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by Peter breeze

Attrition

FADE IN:

INT. STARLITE BAR - SHEEPSHEAD BAY - BROOKLYN, N.Y. - DAY
Dimly lit back room filled with cartons and boxes.
Windows painted black and nailed shut.
In the middle of the room is a card table illuminated by
a single over-head light.
Four men play cards.
TONY (V.O.)
That's me with the cigar. Tony (Crack
Shot) Dipaola.
Crack Shot, early fifties, the oldest of the group, grey
hair, a nasty scar on his right cheek, over-weight.
TONY (V.O.)(CONT'D)
Sittin across from me is RICHIE (STIFFY)
STAFFARDI.
Stiffy, in his late twenties, with rotted teeth, a pasty

Stiffy, in his late twenties, with rotted teeth, a pasty complexion on a thin wiry frame.

TONY (V.O.)(CONT'D) Sittin on my right is VINCENT (BLADE) BANDANOCCI.

Blade, mid-fifties, is medium in height and build. He has dark hair and always looks like he needs a shave. Strapped to his left leg can be seen a ten inch hunting knife.

> TONY (V.O.)(CONT'D) On my left is JOEY (NEEDLE NOSE) MANAGIA.

Needle's, mid thirties, on the thin side but nowhere near Stiffy. He has thin dark hair and covers it with a Yankee cap. His long thin nose gives his nickname away.

> TONY (V.O.)(CONT'D) This represents the entire workforce of the Poppalardi Family Organization.

TOMMY, the bartender enters the room and interrupts the card game.

TOMMY Hey Tony, BIG PETEY wants to see you in his office. TONY

Now?

TOMMY

Yeah... Now.

TONY Did he say what it was about?

TOMMY No, but it sounded pretty important. You better get over there right away.

Tony throws his cards down.

TONY Well fellas... Duty calls. Gotta see what the boss wants.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

A small one room office over a Dry Cleaners.

Tony walks the short block to his office. He walks up a flight of stairs and knocks on an office door which reads: "AJAX PLUMBING & HEATING INC."

From inside the office.

BIG PETEY Yeah... Who is it?

From outside the door.

TONY It's Tony. Tommy the bartender told me you wanted to see me.

BIG PETEY C'mon in Tony.

Tony enters.

Peter (Big Petey) Popalardi, early fifties, short, fat, dark hair, a stumpy cigar dangles out the corner of his mouth.

He sits behind a desk in front of a big double window with no shades.

Big Petey puts his pen down and looks up as he flicks cigar ashes in an ashtray.

BIG PETEY (CONT'D) Sit down Tony. I want to talk to you.

Uncomfortable at the request.

Tony nervously asks.

TONY

What's up Petey?

BIG PETEY

Tony, I gotta problem with some scumbag over in Jersey that's light in his deliveries. I need you to take care of this punk.

A sound of relief in his voice.

TONY Is that all? Sure Petey, I'll take care of it. No problem boss.

BIG PETEY

Good.

TONY Who are we talkin about here?

BIG PETEY

It's Louie Lombardi on Canal Street in Hoboken. We used to use his warehouse when we were highjacking those trailers out of Newark Airport.

TONY

I remember... I never trusted that punk. Somethin about his shifty eyes.

BIG PETEY

I got him doin collections for me now and every week he's comin up light.

Big Petey takes the cigar from his mouth and points it at Tony.

BIG PETEY (CONT'D) He's stealin from me Tony.

TONY

How far do you want me to go with this punk?

BIG PETEY Don't burn him yet. Just rough him up for now.

TONY I'll take care of it. Good as done.

Big Petey leans back in his chair.

A more informal demeanor comes over him.

BIG PETEY

So Tony... How long you been workin for me?

TONY

Close to twenty five years Petey. Started when you broke away from the Colombo's. Took me with you. Remember?

BIG PETEY Yeah... I think that was '85.

TONY We had some good times in those early days. Didn't we boss?

Big Petey looks up at the ceiling, smiling.

BIG PETEY Yeah, not like today.

TONY

I know, now it's kill, kill, kill. What ever happened to broken fingers and busted knee caps?

He relights his cigar, taking the opportunity to change the subject.

BIG PETEY

Roxy was on the phone with Jenna the other day. She sez you're thinkin bout retiring.

TONY

Well, yes... it has been on my mind lately. Jenna wants to go down to Boca Raton. Her sister is there.

BIG PETEY

Maybe we can work something out. I believe in rewarding faithful employees.

TONY

That would be great boss. It's gettin hard for me. This has become a young guys job.

BIG PETEY Here's the deal. After you take care of Louie, come back here and we'll talk.

TONY

I knew you would take care of me boss. I told Jenna the other day.

Big Petey changes the tone in his voice and gets back to business.

BIG PETEY

Next Friday night at 11:30 swing by Louie's warehouse. The side door will be unlocked. I set it up with the night watchman.

TONY How much does he know?

BIG PETEY

Nothing. All he has to do is leave the side door unlocked. He'll be at the allnight diner down the street on a coffee break.

TONY

Where's Louie gonna be?

BIG PETEY He should be upstairs workin in his office.

Petey leans forward in his chair.

BIG PETEY (CONT'D) I want you to hurt him bad. Make him understand the importance of turning ALL his collections over to me.

TONY It's as good as done.

Tony gets up.

BIG PETEY

Remember... This Friday night, 11:30, side door, it's all set. Be there Tony, I'm counting on you. Tony turns around and leaves.

INT. STARLITE BAR - BACK ROOM - DAY

Tony casually walks into the back room and returns to his seat, as if nothing happened.

He looks around the table.

TONY Blades, looks like you been winning some pots since I left. That's all gonna change, now that I'm back.

Stiffy pipes up.

STIFFY What was THAT all about Tony?

TONY

What?

STIFFY Your invite to Big Petey's.

TONY

Ah Nuthin.

STIFFY

Nuthin? What do ya mean nuthin? Big Petey calls you for a face-to-face and you tell us it's nuthin.

Blades joins in and appeals to Tony.

BLADES I thought we were all family here. You can trust us.

TONY Okay Okay... I'll tell ya. Petey wants me to rough some guy up in Jersey. No big deal.

Needle's holds his hands out, palms up.

NEEDLE NOSE Why didn't he pick me? I have a new baseball bat I wanna break in.

TONY I don't know. Maybe it has something to do with me retiring. Incredulous look on Blades face.

BLADES You told him you wanna retire?

TONY Not exactly. Jenna was talking to Petey's wife Roxy on the phone and she mentioned it in passing.

Leaning over closer.

BLADES What did Big Petey say?

TONY After I do this job Friday, we're gonna talk about it.

EXT. GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE - FRIDAY - NIGHT

Tony drives his '89 Honda Civic across the bridge.

When he reaches the other side, he spots a big green sign which reads: "WELCOME TO NEW JERSEY."

He looks down at the dash board and reads the digital clock: 10:55PM.

He lights up an Ashton Double Corona, turns up the volume on Coast To Coast with George Noory and rolls down the windows.

He gazes at the oncoming headlights and begins to plan the operation.

TONY (V.O.) I think I'll bring the Glock and a bat. The Glock to scare the crap out of him and the bat to break his knee cap.

His face shows the strain of all the detail involved.

TONY (V.O.) Maybe the Uzi instead. What if it's a trap? The Uzi will do the job. Twenty caps in seven seconds. Can't beat that for fire power.

The Honda turns off the highway and immediately enters a seedy part of town.

Rows of warehouses on dimly lit streets.

Cars parked in the shadows, abandoned, in various stages of being stripped. Dumpsters overflowed with torn open black plastic garbage bags. Tony pulls up to a warehouse. A big sign out front reads: "LOUIS P. LOMBARDI IMPORTS-EXPORTS." He looks up and spots a light in a second floor window. He slides out from behind the wheel and walks back to the trunk. Opens it, pulls out a baseball bat and a fully loaded 9mm Uzi. Sneaks around to the side of the warehouse and puts an ear on the metal door. He tries the door knob. Slowly turns it. Carefully, he pushes slightly on the heavy metal door. It creaks open. Pitch dark inside. Tony slowly puts one foot in the building. Follows with the other. He gently closes the door behind him. It's pitch black. Off in the distance he spots a dim light, high on the second floor. Louie's office. Eyes squinting he now makes a move toward some metal stairs which he can barely make out in the dark. A burst of bright light now explodes in his eyes, as all the lights in the warehouse are simultaneously turned on. Individual flashes temporarily blind him. Tony panics. He flips off the safety with his thumb and starts spraying the place with his Uzi. People scream. Sounds of bullets ricochet off metal. He holds down the trigger until all the bullets are spent. In a nano second it's all over.

He stands there, baseball bat in one hand, smoking Uzi in the other.

Tony's eyes slowly adjust to the bright light as he surveys the scene.

Utter and complete shock comes over his face.

He first looks up at a giant banner hung from the catwalk above the warehouse floor. It reads: "HAPPY RETIREMENT TONY - FROM THE BOYS."

He looks down to see a long table, gayly decorated with place-settings, party hats, flowers, pitchers of beer and bottles of wine.

Wrapped gifts piled up in one corner. A golf bag with a big red bow on top.

Worst of all, Jenna, with a camera still in her hand, laying in a pool of blood, dead. Big Petey, Roxy, Blades, Stiffy, Needles and even Louie all dead.

Tony stands motionless, eyes fixed on the carnage before him.

The baseball bat and Uzi fall from his hands.

A tear in the corner of one eye.

SUPER: SEVERAL MONTHS LATER

INT. STORMVILLE PRISON - OAKMONT, NEW YORK - DAY

Tony wears a striped suit, sits on a cot in a prison cell.

Name tag on his shirt reads: "DIPAOLA 518309."

In his hand is a travel magazine.

It's opened to an article entitled: "TEN BEST PLACES TO SPEND YOUR RETIREMENT."

FADE OUT:

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