family?

ROB
That's right.

HARDY
I'm not leaving 'til I know Janice
and the kids are all right.

Rob moves to the driver's window, a few feet away from Hardy,
and yells...

ROB
When you gonna learn, they're not
your fuckin' family!

Rob turns and begins walking back to the house.

INT. BLACK BMW - SAME

Hardy grips the knife with his left hand and leans on the
HORN with his right hand.

Rob turns.

ROB
(yells)
The fuck? Stop.

HARDY
Make me.

EXT. BLACK BMW - SAME

Janice comes toward Rob and takes his arm, trying to urge him
away. Hardy stops honking.

JANICE
(soft voice)
Come on, Rob. Come inside.

Rob flings Janice back onto the ground.

Hardy leans on the HORN.

Rob moves toward the car and kicks the driver's side door.

ROB
Stop with the fucking horn.

Hardy leans out the window to inspect the dent. He honks the HORN again.

Rob charges the car and thrusts his arm inside.

INT. BLACK BMW - SAME

Rob's hand comes in the car window and tries to pull Hardy's hand off the horn but Hardy grabs him by the wrist and yanks Rob's arm into the car, Rob's torso now filling the window.

Hardy's knife goes to work, viciously stabbing Rob, with each thrust, he punctuates with a syllable...

HARDY
You-hit-my-daughter-you-piece-of-shit.

Hardy lets go of Rob's wrist and Rob stumbles back, looking down at his bleeding torso in shock.

EXT. BLACK BMW

Rob falls to his knees on the concrete driveway and grabs his chest.

Janice gets up cautiously.

JANICE
Dad! Get out of here.

Hardy grins watching Rob suffer, blood oozing out of the stab wounds.

Hardy opens the door and hobbles over to Rob - no cane needed. He bends down.

HARDY
(whispers)
You hit my daughter. Now, die.

Rob looks up at Hardy in shock, then Hardy bitch slaps him back onto the driveway.

HARDY (CONT'D)
You're not so tough.

Janice comes to Rob and looks up at Hardy.

HARDY (CONT'D)
Help me put him in the trunk.

Hardy grabs Rob's arm.

JANICE
Dad!

HARDY
(tugs on Rob's arm)
Come on.

JANICE
No. I got this. You need to leave -
now!

Hardy looks to Theresa in the car and down at the bloody knife in his hand. He drops Rob's arm.

THERESA
Michael?!

Hardy moves to his car and gets in, closing the door, but waits, looking to Janice.

JANICE
GO!

Hardy backs out of the driveway and takes off.

Janice takes out her phone and kneels next to Rob.

Rob WHEEZES, unable to speak, clutching at his stomach and chest, disoriented and in pain.

JANICE (CONT'D)
(whispers)
You're gonna say you got mugged.

Rob's mouth opens disbelief. He shakes his head and looks down at his chest. Between GASPS...

ROB
But he--

JANICE
If you don't, I don't call 911 and
you bleed out.

INT. BLACK BMW

Hardy drives through suburban neighborhoods. He shakes with the adrenalin aftermath of the fight.

HARDY
He hit her.

EXT. CITY STREETS

The BMW cruises down city streets.

HARDY (O.S.)
You saw it, he put his hands on me.
What was I supposed to do?

THERESA (O.S.)
What you had to.

INT. BLACK BMW - SAME

THERESA
This'll be three strikes, Michael.

HARDY
Not if Rob doesn't say anything.

Theresa notices something's on Hardy's shirt and takes a closer look.

THERESA
There's - there's blood all over
you.

Hardy looks down at his shirt, street lights through tree branches partially illuminate the mess.

He stops at a traffic light and slouches down so no one can see. He glances in his side and rearview mirrors, windows down - listening for sirens.

The light changes, Hardy spots a "Wal-Mart" sign half a block away, changes lanes, and pulls in, stopping far away from cars in the parking lot - under a light pole.

EXT. WAL-MART PARKING LOT - SAME

The BMW idles.

THERESA (O.S.)
What now?

INT. BLACK BMW - SAME

Hardy checks the mirrors again - his eyes wide, breath coming heavy. It's been 25 years since he's been in a fight - he's juiced.

HARDY

Got to wipe down the car.

Hardy's on a mission, plotting in real time. He turns off the engine. Theresa grabs his cane and gets out.

EXT. WAL-MART PARKING LOT

Hardy exits the car. Under the parking lot lights, Hardy looks down - most of the blood on his shirt, some on his pants. He shakes his head.

HARDY

Fuck.

Theresa hands Hardy his cane and stops - shocked by the amount of blood.

HARDY (CONT'D)

I got clothes in the trunk.

Theresa opens the trunks, reaches in and brings out an armful of clothes.

HARDY (CONT'D)

Give me the sweatshirt.

Theresa hands it over, her mouth open in disbelief.

THERESA

You cut?

HARDY

I don't think so.

Hardy puts his sweatshirt on.

Theresa takes some Kleenex from her purse and moves to Hardy's face. He backs away.

THERESA

There's blood.

HARDY

Oh.

She wets the Kleenex with spit and rubs off some of the red. She takes hold of his jaw and moves it back and forth in the dim light. She studies her handiwork, then looks at his arms and cleans up a few spots. She nods.

HARDY (CONT'D)
How much money we got?

THERESA
About ten dollars.

HARDY
We need bleach and some rags - to
wipe down the car.

Hardy moves to an abandoned grocery cart, puts in his cane and shuffles toward Mal-Mart, continually glancing around. Theresa tosses the extra clothes in the cart and takes his arm.

INT. WAL-MART

A GREETER (wears a red vest, about Hardy's age, badge reads "Chuck") perks up just as they pass the automated entrance doors. He puts on a smile.

CHUCK
Welcome to Wal-Mart. Can I help
with you anything today?

Hardy gives him a sarcastic look. Theresa clutches his arm.

THERESA
No thanks.

LATER:

INT. WAL-MART OUTSIDE OF BATHROOMS

Their cart has a small bottle of bleach, some rags, a package of Oreos, Hardy's old clothes, and his cane. He eyes the Oreos.

HARDY
You get double-stuffed?

Theresa picks up the package and looks it over.

THERESA
Sorry. I'll go--

HARDY

You take care of it while I get washed up. (beat) Out to call Jimmy.

THERESA

(nods her head)
Yeah.

HARDY

You know, just in case. Call him for me.

Theresa nods. Hardy takes his cane from the cart, Theresa handing him a change of clothes.

She pats him on the back and he shuffles into the men's room.

INT. WAL-MART

Theresa moves the cart through the store and finds a quiet place with no one around. She dials a number. We hear five RINGS and the call goes to voice mail.

JIMMY BLATT (O.S.)

You've reach the law offices of James Blatt. I'm unavailable now. Please leave a message with your number.

BEEP.

THERESA

Hey, Jimmy - it's Theresa. I'm calling for Michael, Michael Hardy. We might need your help. Expect Michael to use his one call for you.

Theresa ends the call and stares at the phone.

INT. WAL-MART BATHROOM - SAME

Hardy stands at the mirror inspecting the mess. He looks closely at his face and head in the mirror's bright lights and touches some blood spots on his head.

He runs water in the sink splashing it in his face and head, rubbing vigorously. He looks at his dripping face in the mirror and grins, the fearless gangster in the reflection.

HARDY

I'm back.

INT. WAL-MART STORE - SAME

Theresa wheels the cart over to the Oreo cookie display and exchanges their regular Oreos for Double-Stuffed.

She heads toward the restroom but stops - a pretty dress catches her eye. She pauses, takes it off the rack and holds it up to her body. She looks around for a mirror, spots one and walks over to stand in front of it.

For a moment she sees the young girl she used to be - happy - beautiful - not in danger. She spots a pretty top and picks it up, tossing the dress on a rack. She holds the top in front of her. She SIGHS, a smile spreading across her face.

INT. WAL-MART RESTROOM - SAME

Hardy removes his bloody shirt and pants, stands in his underwear. He grabs handfuls of paper towels and dries himself, tossing the dirty paper towels on the sink counter. He puts on an XXL clean blue polo and pulls on a pair of gray sweat pants.

Hardy pulls the three-inch survivor's knife out of bloody pants and washes it in the sink with hot water and soap, wiping it down with paper towels so that his fingers don't touch it.

He tosses the knife into the pile bloody clothes. As he drops them into the open trash bin by the door, a TEEN BOY enters the bathroom and runs into Hardy.

INT. WAL-MART - SAME

Theresa has another top she's holding up in front of the mirror, lost in the moment

SALES ASSOCIATE (O.S.)

May I help you with anything?

Theresa whirls to find a SALES ASSOCIATE (middle-aged woman).

THERESA

No. I mean - no.

SALES ASSOCIATE

That looks pretty on you.

THERESA

Yeah, it does, doesn't it?

SALES ASSOCIATE

We have those in other colors if--

THERESA

Nah. Just ... looking.

INT. WAL-MART BATHROOM - SAME

Hardy gives the Teen a look. The Teen wheels around and leaves.

Hardy takes a final trip to the sink to scrub his hands and dry himself with more paper towels. A last check in the mirror. He takes all the used paper towels and drops them on top of everything in the trash bin.

One more look around - his cane! He moves to the sink to retrieve it and hobbles out the door.

EXT. WAL-MART RESTROOM

Hardy looks around for Theresa - can't spot her. He glances around for cops, anyone who's a threat.

He wanders out into the store, still searching for her. He pulls out his phone.

INT. WAL-MART - SAME

Theresa sighs and re-racks the tops, the Sales Associate taking the dress to put away. Theresa's phone RINGS.

CU Phone ID: Michael Hardy

THERESA

Shit. (answers the phone) Michael, you ready?

HARDY

(anxious)
Where are you?

THERESA

I'll be right there.

Theresa wheels the cart over to Hardy. He's pissed.

HARDY
If I need to make a move, I got to
know where you are.

THERESA
(puts her hand on his
shoulder)
Sorry.

Hardy's not happy, but he's back to business.

HARDY
Hear from Jimmy?

THERESA
Left him a message. Anything from
Janice?

Hardy shakes his head and puts his cane in the basket. He spots the Oreos and nods his approval at Theresa.

LATER:

EXT. WAL-MART PARKING LOT - CAR

A pile of pink rags are on the asphalt next to the car. Theresa sits in the driver's seat wiping the steering wheel one last time with a rag, the bottle of bleach in her other hand. She winces and holds her breath at the harsh odor.

Hardy leans into the open door and looks things over.

THERESA
We should've got gloves.

INT. BLACK BMW

HARDY
CSI won't find shit.

Theresa is overwhelmed by the harsh odor and pushes past Hardy to get out of the car.

EXT. WAL-MART PARKING LOT - CAR

THERESA
Phew. Think I got everything.

Hardy pulls out his phone and looks at it.

HARDY

Damn.

THERESA

Janice?

HARDY

Yeah. Called, texted, still nothing.

Theresa picks up the rags and tosses them in a trash barrel.

HARDY (CONT'D)

John. Got to see John.

EXT. 420 SMOKE SHOP - LIGHTS OFF - LATE NIGHT

JOHN (O.S.)

Lord, your son Michael Hardy is beset upon by great calamities which threaten his life and those he loves.

INT. 420 SMOKE SHOP - SAME

No lights. John holds hands with Michael and Theresa in a small circle by the counter, their heads bowed.

JOHN

Guide him into your light and love. Direct his path in these trying times. (beat) I beseech you in the name of Jesus. (beat) Amen.

HARDY

Amen.

THERESA

Amen.

They let go of their hands and look to each other with solemn eyes.

HARDY

(whispers)
Chance. We got to get Chance.

JOHN

I can go - check things out, you know. Bring him back.

THERESA

John, you've done too much already.

Hardy looks out the front window of the shop as if touching a memory - shakes his head.

HARDY

Can't run. (looks down at his legs)
Whatever's going to happen will
happen.

JOHN

Yeah, give it to God.

Theresa nods and hugs Hardy's shoulders.

INT. BLACK BMW - SAN DIEGO CITY STREETS - 2 BLOCKS FROM
HARDY'S APT - LATER

Hardy pulls over, the car idling.

HARDY

Call me if it's clear.

THERESA

I'll call either way. I'll have my
hand in my pocket ready to speed
dial.

HARDY

Okay.

Theresa exits the car and leans back into the window.

THERESA

No running.

HARDY

(looks at his legs,
laughs)
How can I?

She needs his promise and gives him that look.

HARDY (CONT'D)

Okay. No running.

Hardy watches her scamper across the street against light traffic and disappear into the darkness.

He glances at his phone - no messages. He shuts off the engine.

To ease his angst, Hardy turns on the radio. Dean Martin's "You're Nobody til Somebody Love You" fills the car. He leans back, closes his eyes, and shakes his head.

HARDY (CONT'D)
(Whispers to himself)
Lorenzo fucking Conti.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK:

EXT. STREET - BROOKLYN - NIGHT - EARLY 1970

SUPER: Brooklyn 1970

Dean Martin's "You're Nobody til Somebody Love You" plays.

The weather's raw and windy. A late-model Cadillac pulls into a parking space on the street, steam coming from a manhole cover.

A LARGE MAN gets out, looks around, and flips up the collar of his coat against the wind. He moves to the sidewalk walking toward the restaurant, trying not draw attention.

The Large Man is HARDY (25, hulking, 250 lbs, comb-over, Fu Manchu, large Star of David around his neck, black leather car coat).

EXT. ANGELO'S RESTAURANT - BROOKLYN - SAME

Looks like it's been here since the 30s, a neon sign the only thing new about it.

Hardy approaches the front door, looks around, then enters.

INT. ANGELO'S RESTAURANT - BROOKLYN - SAME

Dark mahogany everywhere. The Dean Martin SONG continues from the bar.

Hardy slips \$20 to the MAITRE D' and leans in to whisper something. The Maitre D' nods and motions Hardy to follow.

HARDY (V.O.)
I come to see Louis Milito. Louis runs the five fingers car theft ring. I think I'm the middle finger. I run cars out to the west coast for my mother to sell. He wants something, but won't talk about it on the phone.

Chianti bottles hang from the ceiling along with sleeves of garlic - you can smell the Italian.

They pass empty red leather booths with red-and-white checked tablecloths, candles in Chianti bottles. They stop at a back booth.

LOUIS (LOUIE) MILITO (30, slicked back dark hair, dark suit, all Italian) waves his hand to Hardy to take a seat, and Hardy slides in.

Louis nods and smiles.

LOUIS
Lookin' good, Michael.

HARDY
You too, Louis.

A WAITRESS comes to the table. Louis points to his empty wine glass.

LOUIS
Another ... and Michael?

HARDY
(to Waitress)
Sprite.

The Waitress leaves.

LOUIS
So, tell me, how's Sammy and Ally
Boy working out?

HARDY
Done a couple jobs with them.
They're learning.

LOUIS
(chuckles)
Good. And Queenie, how's she making
out with the cars?

HARDY
I drive them out, she sells them to
rich people on golf courses.

LOUIS
You drive them?

HARDY
I hate paying someone to see
America in a new Cadillac.

LOUIS

(grins)

I got to get out to La Costa - maybe play some golf - take your mother to dinner. (beat) Hey, let's eat, then we can talk.

HARDY

(picks up the menu)

What's good?

LOUIS

What do you like?

LATER:

A chunk of Italian bread smothered in butter sops up rich tomato gravy. It's stuffed into a mouth framed by a brown Fu Manchu moustache. It's Hardy finishing his meal.

Hardy washes down his last bite with his Sprite. He sets his glass down and looks at Louis.

HARDY

What's the problem, Louis - girlfriend stop putting out?

LOUIS

Nah, I got some cleaning to do. Having trouble finding someone ... reliable. You know, someone outside the family.

HARDY

What's it pay?

LOUIS

You don't want any of this, Michael.

HARDY

How do you know?

LOUIS

(leans in, whispers)

You ever done a hit?

HARDY

I'm Bugsy Siegel's godson. What do you think?

Louis gives back an unsatisfied stare.

HARDY (CONT'D)

I whacked five guys - that I know of.

LOUIS

(snorts)

Know of?

HARDY

Didn't wait around to watch them die.

Louis leans back and pulls out a fresh pack of unfiltered Raleighs from his suit pocket. He thumps it on the table. The red wine in his glass ripples with each thud.

His manicured nails pull the thin red tab to remove the cellophane wrapper, then methodically peel back the silver foil corner seal, tearing it off.

He taps out a cigarette and stares at Hardy, not to challenge his truth, but sizing him up.

Louis takes out a gold Cartier lighter, flicks it, and fires up his Raleigh. He takes a slow drag and sighs, smoke wandering out his nose and mouth toward the ceiling.

The Waitress comes to clean their table but Louis waves her off. He leans in.

LOUIS

I got contracts coming at me all the time - mostly thinning out competition. Doesn't pay much.

HARDY

What's *much* mean?

LOUIS

Five grand.

HARDY

Jesus. (beat) How many you got?

LOUIS

Two now. More comin' every three, four weeks. If you're interested, I can cut you a deal.

Hardy gives a nod for Louis to continue.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

Right now you get cars for 600 each.

(MORE)

LOUIS (CONT'D)

You take a contract, I'll give you ten cars - you pocket an extra grand.

Hardy studies him, cocks his head, and smiles.

HARDY

How do you like them - one in the head, one in the heart?

Louis nods, reaches in his suit and pulls out a thick manila envelope which he slides across the table. Hardy puts it inside his coat.

LOUIS

Don't you want to look? It's kind of complicated.

HARDY

No.

LOUIS

It's Lorenzo Conti - and fifty percent down.

HARDY

(whispers)

Lorenzo fuckin' Conti? I'd do him for free for what he did to that girl.

LOUIS

(whispers)

Like I said, it's complicated. He's number two man for Gambino - which means he's made.

Louis takes another long drag and taps his ashes into the pewter ashtray on the table.

HARDY

(nods)

I'll take it.

Louis looks around, leans back in the booth, arms wide, big smile - worries gone.

LOUIS

They make a great lasagna here, don't they?

Louis stubs out his Raleigh, stands, peels off a C-note from a wad of cash and slaps it on the table.

Hardy slides out of the booth and stands. He snatches a pewter salt shaker and slips it into his car coat. Louis spots the move and gives Hardy a questioning look.

HARDY

I collect 'em - but only if the
food's good.

BACK TO SCENE

EXT. SAN DIEGO CITY STREETS 2012 - NIGHT

Hardy's black BMW with its dented door is parked in the same place, windows rolled down. Dean Martin's song finishes.

A siren WAILS in the distance.

INT. BLACK BMW - SAME

Hardy perks up, sits forward, eyes alert, searching mirrors and the streets for what's going down. Another siren joins the first, now closer.

He starts the BMW, lights off.

His phone BEEPS and he looks down. A message from Theresa.

CU Phone: [coming]

A few moments later he spots her running toward the car from out of the shadows, her hands filled with two duffle bags, Chance on a leash. She waves at him and YELLS.

THERESA

Go! GO!

FADE OUT: