

HAVEN LOST

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. CITY HALL - DAY

1936

On the steps of City Hall, three male corpses lay in pools of blood.

Around the dead bodies are panicking civilians, scattering to and fro, or cowering in fear.

Down in the street, a man holds a smoking Tommy Gun. He turns around as POLICE OFFICERS point their weapons at him and shout barely audible words at him.

The man is MICHAEL SORIANO, an every-day looking chap in a pinstripe suit. There's nothing truly defining about his appearance, except for something in his eyes. They show a glimpse of a haunted man.

Two OFFICERS jump at him, turn him around, pin him against a car, and cuff him. Michael doesn't resist. He cooperates.

COP

You're going away for a while,
wise guy.

Michael nods his head, grimacing.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Michael calmly sits in the interrogation room, his hands folded, resting on the table.

The door opens, and DET. MARK GALLAGHER enters, cup of coffee in one hand, some papers in the other. Det. Gallagher is a sarcastic, passive jerk.

He sits down across from Michael, eyeing him.

DET. GALLAGHER

I'm Detective Mark Gallagher.

Michael extends his hand, and Det. Gallagher just looks at it curiously. He then returns his gaze to Michael.

DET. GALLAGHER

As much as I would love to become
best friends, I have time
constraints. So, if you please,
let's not waste any time and get
(MORE)

DET. GALLAGHER (cont'd)
down to business. What happened
out there today?

MICHAEL
It's pretty obvious what happened
out there, detective. Those men
are dead, and I shot them.

Det. Gallagher writes something on one of the papers.

DET. GALLAGHER
I'll go ahead and take that as
your confession. That was easy
enough. Honesty is always the best
policy, Mr. Soriano. Even when
you're a murderer.

MICHAEL
Call me Michael.

DET. GALLAGHER
I know that you know that you're
going to prison for a long time.
You're feeling scared and
insecure, I'm sure, but really,
I'm not a good candidate to be
your Pen Pal.

MICHAEL
Exchanging first names is a common
courtesy. Even criminals and cops
can be courteous.

DET. GALLAGHER
I use first names for friends and
colleagues and sometimes animals.
I'm going to keep this as
professional as I can between us.

MICHAEL
Very well. I understand.

Det. Gallagher takes out a cigarette and lights it.

DET. GALLAGHER
You smoke?

MICHAEL
Yes.

Michael extends his hand for a cigarette, and Det. Gallagher
puts the cigarette case back in his pocket.

DET. GALLAGHER

Good, then you won't mind if I do.

Michael brings his hand back in, looking at Det. Gallagher with a combination of amusement and irritation.

DET. GALLAGHER

The city is taking particular interest in this case because of the high profiles and reputations of the men you shot this afternoon. Men that you were once associated with, correct?

MICHAEL

Correct.

DET. GALLAGHER

We have our own assumptions about what the Stucchio family is involved in. Unfortunately, we've never been able to prove it, as you well know when they walked today. If you're willing to cooperate, we may be able to strike a deal with the city council.

MICHAEL

Keep it. I've got nothing left. Nobody to protect. Nothing to hide.

DET. GALLAGHER

Good. Less strings for me to bust my ass to pull.

Det. Gallagher slides a paper over to Michael, as well as a pencil.

DET. GALLAGHER

You need to be aware that everything you say in this room is being listened to, recorded, and may be used in court against you.

MICHAEL

I'm aware.

DET. GALLAGHER

Good. Sign your soul away, then.

Michael signs the paper and slides it back to Det. Gallagher.

DET. GALLAGHER

Now, what's your involvement with the Stucchios?

MICHAEL

For this to make any sense, and for you to get any of the information you want, I'd have to go to the beginning. It's a long story.

Det. Gallagher inhales deeply on his cigarette.

DET. GALLAGHER

As long as it's not a boring story, I've got plenty of time. I have a short attention span. It's why I became a cop.

MICHAEL

Very well.

FADE TO:

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

A large delivery truck cruises down the road.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

It was three years ago. I was a delivery man, and I often made deliveries at the Stucchio Deli and Diner. Over the years, I'd gotten to know them fairly well.

The truck stops in front of the little diner/deli, and Michael gets out of the truck.

He walks to the back of it, opens the doors, grabs a box, and carries it into the diner.

INT. STUCCHIO DINER - DAY

Michael steps inside the diner.

Behind the counter, PAULIE STUCCHIO is serving a regular customer, VICKY WILLIS.

Paulie is very Italian.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

Paulie Stucchio ran the deli. He was Don Stucchio's only son, and heir to the family business when the Don died.

PAULIE

All right, there you go, Vicky. I recommend you use that within the next two days, otherwise it may spoil.

VICKY

Don't worry, Paulie. I'm making it for tonight.

PAULIE

Well no worries, then. Anything special you're preparing?

VICKY

I'm doing a veal scallopini. It's Jim's birthday tonight, so I'm making him something special.

PAULIE

Terrific. Don't let the meat cook for too long. Nothing worse than over cooked veal.

VICKY

I know, I've got it covered. Thanks Paulie.

PAULIE

It's my pleasure. I live to serve.

VICKY

You're too kind. Take care. I'll see you next week. Give my regards to the family.

Vicky turns to leave.

PAULIE

Will do. We'll see you soon. Tell Jim I says Happy Birthday.

VICKY

I will.

Vicky walks past Michael, who nods his head curtly.

MICHAEL

Ma'am.

VICKY

Good afternoon.

Vicky walks out, and we now notice that one of the tables in the diner is occupied.

Sitting at it is JOEY LEONE, and the VELTRI brothers, NEIL and VINNIE.

Joey fixes his cold eyes on Michael, who nods as he walks by, approaching the counter.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

Joey was the family's hired gun. Explosive and violent temper. If the man had a heart, it was frozen solid years ago. A real loose cannon, that one. You never wanted him to pay you a visit.

MICHAEL

Morning, Paulie.

PAULIE

Hey, Michael! How ya doin'?

MICHAEL

I'm healthy and I'm working.

PAULIE

Amen for that, right?

MICHAEL

Yeah.

Michael sets the box down onto the counter, and Paulie takes it and disappears into the back.

THERESA STUCCHIO walks out of the kitchen, a smile on her face.

THERESA

Hey, Mikey! I thought I heard your sweet voice! How are you, my boy?

MICHAEL (V.O.)

Theresa Stucchio was the Don's wife. A real sweet lady. The classic Italian. I always wondered
(MORE)

MICHAEL (cont'd)
what she was doing with a man like
the Don. She treated everyone like
family.

MICHAEL
I'm okay, Mrs. Stucchio. How are
you?

THERESA
Busy as always! You just got
married, didn't you?

MICHAEL
Last week, yeah.

THERESA
Happy?

MICHAEL
Oh, yes. She's great.

THERESA
Fabulous. You should bring her in
for dinner one night.

MICHAEL
I would love to, but money is
really tight with us right now.

THERESA
It's on the house.

MICHAEL
No, I couldn't.

THERESA
Nonsense. I insist.

MICHAEL
Really?

THERESA
Of course! Please, anytime.

MICHAEL
Thank you, Mrs. Stucchio.

THERESA
Bah. But I've got sauce on that
needs attending to. Take care of
yourself. Come and see us anytime.

MICHAEL

I will. Take care.

Theresa walks back into the kitchen, and Paulie returns from the back, an envelope in his hand.

PAULIE

Here you go, Mikey.

Paulie hands Michael the envelope, who takes it.

MICHAEL

Thanks, Paulie.

PAULIE

There's a little something extra in there from Mr. Stucchio.

MICHAEL

No, I can't accept that.

PAULIE

It would be an insult if you didn't. It's a wedding gift.

MICHAEL

You're all too kind.

PAULIE

We take care of those that take care of us.

MICHAEL

I don't know how to thank you.

PAULIE

Then don't.

MICHAEL

Okay. I'll see you soon, then.

PAULIE

Lookin' forward to it. Say hi to the new Mrs. for me.

MICHAEL

I will. Give Mr. Stucchio my thanks.

MICHAEL

Of course.

Michael heads for the door, Joey's cold eyes still fixed on him.

Michael looks at him, smiles, and exits.

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

Michael's car rides through the streets, heading home.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

And that's the way it was for me.
I worked as much as I could, but
times were tough, and money was
hard to earn. I appreciated the
extra money from the Stucchio's,
and inside I hoped I would get
more.

The car pulls up to a small house. Michael gets out of the car, and enters the house.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Michael enters the kitchen, where his wife, JUDY SORIANO, is finishing cooking dinner.

MICHAEL

Hello, love.

JUDY

How was work?

Michael kisses Judy, and opens the ice box, getting some water.

MICHAEL

Slower than usual. I think they're
going to start cutting hours
again.

Judy moves dinner onto the kitchen table, and sits down.

JUDY

Why?

Michael joins her at the table.

MICHAEL

Because business is slow. People
are buying less and less.

JUDY

So then what are you going to do?

MICHAEL

I haven't figured it out yet.

JUDY

We can't lose the house.

MICHAEL

I know, Judy.

Michael takes some cash out of his pocket.

JUDY

Where did you get that?

MICHAEL

The Stucchio's gave it to us.

JUDY

What did you do?

MICHAEL

Nothing. It's a wedding present.

JUDY

I don't want you taking anything from those people, Michael. They're crooked.

MICHAEL

They're decent people.

Judy begins serving dinner.

JUDY

Maybe to you, but I've heard the same rumors everyone else has. I'm not a fool, and neither are you.

MICHAEL

I'm not getting involved with them, so relax.

JUDY

Good. Now say grace, please.

Michael and Judy both bow their heads for prayer.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Michael walks inside the warehouse he works from.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
Things only got worse for me from
there.

Michael's boss, ROBERT JOHNSON, approaches Michael, who is getting ready to climb inside his truck.

ROBERT
Michael, hold on a minute.

Michael turns and faces his boss.

MICHAEL
Yeah, boss?

ROBERT
Before you head out, I need to
talk to you. In the office.

A look of concern crosses Michael's face, but he follows his boss into the cramped little "office."

MICHAEL
What is it?

ROBERT
First, I just want you to know
that you're a great worker, and I
really appreciate how hard you
work for me.

MICHAEL
Thank you, Mr. Johnson.

ROBERT
Don't thank me yet.

MICHAEL
I have a feeling I'm not going to
like where this is going to go.

Robert sighs.

ROBERT
As you know, times are hard and
business has gotten slow.

MICHAEL
Yeah.

ROBERT

I've gotta lay half of my drivers off, and, as much as I'd love to keep you, you're still relatively new.

MICHAEL

I've worked here for two years, sir.

ROBERT

I know, but others still have seniority over you. Today will be your last route. I'm sorry, Michael. I wish I could keep you.

MICHAEL

I understand.

There's an awkward silence for a moment, and Michael shifts gears.

MICHAEL

Well, I better get started on my deliveries.

ROBERT

Right. I'll call you if it picks up again, yeah?

MICHAEL

Sure. Thanks, Robert.

Michael walks out.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

The delivery truck slowly rides through the city.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

I couldn't believe my luck, and although I didn't know it, for better or for worse, my luck was about to change.

INT. STUCCHIO DINER - DAY

Michael enters the diner with a small dolly filled with boxes.

Paulie is behind the counter.

Joey is sitting at one of the tables by himself.

PAULIE

Hey! Mikey! That time of the week
already?

MICHAEL

Yeah.

Paulie notices that something is bothering Michael.

PAULIE

Everything all right with you? You
seem kinda down.

MICHAEL

This is my last delivery.

Michael unloads the boxes onto the counter, and Paulie
stacks them onto the floor behind the counter.

PAULIE

What? For today?

MICHAEL

No. They're laying me off.

PAULIE

No shit?

MICHAEL

No shit.

PAULIE

You gotta be kidding me. You've
been with them a long time.

MICHAEL

Not long enough, apparently.
Seniority rules.

PAULIE

It's those damn unions. I'm sorry
for your troubles. Anything we can
do for ya?

Michael shakes his head.

MICHAEL

Not unless you can find me another
job.

Paulie ponders for a moment.

PAULIE

I wish I could. I'll keep my eyes open, huh?

MICHAEL

Yeah, thanks. I appreciate that. Are your parents in today?

PAULIE

Nah. Papa's got a business meeting and Ma's taking the day off.

MICHAEL

Give them my best wishes, yeah?

PAULIE

Sure thing, Mikey.

Paulie heads to the back and returns with an envelope, handing it to Michael.

PAULIE

Here you go.

MICHAEL

Thanks. It's been a pleasure.

PAULIE

Likewise. Stop in and see us sometime. Bring the wife.

MICHAEL

Will do.

Michael turns around and begins to leave.

PAULIE

Don't worry, Mikey. Things'll pick up. You'll see.

MICHAEL

I hope so.

Paulie picks up a box and walks to the back with it.

As Michael walks past the table Joey is sitting at, Joey raises his hand to stop him.

Michael looks at him.

MICHAEL

What's up, Joey?

JOEY

I know you've got trouble. You want to earn some extra dough, call this number.

Joey hands Michael a phone number.

MICHAEL

I don't -

JOEY

Don't say anything. Just think about it.

Joey goes back to reading his paper.

Michael looks at the number, and exits.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Michael enters his bedroom. It's dark, and Judy is lying in bed, asleep.

Michael undresses, and climbs into bed next to her. She stirs.

JUDY

Hey, honey.

MICHAEL

You went to bed early.

JUDY

Not feeling well.

MICHAEL

Should I call the doctor tomorrow?

JUDY

No, I'll be fine. Work okay?

MICHAEL (V.O.)

I couldn't find the words to tell her. She was sick, and the last thing I wanted was to place another burden on her.

Michael kisses her back.

MICHAEL

Work was good.

JUDY

'kay. Good.

Michael kisses the back of her neck, and she drifts back into sleep.

Michael rolls onto his back, and looks up at the ceiling, thinking.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Michael sits at the kitchen table, spreading jam onto a piece of bread.

Judy joins him, still looking ill.

JUDY

Good morning, dear.

MICHAEL

Feeling any better?

JUDY

I wish. I was hoping to do some gardening today.

MICHAEL

Sure I shouldn't call a doctor for you?

JUDY

I'll be fine. We can't afford a doctor right now, anyway. Just take care of work and I'll take care of me.

Michael takes a bite, thinking. He looks at Judy, wanting to give her the news.

JUDY

What is it?

Michael thinks some more, then smiles, shaking his head.

MICHAEL

Nothing. I've got to go to work. I love you. Get some rest.

JUDY
Have a good day.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Det. Gallagher puts out a cigarette, looking at Michael.

DET. GALLAGHER
So, you were deceptive to your
wife. Tsk, tsk.

MICHAEL
You would have done the same.

DET. GALLAGHER
On the contrary, I would not,
because I am not married.
Therefore, I have no reason to be
deceptive to anyone. I do hope
that you're not creating this
story to invoke some sort of pity
from me as to your reasoning for
committing your crimes.

MICHAEL
Absolutely not. I have no false
pretenses about my fate. I am not
telling you any of this in the
hopes that you might see me as a
better person than I am in
actuality.

DET. GALLAGHER
Good. Proceed.

EXT. FLOWER SHOP - DAY

Michael steps inside a flower shop.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
I went all over town looking for
another job.

EXT. BAKERY - DAY

Michael enters a bakery.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
I figured if I could get another
job, I wouldn't have to tell Judy
I was fired.

EXT. FISHING DOCKS - DAY

Michael speaks with a FISH SALESMAN.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
Unfortunately, everywhere I went,
I was given the same response.

EXT. TAXI HQ - DAY

Michael exits the city's Taxi HQ, shaking his head.

He puts a cigarette in his mouth, and searches his pockets
for some matches.

He pulls out the card that Joey gave him.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
I didn't trust Joey, and I knew
Judy told me not to get involved
with them, but I had to see what
he had to offer. A job is a job,
right?

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - DAY

Michael enters the house. Judy is sleeping on the couch.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
So, on my so-called "lunch hour,"
I went home and decided to call
the number Joey gave me.

Michael enters the kitchen, picks up the phone, and calls
the number.

JOEY (O.S.)
Joey Leone.

MICHAEL
Hey Joey, it's Michael. Michael
Soriano.

JOEY (O.S.)
Thought about my proposal?

MICHAEL

Yeah. I'll do it. When can I start?

JOEY (O.S.)

It's not a steady 9-5 job. This may just be a one-time thing.

MICHAEL

What exactly did you have in mind?

JOEY (O.S.)

Never mind that. Meet me at the diner tonight. 9 o'clock sharp. Don't be late.

MICHAEL

Wait, what do I tell my wife?

But the line is already dead. Michael hangs up.

MICHAEL

Oh, shit.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Judy lies on the couch, reading a book. A wastebasket is beside the couch.

Michael enters the living room, dressed to go out. Judy looks at him.

JUDY

Where are you going?

MICHAEL

I have to go out for a bit.

Judy struggles to sit up some.

JUDY

Out where?

MICHAEL

There's some work I need to do.

JUDY

At this time of night?

MICHAEL

Yeah. Robert wants to move some freight around the warehouse, and it's hard to do during normal

(MORE)

MICHAEL (cont'd)
operating hours.

JUDY
What time will you be home?

MICHAEL
I don't know. Late. You'll
probably be in bed.

JUDY
All right, I suppose.

Michael walks over and kisses Judy on the forehead.

MICHAEL
Get some rest. I'll see you in the
morning.

JUDY
Okay, I'll try. Have a good night.

MICHAEL
Thanks.

Michael walks out the front door, closing it behind him.

INT. MICHAEL'S CAR - NIGHT

Michael keeps his eyes on the road, looking nervous as hell.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
Lying to Judy like that left a bad
taste in my mouth, and my
conscience was already starting to
eat away at me. I had no idea what
to expect, and I couldn't shake
the feeling that I might not make
it home.

EXT. STUCCHIO DINER - NIGHT

Michael pulls up in front of the diner.

Joey is outside waiting for him, as are Vinnie and Neil.

Michael steps out of the car.

JOEY
Don't bother.

Michael gets back in the car.

Joey gets in the front passenger seat, and Vinnie and Neil get in the back.

Michael drives away.

INT. MICHAEL'S CAR - NIGHT

Joey lights up a cigarette.

JOEY

Mind?

Michael shakes his head.

JOEY

Didn't think so.

NEIL

So this is the guy, eh?

MICHAEL (V.O.)

Neil and Vinnie were the family's lapdogs, and they usually stuck by Joey's side.

JOEY

Michael, Neil and Vinnie. Neil and Vinnie, Michael.

VINNIE

How you doin'?

MICHAEL

Brothers?

NEIL

Three years apart.

MICHAEL

Related to the Stucchios?

VINNIE

Cousins.

Michael nods his head. It's quiet for a moment.

MICHAEL

Where are we going?

JOEY

The docks.

MICHAEL

What's going on there?

JOEY

Word of the wise, Michael. Those
that know less, live longer.
Capice?

MICHAEL

Gotcha.

Michael grips the steering wheel tighter.

JOEY

Relax.

NEIL

So I hear you were a delivery boy?

MICHAEL

Yeah.

NEIL

How long?

MICHAEL

Not long enough, apparently.

VINNIE

That's the problem with the world
today. Nobody has any appreciation
for dedicated service anymore.

Neil leans forward and pats Michael on the shoulder.

NEIL

Don't worry, Mikey. We've got you.

VINNIE

That's right. You take care of us,
we'll take care of you.

EXT. FISHING DOCKS - NIGHT

Michael pulls up to the fishing docks.

Neil and Vinnie get out of the car.

INT. MICHAEL'S CAR

Michael looks around nervously.

MICHAEL

Now what?

JOEY

We wait.

EXT. FISHING DOCKS

Neil and Vinnie walk forward, looking around for someone or something.

There's a noise from the shadows, and MATT JONES steps out, meeting Neil and Vinnie.

VINNIE

What took you?

MATT

Just makin' sure it was yous guys.

NEIL

You expecting someone else?

MATT

You never know, these days.

VINNIE

What's the matter, Matt? Don't you trust us?

MATT

I don't know who I can trust anymore.

NEIL

Funny, there's a lot of that going around lately.

Vinnie and Neil get closer to Matt, who looks severely uncomfortable.

VINNIE

So, what's been going on with you? Haven't seen you around lately.

MATT

Been working. Doing odd jobs here and there. Gotta eat, you know?

NEIL

Don't we take good enough care of you?

MATT

Yeah, you guys take care of me just fine.

NEIL

Word on the street is that you've been talking to the O'Brannon's.

MATT

Why would I do such a thing?

VINNIE

Well, that's what we're here to find out, Matty.

Matt becomes visibly more nervous.

MATT

I swear to God, I ain't been talking to that slime. My loyalty lies with you guys and Mr. Stucchio.

NEIL

If there's something we can't stand more than anything, it's liars. You lying to us?

MATT

No! Of course not!

VINNIE

Just come clean, Matt. Believe me, you're better off being honest.

Vinnie places his hand on Matt's shoulder, and he breaks.

MATT

Okay! Look, Johnny O'Brannon offered me a lot of money if I'd give 'em some information about yous guys. I told him some bullshit and took the money. That's why you haven't seen me around. They find out I lied and took their money, I'm a dead man. I didn't tell them nothing, I swear!

NEIL

So, if you lie to them, you're dead. What do you think we'll do to you if you lie to us?

MATT

I ain't lying! Honest. I gave 'em nothing.

VINNIE

You lied at first about talking to them. You could be lying to us now. How can we trust you?

MATT

You can trust me! I promise!

Neil and Vinnie look to Michael's car, and nod their heads.

INT. MICHAEL'S CAR

MICHAEL

What's that mean?

Joey gets out of the car.

EXT. FISHING DOCKS

Joey approaches Matt. Neil and Vinnie walk back to the car.

MATT

Oh, shit. You're not going to kill me, are you, Joey?

JOEY

Walk with me.

Joey places his hand on Matt's shoulder, and the two slowly walk along the docks.

MATT

Don't kill me. I've been straight up with you.

JOEY

I just want to know the truth.

MATT

I told them -

Joey takes out a pistol, and buries it into Matt's side.

MATT

I swear to Christ! I told them nothing! I gave them shit!

JOEY

And you still took their money.

MATT

Yes.

Joey looks into Matt's terrified eyes for a moment, and then removes the gun from his side, laughing.

JOEY

Sly dog.

Matt laughs uneasily, then starts to loosen up.

Joey then shoots Matt in the gut, dropping him.

Matt lies on the ground, clutching his wound, moaning in pain.

MATT

Why you - Why you shoot - shoot me?

JOEY

Pathetic.

Joey plugs him two more times, killing him.

Joey then drags him to the edge of the dock, and drops him into the ocean.

INT. MICHAEL'S CAR

Joey gets back into the car. Calm, as if nothing happened.

Michael looks shocked, sick, and terrified.

NEIL

Back to the diner, Mikey.

Michael doesn't move. He doesn't speak.

VINNIE

You all right, bud? Mike?

Michael snaps back into reality.

MICHAEL

I'm fine. Yeah. The diner. Sure.

Michael begins to drive.

EXT. STUCCHIO DINER - NIGHT

They pull back up to the diner, and the group gets out of the car.

Michael staggers inside the diner.

INT. STUCCHIO DINER - NIGHT

Neil and Vinnie lead Michael to a table and sit down with him.

NEIL

Just relax. Get your bearings. I know it's hard to watch.

VINNIE

The first one is always hardest.

MICHAEL

Yeah.

Michael is very pale.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

I'd never seen a dead body before, let alone witness someone be murdered. I had so many conflicting emotions, I didn't even know where to begin.

Joey walks into the back of the diner.

Vinnie gets up and gets the three of them drinks. He returns to the table with them.

VINNIE

Drink that.

Michael takes a sip, and some color returns to his face.

Joey returns from the back, and tosses Michael an envelope.

JOEY

You can leave.

MICHAEL

That's it?

JOEY
You want a trophy?

Michael picks up the envelope and begins to leave the diner.
Joey lights up another cigarette.

NEIL
Those things'll kill you, Joey.

Joey just gives Neil a look, and Neil looks away.

VINNIE
He's not a bad guy. I wonder if
he'll squeal.

JOEY
Doubtful.

NEIL
The boss is gunna want to hear
about this.

Joey pays no mind to this comment.

Michael exits the diner.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Michael enters his house. The lights are on.

MICHAEL
Judy?

Silence.

MICHAEL
Honey?

Still nothing.

Michael walks through the house, looking for his wife.

He sees the back door is open.

Michael looks outside, and sees Judy huddled on the ground,
outside the outhouse.

MICHAEL
Judy!

EXT. BACKYARD

Michael runs to Judy. She's really sick.

MICHAEL
Judy? Sweetie? What's wrong?

JUDY
(weakly)
I don't feel good.

MICHAEL
How long have you been out here?

JUDY
I don't know.

MICHAEL
I'm calling a doctor. Come on.

Michael scoops Judy up in his arms, and begins carrying her back to the house.

MICHAEL
Jesus, you're burning up.

JUDY
I'll be fine.

INT. BATHROOM

Michael sets Judy inside the tub, and turns on the water.

MICHAEL
Just hold on, I'm going to call
the doctor. I'll be right back.

JUDY
Can't..afford..doctor.

MICHAEL
Too bad.

Michael runs out of the bathroom.

JUDY
Michael...

INT. KITCHEN

Michael picks up the phone.

MICHAEL
Operator? I need a doctor.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Det. Gallagher sips some coffee.

DET. GALLAGHER
And the loving husband shows up
just in time to rescue his sick
wife. I'm touched.

MICHAEL
Sarcasm?

DET. GALLAGHER
Never.

MICHAEL
I loved my wife very much.

DET. GALLAGHER
Past tense noted. I can see where
this is going.

MICHAEL
Is that so?

DET. GALLAGHER
Yeah. the sob story about the sick
wife is suppose to invoke sympathy
and I'm supposed to relate. Then
I'm supposed to empathize and
realize that all this started so
you could save your sick wife.

MICHAEL
You're partially correct.

DET. GALLAGHER
Shocking. Maybe that's why I'm a
detective.

MICHAEL
Since you've got it all figured
out, I might as well not even
continue.

DET. GALLAGHER
Oh, no. By all means, continue.
I'm captivated by this gripping
story.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

DOC HOLLIS walks away from Judy, who is sleeping in bed.

He approaches Michael.

DOC HOLLIS

I gave her something to help her
sleep. Let's talk downstairs.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Doc Hollis sits down on the couch, and Michael hands him a
glass of water.

DOC HOLLIS

Oh, thank you.

MICHAEL

Is she going to be all right?

DOC HOLLIS

The fever should go down within
the hour, and with that, the
vomiting should cease.

MICHAEL

Is it just a brief illness?

DOC HOLLIS

Well, I'm not sure, and that's
what's been bothering me. The
symptoms she has suggest a virus,
but the way she passed out
outside, and how afflicted she is,
it seems as though something else
is at work. With your permission,
I'd like to take some blood if her
symptoms continue.

MICHAEL

Of course.

Doc Hollis finishes his water, and stands up, preparing to
leave.

DOC HOLLIS

But first, we'll see how the
medication works. I could be
wrong. If her symptoms persist or
worsen over the next couple of
days, call again.

Michael walks Doc Hollis to the door.

MICHAEL

Thank you for coming out so late,
Doctor Hollis.

DOC HOLLIS

Nonsense. I'm always on call.

MICHAEL

Goodnight.

DOC HOLLIS

Goodnight.

Doc Hollis exits the house, and Michael closes the door behind him.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Michael pours himself a glass of juice, and slowly drinks it.

The telephone rings, and Michael answers it.

MICHAEL

Hello? (Beat) Now? (Beat) I don't
think I can come right now. My
wife is very sick. (Beat) Okay.
(Beat) No, I understand.

Michael hangs up the phone, and sighs.

MICHAEL

Shit.

Michael walks out of the kitchen.

INT. BEDROOM

Michael walks into the bedroom, and leaves a note on the night stand.

Michael kisses Judy's forehead, and she stirs slightly, but remains asleep.

INT. STUCCHIO DINER - DAY

Michael enters the diner, where Neil and Vinnie are waiting for him.

They stand up as he enters.

Paulie is behind the counter.

PAULIE
How you doing, Mikey?

MICHAEL
Been better, Paulie.

PAULIE
I hear ya.

Neil and Vinnie walk past Michael, heading for the door.

NEIL
Come on, Mike.

VINNIE
Gotta go see the boss.

Michael follows them out the door.

EXT. STUCCHIO MANOR - DAY

A car pulls up to a large manor. It's lavish, Italian, and gorgeous. Just the kind of place you'd expect a mob boss to live in.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
I was blown away when I first saw the Stucchio Estate. This was way beyond a mere deli and diner's income. Of course you heard the stories about the family bringing fortunes over from Italy. I'm sure to some extent that was true, but let's be realistic here: The place was created from blood money.

Vinnie, Neil, and Michael get out of the car, and walk up the manor steps to the front door.

NEIL
Consider yourself lucky.

VINNIE
Not many people see the inside of Mr. Stucchio's home.

Neil opens the door, and the three of them enter.

INT. STUCCHIO MANOR - DAY

If the outside looked fantastic, the inside looks absolutely gorgeous. Lavish artwork. Marble flooring. Beautiful carpets. Vases. Everything. A lot of time and money was invested into this place.

Michael views his surroundings, awestruck.

NEIL

This way.

The three make their way up the main staircase.

They head down a hallway, which opens up into a larger room with a couple doors on either side.

Vinnie walks up to one of the doors, and knocks on it.

VINNIE

Boss, Michael Soriano is here to see you.

DON STUCCHIO (O.S.)

Send him in.

Vinnie turns to Michael, and motions for him to enter the room.

Michael approaches the door, and slowly opens it.

He steps inside the room.

INT. OFFICE

The office is beautifully furnished, with several shelves of books to boot.

Joey is sitting in front of a desk.

Behind the desk, DON EMELIO STUCCHIO is seated in a large leather chair. He's got a cigar in one hand, and a glass of brandy in the other.

DON STUCCHIO

Take a seat. Close the door behind you.

Michael does as he's told.

Don Stucchio motions at the bottle of brandy.

DON STUCCHIO

Drink?

MICHAEL

No, thank you.

Don Stucchio puffs his cigar.

DON STUCCHIO

Do you know why you were brought here?

MICHAEL

No, sir.

DON STUCCHIO

It's been brought to my attention that you joined Joey here on a little errand last night.

Michael looks at Joey, who is staring into space, and then back at Don Stucchio.

MICHAEL

Yes, sir.

DON STUCCHIO

You tell anyone where you were last night?

Michael shakes his head.

DON STUCCHIO

What about who you were with?

Again, Michael shakes his head.

DON STUCCHIO

Not even your wife?

MICHAEL

No. No one.

Don Stucchio takes a drink from his glass.

DON STUCCHIO

Why don't we get some air?

Don Stucchio stands up, as do Michael and Joey.

Don Stucchio points at Joey.

DON STUCCHIO
Not you. Sit. I'm not done with
you yet.

Anger crosses Joey's face, but he sits back down.

DON STUCCHIO
Come with me, Michael.

Don Stucchio walks out of the office. Michael follows.

EXT. STUCCHIO MANOR, VINEYARDS - DAY

Don Stucchio and Michael walk out the back door of the manor.

The large backyard has it's own small garden, complete with a vineyard, growing grapes and tomatoes. It's a breathtaking sight.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
As I looked out over the vineyard,
I couldn't help but be taken
aback.

The two begin walking along the vines.

DON STUCCHIO
It's nice, isn't it?

MICHAEL
Unbelievably.

DON STUCCHIO
I like to surround myself with the
homeland.

Don Stucchio takes a grape and hands it to Michael.

Michael eats it.

DON STUCCHIO
Good, huh?

MICHAEL
Very.

They continue walking.

DON STUCCHIO
I don't remember much of Italy, my
father brought us over here when I
was twelve. But, I remember
(MORE)

DON STUCCHIO (cont'd)
 looking out over the vineyards at
 my grandfather's villa. We used to
 go out with my grandmother and
 pick the tomatoes when they were
 just ripe enough. She made the
 most amazing dishes with them.

MICHAEL
 I can only imagine.

DON STUCCHIO
 My mother learned the recipes, and
 when we came here, my father
 opened the diner with the little
 money he had. Try as they might,
 they could never get the sauces to
 taste like grandmother's.

Don Stucchio picks a tomato from a vine, and examines it.

DON STUCCHIO
 You know why? Because the tomatoes
 came from an outside source. They
 weren't raised and picked by their
 own hands. Everything is better
 when you put your own blood,
 sweat, and tears into it. It's a
 product you know you can trust,
 because it's your own. You know
 where it came from, and how it was
 made. Do you understand, Michael?

Michael nods his head.

DON STUCCHIO
 We don't really bring outsiders
 into the business. Joey did so
 without my consent, but he has
 vouched for you. Were it not for
 the fact that you were around and
 served the diner for so long, we'd
 be having this conversation in a
 different setting.

MICHAEL
 I understand.

DON STUCCHIO
 My wife likes you, Michael. My
 son, Paulie, he likes you,
 Michael. From what I've seen, you
 seem like a decent, stand-up kind
 (MORE)

DON STUCCHIO (cont'd)
of guy.

MICHAEL
Thank you.

Don Stucchio tosses the tomato away, and looks Michael in the eyes.

DON STUCCHIO
I'm going to be honest with you,
because I expect honesty from
everyone else. You're on shaky
ground.

MICHAEL
What do you mean?

DON STUCCHIO
I have no guarantees you won't
squeal.

MICHAEL
You have my word, Mr. Stucchio.

DON STUCCHIO
What's in someones word? There
used to be a time when a person's
word really meant something, but
that time is long-gone.

MICHAEL
So, then what can I do?

DON STUCCHIO
I need an act of good faith,
Michael, and you need work, yeah?

Michael seems hesitant for a moment, but he nods his head.

MICHAEL
What did you have in mind?

DON STUCCHIO
You work for the family for a bit.
Odd jobs, here and there. That
way, we can keep an eye on you.

Michael starts to speak, but Don Stucchio raises his hand.

DON STUCCHIO
Don't say anything yet. There are
other options, but you won't be
paid then, and I'll still be
(MORE)

DON STUCCHIO (cont'd)
 unsure about you. There's danger
 involved with working for me.
 Perhaps you should think about
 your wife first.

An older, slightly pudgy man makes his way to the two of
 them. TOMMY CHINO is his name.

TOMMY
 Don Stucchio, excuse the
 interruption.

DON STUCCHIO
 (introducing them)
 Michael Soriano, Tommy Chino.

MICHAEL
 Hi.

TOMMY
 Pleased to meet you.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
 Tommy Chino was the family's
 financial adviser and bookie. He
 also handled the more legal
 aspects of the business.

TOMMY
 (to Don Stucchio)
 There's a problem with the figures
 for this month. Someone isn't
 paying.

DON STUCCHIO
 I see. Wait for me in the study.

TOMMY
 (turning back to
 Michael)
 I apologize.

MICHAEL
 Not at all.

Tommy walks back towards the house.

Don Stucchio turns to Michael.

DON STUCCHIO
 You have twenty-four hours to
 consider my offer. If you'll
 excuse me, I have business to
 (MORE)

DON STUCCHIO (cont'd)
 attend to. Have Neil and Vinnie
 take you back home.

With that, Don Stuccio heads back to the house.

Michael takes in his surroundings again, inhales deeply, and heads back to the manor.

INT. STUCCHIO MANOR - DAY

Michael walks through the manor, looking around.

He turns the corner, heading for the entrance way, not paying attention, and, BUMP! Runs right into CERINA STUCCHIO.

MICHAEL
 Oh, excuse me.

Cerina looks Michael up and down, and smiles.

CERINA
 Not at all, sir.

She extends her hand.

CERINA
 I'm Cerina.

MICHAEL
 Michael. Michael Soriano.

The two shake hands, never for a moment breaking eye contact.

CERINA
 I'm assuming you're here on
 business?

MICHAEL
 Mr. Stucchio wanted to speak with
 me, yeah.

CERINA
 I figured as much. I've got some
 things I need to do, but it was
 nice meeting you, Mr. Soriano.
 Maybe I'll see you around.

Cerina walks away, heading for the stairs.

MICHAEL

Yeah. You, too.

Michael turns around and sees Vinnie and Neil staring him down.

NEIL

I know what you're thinking, and no.

VINNIE

The Don's daughter is off limits.

Michael shrugs, smiling.

MICHAEL

Fellas, come on, I'm a married man, here.

NEIL

Married or not, just know.

VINNIE

Off limits. Come on.

The three leave the manor.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Det. Gallagher leans back in his chair, sighing.

DET. GALLAGHER

I hear the Siren's call growing louder.

Michael raises his eyebrow at this comment.

MICHAEL

What makes you say that?

DET. GALLAGHER

You mean, besides the fact that I'm not an idiot?

Michael chuckles at this.

Det. Gallagher stands up.

DET. GALLAGHER

I'll be right back. Don't go anywhere, now.

Det. Gallagher leaves the room, closing the door behind him.

Michael looks around the painfully bland and barren room, sighing.

The door to the room re-opens, and CHIEF EVERETT enters the room.

Michael looks at Chief Everett with great contempt.

Chief Everett stands at the front of the table, staring Michael down.

CHIEF EVERETT

Well, well. Look who got himself
in a bit of a pinch, eh?

Michael doesn't say anything, just looks at Chief Everett with distaste.

Chief Everett slowly walks over towards Michael, and leans on the table.

CHIEF EVERETT

I hope you're not expecting to
wash your hands of this, Michael.
This is my domain now, and I just
lost a lot of money because of
you.

MICHAEL

And do you really think I give a
damn?

CHIEF EVERETT

Oh, I know you don't, but let me
make something clear to you, boy.

MICHAEL

Hm, what's that?

CHIEF EVERETT

If you so much as mention me in
this little report of yours, I'll
make sure you never leave prison.
Understand, you little son of a
bitch?

MICHAEL

After I'm done, you'll no longer
have the authority.

CHIEF EVERETT
I've got friends inside.

MICHAEL
You won't.

Chief Everett is now getting pissed, and he stands up.

CHIEF EVERETT
All right, now you listen to me -

DET. GALLAGHER (O.S.)
Chief Everett.

Chief Everett turns around, and sees Det. Gallagher, who has a fresh cup of coffee in his hand.

DET. GALLAGHER
What brings you down here?

CHIEF EVERETT
Just came down to have a word with Mr. Soriano.

DET. GALLAGHER
What about?

CHIEF EVERETT
It's not your concern, detective.

DET. GALLAGHER
You were expressly forbidden from having any involvement with this case what-so-ever. So, it really kind of is.

Chief Everett walks over to Det. Gallagher, and leans in close to him.

CHIEF EVERETT
Mind your tongue, detective. I'm still chief, and I will still be after this case is closed. Remember that.

Chief Everett walks past him.

DET. GALLAGHER
Good seeing you, too, chief.

Chief Everett exits the room, closing the door behind him.

Det. Gallagher sits back down.

DET. GALLAGHER
What was that about?

MICHAEL
Nothing. Shall we continue?

Det. Gallagher gets his pencil ready, nodding.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - DAY

Michael is in the kitchen, preparing soup.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
I had been working for the
Stucchio's for a little over a
week, and still hadn't told Judy.
I'd wanted to keep it from her for
as long as possible.

Michael takes out a small medicine bottle, and pours it into
a glass. He then fills the glass with water.

INT. BEDROOM

Judy is propped up in the bed by pillows.

Michael enters the room with the soup and medicine.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
Judy's condition was improving,
but she was still bed-ridden. The
doctor had come a couple days
prior to take some blood.

Michael sets the soup down on the night stand, and hands
Judy the medicine.

MICHAEL
How do you feel?

JUDY
Better.

Michael feels her forehead.

MICHAEL
Your fever is going down. Drink
that.

Judy looks at the glass, then back at Michael.

JUDY

All this medicine and doctor visits. We can't afford this.

MICHAEL

Don't worry about it, babe.

JUDY

I'm worried about it. Where are you getting all of this money? We were just barely scraping by, and now all of a sudden we have extra money for medicine and doctors?

Michael looks away, sighing.

MICHAEL

Take your medicine, Judy.

Judy drains the glass as she's told.

JUDY

Tell me what's going on.

Michael looks up at the ceiling, and then at Judy.

MICHAEL

I was fired a couple weeks ago.

Judy is stunned by this.

JUDY

Did you ever plan on telling me?

MICHAEL

I didn't want you to worry, with you being sick and all.

JUDY

I'm your wife, Michael. I have a right to know these things! Where is our money coming from?

MICHAEL

I've got another job.

Michael looks at the floor, and Judy knows.

JUDY

No. You're not!

MICHAEL

They're decent people.

JUDY

They're crooks! Is that what
you've become now?

Michael looks at her.

MICHAEL

Never. Be grateful. It's their
money that's paying for your
medicine.

Judy throws the glass, and it shatters.

JUDY

I don't want help from blood
money.

MICHAEL

It's not blood money.

JUDY

Don't be a fool. And what of you?
What do you do for them?

MICHAEL

I drive them around. I make
pick-ups and deliveries. My job is
almost exactly the same as it was
at the warehouse.

JUDY

Except it's illegal!

Michael stands up.

MICHAEL

For the time being, it's all we
have. I need you to understand.

Judy rolls over onto her side, facing away from him.

JUDY

Leave me.

Michael turns around and leaves, stopping at the doorway. He
looks back at her.

MICHAEL

I'm just doing everything I can to
take care of you. I hope you'll
see that. Eat your soup, it'll
give you some strength. I love
you.

Michael exits.

Judy rolls over as if to say something, but it's too late. He's gone. She sighs.

EXT. STUCCHIO MANOR - DAY

Michael, Vinnie, and Neil walk out of the manor, heading for the car.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

I kept working for the Don. It turned out that the money was VERY good, and for the majority of the time, there was nothing to it.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

The three walk inside a small grocery store, and find it trashed.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

Though there was the occasional hitch.

The three look around at the mess.

VINNIE

Rick?

NEIL

You all right, buddy?

RICK MATHERS steps out of the back of the store, a mop in his hand.

His nose has been busted.

RICK

Hey, fellas. I'm not going to have the money this week. The O'Brannon's came and cleaned me out.

NEIL

How long ago did they leave?

RICK

You missed 'em by maybe five minutes.

Michael looks at the wrecked store.

MICHAEL
Why did they do this?

RICK
I refused to give 'em my money. My loyalty lies with the Stucchio's, not the O'Brannon scum. They're a rotten lot.

VINNIE
Well don't worry, Rick. We'll take care of them and make sure nothing like this happens again.

NEIL
That's right. We take care of those that take care of us. In the mean time, we'll help you get this place cleaned up.

The group sets to work, cleaning the place up.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
That was the first time I'd seen any open rivalry between the two families. It certainly wouldn't be the last.

INT. COVERED TRUCK - NIGHT

Michael, Joey, and Paulie are in the truck, riding.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

They are driving out into the country.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
It wasn't too much longer before I learned where they got a large amount of their profits from.

EXT. FARM - NIGHT

The truck pulls into a farm, complete with a large barn, silo, and house.

The truck stops in front of the barn, and the three get out of the truck.

INT. BARN

Inside the barn, a delivery truck is parked.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

Due to the ban of alcohol, the demand for it was pretty high. It's amazing how much people want what they can't have. Folks were willing to pay top-dollar for it. Fortunately for Haven City, we're only about fifty miles from the Canadian boarder. They sold us booze for a good price.

Michael and Paulie help the CANADIAN WORKERS load the booze from the delivery truck into the covered bed of the pick-up.

Joey stands guard with a shotgun in his hands and a cigarette in his mouth.

Suddenly, there's the sound of a cocking gun.

CHIEF EVERETT (O.S.)

Hold it right there!

Everyone stops what they are doing and turns around.

Chief Everett is standing there with two other COPS, their pistols drawn.

CHIEF EVERETT

Just what do we have going on here?

Nobody says anything.

Chief Everett makes his way over to the truck, and looks at the side of it.

CHIEF EVERETT

Canada, eh? We're a long ways from home now, aren't we?

MICHAEL

We're exchanging crops.

CHIEF EVERETT

Shut your mouth, boy.

Chief Everett looks in the back of the covered pick-up, and pulls a small bottle of liquor out of one of the boxes.

He opens the bottle, smells it, and takes a drink.

He looks at the bottle.

CHIEF EVERETT

Good stuff.

Michael isn't sure what's going on. He looks to Joey who is strangely calm, and then over to Paulie, who takes an envelope out of his coat pocket.

PAULIE

Only the best, chief.

Chief Everett turns around and walks over to Paulie, who hands him the envelope.

Chief Everett opens the envelope, and flips through the cash.

CHIEF EVERETT

Seems low this month.

PAULIE

Time's is hard, chief.

Chief Everett looks at Paulie a moment, and then puts the envelope in his coat pocket, smiling.

CHIEF EVERETT

Let's hope this batch sells better then, eh?

Chief Everett looks at his fellow officers.

CHIEF EVERETT

All right, boys. I see nothing illegal going on out here. Let's head on back.

The two Cops holster their weapons, and the three leave the barn.

The Canadians get in their trucks.

Michael looks at Paulie and Joey.

MICHAEL

What the hell was that?

PAULIE

That's how we do business, Michael. Let's go.

INT. COVERED TRUCK

MICHAEL

So you have the chief of police in your pocket?

PAULIE

I wouldn't say he's in our pocket, but when it comes to certain things, let's just say we're friendly enough for him to turn a blind eye. Now, that's not to say that if you piss him off enough or spray down a neighborhood that he won't bust your balls.

JOEY

I'd like to bust that crooked bastard's head in with a baseball bat.

Michael glances at Joey, surprised.

PAULIE

Joey here can't stand him. Or any cop, for that matter.

EXT. BLUES CLUB - NIGHT

The pick-up pulls up along the back of the Blues club.

The three get out of the truck.

Paulie walks up to the back door, and knocks on it.

A moment later, SARAH GOODMAN, the owner of the club, opens the door.

She looks around, and then at Paulie.

SARAH

You're late.

PAULIE

Sorry, Mrs. Goodman. The transaction took longer than we anticipated.

Sarah crosses her arms, shaking her head.

Paulie stands there, not exactly sure what to say.

SARAH

Well? What are you waiting for? I haven't got all night. Bring it in.

Sarah turns around and heads back into the club.

Paulie turns to Michael and Joey.

PAULIE

All right, you heard the lady. Bring it in.

Michael and Joey head towards the back of the pick-up, and each grab a case of liquor.

INT. BLUES CLUB, OFFICE - NIGHT

Michael and Paulie are standing in Sarah's office. She's smoking a cigarette.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

Sarah Goodman was one of the most powerful and self-assured women I'd ever met before. She was all about business, and she was good at what she did.

SARAH

I know we made a deal that we would split the money 50/50, but it's not cost effective, and quite honestly, isn't worth the risk for me.

PAULIE

A deal is a deal, Mrs. Goodman. You can't go back -

SARAH

I can do whatever the hell I want, Paulie. I have no obligations to you or your father. You came to me, remember? The only reason I even considered this whole thing is because of who your father is.

PAULIE

The deal is 50/50.

SARAH

My new proposal is 70/30. Now you can either take my offer, or take your booze elsewhere and hope to strike a better deal.

Paulie shifts uncomfortably, thinking.

PAULIE

All right. Fine. 70/30.

Sarah smiles, and puts out her cigarette.

SARAH

I figured you'd see things my way. Now, have a drink on me, fellas.

Paulie leaves the room, Michael follows.

INT. BLUES CLUB

Paulie goes out to the main room, Michael following behind.

Paulie leans over the bar, grabs a small bottle of liquor, and sits down.

The BARTENDER looks at him, ready to get defensive.

PAULIE

Don't even say a word, pal. This is mine.

The Bartender goes back to work.

Paulie opens the bottle and takes a drink.

Michael sits down next to Paulie.

MICHAEL

What happened in there?

PAULIE

You were there, Michael.

MICHAEL

I know, but you're going to let her strong-arm you like that?

Paulie takes another swig and slams down the bottle.

PAULIE

What are you trying to say? That I'm not a man?

MICHAEL

No, not at all, Paulie. Of course you're a man. You're Don Stucchio's son.

PAULIE

Yeah, don't remind me, okay?

Paulie takes another drink.

MICHAEL

I'm just saying, she's going back on her end of the deal. If your father -

PAULIE

Look, Mikey, I'd really appreciate it if you kept your nose out of things you don't really understand.

Michael takes offense to this, and looks away.

MICHAEL

Sorry. Forget I said anything.

Paulie takes another drink, and sighs.

PAULIE

Look, Papa put me in charge of this little operation so I could get a taste of the business. If he got word that I can't handle something as simple as this, he'd never trust me to handle the business after he's gone. Not that I really care.

Michael raises his eyebrows.

MICHAEL

You mean you don't want to run the business?

PAULIE

Nope, but I'm expected to keep the Stucchio name respected and around. I don't want to ruin the legacy my father worked so hard to leave, and more than anything, I don't want him to be disappointed with me.

Paulie finishes the bottle, and burps.

PAULIE

Good stuff.

Paulie stands up.

PAULIE

Go find Joey.

Michael stands up.

MICHAEL

What for?

PAULIE

Tell him we're going to stay a while.

EXT. BLUES CLUB - NIGHT

Joey is leaning against the pick-up, smoking a cigarette, looking off into space.

Michael approaches him.

MICHAEL

Hey, Joey.

Joey turns around with a start, drawing his pistol.

Michael puts his hands up.

MICHAEL

Whoa. Didn't mean to give you a start.

Joey holsters his gun.

JOEY

You didn't.

MICHAEL

Paulie wanted me to find you and tell you that we're staying a while.

JOEY

Great.

Joey doesn't move from the truck.

MICHAEL
Are you coming inside?

JOEY
Later.

Michael nods, and heads back inside.

INT. BLUES CLUB - NIGHT

On the stage, several black musicians playing soothing music.

The whole atmosphere is very calm and peaceful. Almost romantic.

Michael looks around the club.

Paulie is sitting at a table with two other LADIES, drinking and talking.

Paulie waves at Michael, who waves back.

CERINA (O.S.)
Fancy meeting you here.

Michael turns around.
Cerina is there, and she looks gorgeous.

MICHAEL
Ms. Stucchio.

Michael takes her hand and kisses it.

CERINA
Mr. Soriano. What brings you here tonight?

MICHAEL
I had to make a delivery.

CERINA
Is it always business with you?

MICHAEL
I'll let you know. Your brother is here if you want to meet up with him.

CERINA

I see enough of him at home. I like to have some sort of life outside of the family, you know.

MICHAEL

I understand.

Cerina looks to the bar, then back at Michael.

CERINA

So what's a lady have to do to get a drink around here?

Michael smiles.

MICHAEL

Right this way, madame.

Michael leads Cerina over to the bar.

MICHAEL

Bartender! Can we get some drinks over here?

The Bartender nods, and a moment later, hands them two drinks.

MICHAEL

Come here a lot?

CERINA

Often enough.

MICHAEL

Often enough for what?

Cerina smiles and winks.

CERINA

That's for me to know, good sir.

Michael chuckles.

Cerina glances at the wedding band on his hand.

CERINA

Been married long?

MICHAEL

A few months.

CERINA
Do you like it?

MICHAEL
Yeah. It's all right.

CERINA
I don't think I could ever be that
tied down.

MICHAEL
Why's that?

CERINA
I like to have some breathing
room. Probably because I very
rarely get any from the family.

MICHAEL
True.

The two drink. It's quiet a moment.

Cerina sets her glass back down onto the bar, and turns to
Michael.

CERINA
Care for a dance?

Michael sets his glass down, smiling.

MICHAEL
Well, actually -

He's interrupted by Joey, who is suddenly there.

JOEY
We're leaving.

Joey turns to Cerina.

JOEY
You're coming.

CERINA
The hell I am.

JOEY
I'm not giving you a choice.

CERINA
Don't tell me what to do, Joey.
You're not even family, and -

STEVE (O.S.)
The fun has arrived!

Michael, Cerina, and Joey turn to the direction of the voice.

STEVE BOYD, BILLY MURPHY, and a couple other thugs have entered the club.

STEVE
Yes, sir. Yes, sir. Turn up the music, boys! We're going to party like it's New Years!

MICHAEL (V.O.)
Steve Boyd and Billy Murphy were Irish gangsters that belonged with the O'Brannon's. They were loud, vulgar, and violent.

Michael, Joey, and Cerina make their way to the back of the club.

JOEY
Where's Paulie?

MICHAEL
He's was over on the side with two ladies.

JOEY
Take her out back. We'll meet you.

Joey breaks away from Cerina and Michael, who continue heading for the back.

Joey makes his way over to Paulie.

JOEY
Time to go.

Paulie stands up without a word.

Billy makes his way over to the bar. Everyone is quiet.

BILLY
Hey, bartender! Get me a round of whiskey.

The Bartender looks at Billy blankly.

BARTENDER
Alcohol is prohibited, sir.

Billy grabs the Bartender by the neck and slams his face onto the bar.

BILLY

Don't hand me that bullshit! I know you've got the goods, cos you get it from those Stucchio bastards. Now pour the fuckin' booze!

Billy releases the Bartender, who stumbles back, and then composes himself.

BARTENDER

Yes, sir.

The musicians have stopped playing.

Steve looks at them.

STEVE

I don't recall tellin' you niggers to stop playin'.

The music starts again, and Steve makes his way to the bar.

Everyone is watching them.

STEVE

What the hell are you all lookin' at? Get back to mindin' your own business!

Everyone goes back to what they were doing.

Joey and Paulie slowly make their way to the back.

Billy glances over and sees them. He stands up.

BILLY

Do me eyes deceive me? Is that a Stucchio over there?

Joey and Paulie turn and look at them.

Now Steve has stood up, and the two other thugs they came is with stand as well.

PAULIE

We were just leaving.

STEVE

Oh, I don't think so. Not yet.

Steve and Billy slowly inch over towards them.

PAULIE

We're not looking for trouble
tonight.

BILLY

No, of course you're not, Paulie.
You pussy.

JOEY

Watch your mouth.

Billy looks at Joey, surprised.

BILLY

Excuse me? You talkin' to me, are
you?

JOEY

I'm looking at you, aren't I?

Billy grabs a glass off one of the tables, and heaves it at
Joey, who ducks out of the way.

The glass smashes against the way, shattering.

Quick as a flash, Joey grabs another glass and heaves it
back at Billy, cracking him on the head with it.

One of the Thug's runs at Joey, who quickly takes out a
switchblade and plunges it into the Thug's gut repeatedly,
killing him.

Billy falls to the ground, and Steve stands over him.

Everyone screams and runs about from the sudden burst of
violence.

STEVE

Christ Billy, are you okay?

Billy has a cut on his forehead, and he places his hand on
it.

BILLY

Shite, that hurt.

Steve looks back to Joey and Paulie, who are gone.

EXT. BLUES CLUB - NIGHT

Michael and Cerina are out back waiting.

Joey and Paulie bust out the back door, running for the truck.

MICHAEL

What the hell happened in there?

PAULIE

No time. Drive.

Joey takes out his pistol and jumps into the bed of the pick-up.

Cerina, Michael, and Paulie jump into the cab and they drive away.

EXT. STUCCHIO MANOR - NIGHT

The truck pulls up to the manor.

All four of them get out of the truck.

JOEY

I should have just taken them all out.

PAULIE

And started a full-scale war? Papa would've killed you. he's already going to be pissed when he hears about this. You spilled O'Brannon blood, Joey!

Joey holsters his pistol. He takes out the switchblade, which has blood on it. He looks at it.

JOEY

It's a beautiful thing, isn't it?

PAULIE

Oh, Jesus Christ. This is bad.

MICHAEL

Why?

PAULIE

There's two ways to do things in this business. The right way, and the wrong way. A public attack like that sends the wrong kind of
(MORE)

PAULIE (cont'd)
message.

JOEY
You're just afraid to start
trouble.

PAULIE
What'd you say to me?

JOEY
Nothing.

Joey walks to his car, gets in, and drives away.

Paulie looks at Michael.

PAULIE
Thanks for the help tonight,
Mikey. You can go home now. Be
careful. Things are going to get a
little hairy.

Paulie heads to the door.

PAULIE
C'mon, Cerina.

CERINA
In a second.

Paulie enters the house and closes the door.

Cerina turns to Michael.

CERINA
Well I probably won't be allowed
out for a while now, especially
not by myself. Just remember that
you owe me a dance.

MICHAEL
I guess I do, don't I?

CERINA
I'll hold you to it. Goodnight,
Michael.

Cerina heads for the door.

MICHAEL
Goodnight, Ms. Stucchio.

Cerina turns around.

CERINA
It's Cerina.

She enters the house and closes the door.

MICHAEL
(to himself)
Cerina.

Michael heads to his car.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Det. Gallagher looks at Michael with a slight smile.

DET. GALLAGHER
Well, my, my. It's awful easy to
start a mob war in your line of
work, isn't it?

MICHAEL
Apparently so. Who would've
thought, right?

DET. GALLAGHER
Yeah. Imagine that.

Michael adjusts his tie, loosening it.

MICHAEL
Do you think I could get some
water or something? My throat's
dry.

Det. Gallagher takes a drink from his coffee.

DET. GALLAGHER
And this coffee is bitter, but you
don't hear me complaining, now do
you?

MICHAEL
You could just say no.

DET. GALLAGHER
But that would be the reasonable
thing to do. There's no fun in
being reasonable. You of all
people should know that.

MICHAEL

Hey, I'm a very reasonable man.

DET. GALLAGHER

Yes, because spraying down a group of men on the City Hall steps is reasonable.

MICHAEL

I had my reasons.

DET. GALLAGHER

Which I would love to hear, so without further delay, let's continue.

EXT. MICHAEL'S NEW HOUSE - DAY

Michael leads Judy up a walkway, blindfolded.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

The month's fell off the calendar like minutes, and I had made enough money for a new house.

Michael takes the blindfold off Judy, who smiles.

In front of her is a gorgeous house, probably twice as big as their old one.

JUDY

Oh, my! Michael! It's gorgeous!

Judy hugs Michael, and kisses him.

MICHAEL

We're moving up in the world, Judy.

Judy turns and looks back at the house.

From out the front door, Paulie, Theresa, and Cerina emerge, champagne in their hands.

THERESA

Welcome home!

The smile fades from Judy's face.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

While Judy still despised me working for the Stucchio's, she had slowly grown to accept it. Or,
(MORE)

MICHAEL (cont'd)
at least she kept quiet about her
distaste.

Theresa hands Judy a glass, and kisses both of her cheeks.

INT. MICHAEL'S NEW HOUSE - NIGHT

The five of them are in the living room, drinking cocktails.

The move has been completed.

THERESA
You know, I've always wanted to
hear how the two of you met.

Judy sets down her glass.

JUDY
Well, actually, it's kind of a
funny story. See, a few years ago,
I was helping my mom out at her
knit shop, and about once a week
we got deliveries for supplies and
such. Well, lo and behold, who
should come to the shop one week
to make a delivery but Michael.

MICHAEL
That's right, babe.

He rubs her thigh.

JUDY
So, he comes in with a stack of
boxes - way more than he could
carry, and he's trying to navigate
through the shop -

MICHAEL
There was stuff everywhere, mind
you.

JUDY
And he stumbles on a box of yarn,
bumps into me, and falls into a
box of pins.

MICHAEL
I had more holes in my rear than a
pin cushion.

JUDY

So, feeling bad, I offered to pay
for any doctor visits, and
instead, he wanted a date.

Michael takes Judy's hand and squeezes it. She smiles.

CERINA

You just meet all sorts of women
on the job, don't you, Michael?

Michael chuckles, and Judy's smile fades.

THERESA

Well, I think it's positively
delightful.

JUDY

What about you and your husband?

MICHAEL

Where is Mr. Stucchio, by the way?
I thought he was going to be
joining us today?

THERESA

He got tied up with a business
meeting.

PAULIE

The story of his life.

THERESA

The business is why we live so
well, Paulie. Don't forget that.

JUDY

Anyway, about how you met.

Cerina pours herself more to drink, and offers more to
everyone. Paulie accepts, everyone else declines.

THERESA

It was thirty-five years ago - My,
it doesn't seem that long. Anywho,
his father had opened the diner
and they needed a kitchen-aid. His
mother couldn't keep up and was
getting old. I was young and
needed a job, so I went in. Emelio
was the busser, and he was so
sweet on me. He'd leave flowers
and chocolates for me to find.

Judy coughs.

THERESA
All right, dear?

JUDY
I'm fine.

THERESA
I didn't think he'd ever get the nerve to ask me on a date. Then, one day, he did. We've been together ever since, and have two wonderful kids to show for it.

CERINA
Well, one wonderful kid.

PAULIE
Watch it.

THERESA
Stop it, you two.

Judy stands up, clutching her stomach.

JUDY
Excuse me.

Judy stumbles out of the room.

MICHAEL
Judy, are you okay, hunny?

There's a crash in the kitchen, and Michael runs to the sound.

INT. KITCHEN

Judy is lying on the floor, unconscious.

MICHAEL
Judy! Call a doctor!

Michael scoops up Judy's head and rests it on his lap.

MICHAEL
It's going to be fine. Hold on.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
Judy's health had continually gone up and down, but it hadn't been that bad since the first time.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Judy is sitting up in her hospital bed.

Michael is sitting next to her.

They're talking, but it's not really audible, or important.

Doc Hollis enters the room.

They look at him.

MICHAEL

What's the news, doc?

DOC HOLLIS

As far as we can tell, she's okay to go home. Perhaps you just stood up too fast, Judy.

JUDY

So, I'm okay?

DOC HOLLIS

Well, as okay as your condition allows.

Judy and Michael both sigh in relief.

EXT. FISHING DOCKS - DAY

Michael, Vinnie, Neil, and Joey take some money from one of the dock vendors.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

With my wife cleared with a clean bill of health, I was able to resume work again, and things were running smoothly.

The group make their way back to the car and get in, Michael driving.

INT. STUCCHIO DINER - NIGHT

Paulie is cleaning up the diner.

Theresa is sitting at a table with Michael, Neil, and Vinnie.

THERESA

Do you ever go home, Michael?

MICHAEL

Once in a while, sure.

THERESA

Don't forget that you have a wife.
She should come before my
husband's wishes.

MICHAEL

She does, Mrs. Stucchio.

THERESA

I hope so.

NEIL

C'mon, give him a break. He's
doing what he loves, right Mikey?

Neil pats Michael on the back, and Michael smiles.

MICHAEL

Something like that.

VINNIE

How's your lady been feeling,
anyway?

THERESA

I hope she's doing better.

Michael shrugs.

MICHAEL

She spends a lot of time in bed.

THERESA

Give her our well wishes, yeah?

Michael nods.

MICHAEL

Of course.

INT. MICHAEL'S NEW HOUSE - NIGHT

Michael crawls into bed next to Judy, who is sleeping.

He kisses the back of her neck.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Judy is sitting at the vanity, getting all made-up as if she's going out somewhere.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

Over the next couple months,
things were looking up. Business
had picked up, as had Judy's
health, and we'd heard nothing
from the O'Brannon's. We were all
going out for dinner.

Michael walks into the room, looking spiffy.

MICHAEL

You just about ready, hun?

JUDY

Yeah.

She doesn't sound enthusiastic.

Michael turns to leave, but notices, and looks back at her.

MICHAEL

Everything all right?

JUDY

Mhm.

MICHAEL

Feeling okay?

JUDY

I'm fine, Michael.

Michael walks over to her, and crouches down next to her.

MICHAEL

Talk to me.

JUDY

There's nothing to discuss.

MICHAEL

Clearly there is.

JUDY

No.

MICHAEL

Judy.

Her eyes haven't left the mirror, and she keeps fixing her hair.

MICHAEL

Look at me.

Judy sighs and looks at him.

JUDY

What, Michael?

MICHAEL

Tell me what's bothering you.

JUDY

I just want to know when enough is enough. You're always with them. I rarely get to see you. I can't even remember the last time you took just me out.

MICHAEL

You've been sick -

JUDY

Don't use that as an excuse. I want time with my husband, without the Stucchio's. Or have they become more important?

Michael stands up, irritated.

MICHAEL

I can't believe you would even think that.

JUDY

Well sometimes it sure as hell feels like it.

MICHAEL

There is nobody in the world more important to me than you.

JUDY

Yeah? Then show it.

MICHAEL

Let me know when you're ready.

Michael walks out of the room.

Judy returns to getting ready, and then slams her brush down, burying her face into her hands.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Inside the restaurant at a large table is the whole gang: Michael, Judy, Don Stucchio, Cerina, Joey, Neil, Vinnie, Paulie, Theresa, Tommy, and a few OTHERS that we haven't seen before.

They're dining and seem to be enjoying themselves.

At the end of the table, Tommy, Neil, Vinnie, and Joey seem to be having their own conversation.

TOMMY

So, I look at the guy, and I say:
"Hey Buddy! While you're down
there, why don't you shine my
shoes!"

Neil, Vinnie, and Tommy laugh.

NEIL

Oh, God. I remember those days.

VINNIE

The shoe shining? Christ, don't we
all.

JOEY

I don't.

TOMMY

There's a reason for that, Joey.

Again, Vinnie, Neil and Tommy laugh. Joey doesn't.

He looks at Tommy curiously.

JOEY

What's that supposed to mean?

TOMMY

What?

JOEY

What you just said. "There's a
reason for that, Joey." What's
that mean?

TOMMY

What? C'mon, Joey. I'm just messin' with you.

NEIL

Let it go, Joey.

JOEY

No, I'd really like to know so I can laugh too.

TOMMY

Joey, I really meant nothing by it, man.

A grin appears on Joey's face.

JOEY

Gotcha.

Tommy, Vinnie, and Neil start laughing. Joey just continues to grin.

JOEY

And that's why you're only the money man. You're a spineless fucking coward that backs down at the first sign of confrontation.

They stop laughing. Tommy looks down at his plate in shame.

VINNIE

Jesus, Joey. Lighten up for once.

Joey takes a bite of food, annoyed.

Down at the other end, Paulie, Cerina, Judy, and Michael are having their own conversation.

JUDY

See, when I was a kid, I always wanted a dog.

CERINA

I don't know why, but I've never been a dog person.

PAULIE

Probably because they always bite you.

CERINA

For some reason.

PAULIE

It's because they're MAN'S best friend.

CERINA

And in your case, the only friend.

They laugh.

At the head of the table, Don Stucchio and Theresa are having their own conversation, which really isn't audible.

It seems as though Don Stucchio is more interested in watching everyone else at the table.

Don Stucchio nods his head at something Theresa says, and then raises his water glass, tapping it with a fork.

Everyone at the table stops talking and looks at the Don.

DON STUCCHIO

I hope everyone is enjoying their meal and is having a good time, and if you don't mind, I have some words.

Everyone nods their heads and gives him the go-ahead to continue.

DON STUCCHIO

First, I want to say how pleased I am to have you all here and for us to be together. It doesn't happen nearly enough.

Neil raises his glass.

NEIL

Here, here!

Don Stucchio raises his glass in return.

DON STUCCHIO

I thought that since everyone is here, we could talk some business. I know you have been on edge the last few months, awaiting retaliation from the O'Brannon's. As much as I would like to tell you to not fret, I can't. Those bastards hold a grudge, and will strike back at us. I don't know how or when, but we all know they

(MORE)

DON STUCCHIO (cont'd)
will.

Don Stucchio takes out a cigar and lights it.

DON STUCCHIO
They're growing ballsier by the day, and are encroaching upon our business. They have no respect for what we've worked so hard to establish and run. They've got no respect period. Or morals, for that matter. This can't be tolerated. We need to make it known that this is our city, and we're not going to let some outsiders take it from us.

Don Stucchio takes a puff.

DON STUCCHIO
I started from the bottom and fought my way to the top. The Stucchio family has been here a long time, and will remain here for a long time to come. Respect is something that has become antiquated in this business, and we need to bring it back. I'm proud of all of you for your hard work and services. Even if I don't express my gratitude all the time. I want you to know how much I appreciate you all. We're family, and nothing will interfere with that.

Don Stucchio raises his glass.

DON STUCCHIO
A toast.

Everyone at the table raises their glasses.

DON STUCCHIO
To business. To health and prosperity. And to the unbreakable bond that is family.

Everyone clinks their glasses together, and they take a drink.

Judy looks around at everyone with uncertainty. She's uncomfortable.

EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The groups heads out of the restaurant, where their cars are waiting for them.

PAULIE

To the club!

Neil and Vinnie look at Michael and Judy.

VINNIE

You two coming?

NEIL

It's not a question. They gotta come.

JUDY

I don't know, guys.

Cerina looks at Michael and winks. Michael smiles.

Don Stucchio and Theresa step out of the restaurant.

The Don turns to the HOST and shakes his hand, thanking him.

The Host closes the restaurant doors, and the lights in the restaurant dim. It's closed.

DON STUCCHIO

Come on, let's get out of here.
We've bothered these kind folk
long enough.

From around the corner, tires screech, and a speeding car emerges.

Leaning out the window with a Tommy Gun in his hand is Billy Murphy.

Some IRISH THUG is doing the driving.

BILLY

Fuckin' wop bastards!

Billy opens fire.

Everyone drops to the ground behind the cars, ducking for cover.

Bullets spray the cars and front of the restaurant.

In an instant, the shooting is done and the car is gone.

Everyone slowly gets to their feet.

DON STUCCHIO

See what I mean!? No respect!

The screech is heard again, and the car re-appears from around the corner, ready for round two.

Except Joey is ready, his handgun drawn.

He shoots at the car several times, before Billy has a chance to fire.

Two of the tires blow out, and the car skids out of control, slamming into a light post across the street.

Joey reloads his gun, and quickly walks towards the car.

He fires twice through the back window, taking out the driver.

He then opens the rear passenger door and pulls Billy out of the car, tossing him on his back onto the street.

He kicks him repeatedly.

JOEY

You son of a bitch! You think
you're tough? I'll show you tough,
you rat fuck!

Billy tries futilely to defend against the blows.

BILLY

Shite! Don't! Stop!

Joey stops kicking him and looks down at him, hate in his eyes.

JOEY

The O'Brannon's are history in
this town, you hear me?

Joey shoots Billy three times, killing him.

Judy watches this event unfold in horror.

Don Stucchio looks around.

DON STUCCHIO

Is everybody okay?

Everyone nods.

Joey returns to the group, tucking his gun away.

JOEY

Incompetant bastards.

Judy looks at Michael, tears in her eyes.

JUDY

Take me home. Right now.

MICHAEL

All right.

Michael takes Judy's hand, and leads her to the car.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

It was the first time I had been
shot at, and it was a scary thing.
I was pretty rattled. I could only
imagine how Judy was feeling.

Paulie watches Michael lead Judy away.

PAULIE

Michael, where you going?

MICHAEL

I'm taking my wife home.

PAULIE

You're still coming to the club,
right?

MICHAEL

I don't think so.

PAULIE

Come on, you gotta!

NEIL

Yeah, Mikey.

Michael gets Judy into the car and closes the door.

He walks back over to them.

MICHAEL

We were all nearly killed.

NEIL

We can't show them that we're
afraid of them.

PAULIE

We need you there.

VINNIE

Strength in numbers, pal.

Michael looks at them and sighs.

MICHAEL

All right.

Michael heads back to his car.

Joey leads Don Stucchio and Theresa to their car.

JOEY

I'll get you home, where it's
safe.

Siren's approach in the distance, and they all begin to
drive away.

INT. MICHAEL'S NEW HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Judy is now in a nightgown and is sitting on the bed.

Michael hasn't changed, but he's sitting on the edge of the
bed beside her.

JUDY

Is this what going out with you is
going to entail? Being shot at?

MICHAEL

No. That won't ever happen again.

JUDY

You're damn right it won't. Don't
ever ask me to go out with them
again. You might be willing to die
for them, but I'm certainly not.

MICHAEL

I'm not willing to die for them.

JUDY

You must be, considering you
continue to work for them.

MICHAEL

No.

JUDY

And what Joey did. Is that the kind of man you've become, too?

Michael looks at her, taken aback.

MICHAEL

What do you think?

JUDY

I don't know anymore, Michael. Have you killed anyone?

MICHAEL

No, and I'm not going to. I'm not a killer.

Judy looks at her feet.

JUDY

I'm scared, Michael.

MICHAEL

I'm not going to get hurt.

JUDY

That's not what I'm afraid of.

MICHAEL

Then what?

JUDY

I'm worried that you're going to go so far past the line that you're no longer going to be the man I married.

Michael stands up, irritated.

MICHAEL

I'm tired of having these conversations, Judy.

JUDY

Then don't put us in the position to have them!

MICHAEL

What do you want me to do?

JUDY

Get a real job. Walk away from them. For me.

Michael sighs, shaking his head.

MICHAEL

Go to bed. I've got to go.

JUDY

Where? Back out with them?

MICHAEL

They need me.

JUDY

I need you!

Judy's eyes water.

Michael looks at her.

JUDY

Don't you understand that?

MICHAEL

I do.

JUDY

Do you care?

Michael sighs, walking away.

MICHAEL

Goodnight.

JUDY

Answer me, goddamn it!

MICHAEL (O.S.)

I'm not doing this tonight! Take your medicine and go to sleep!

The front door opens and slams shut.

Judy breaks down and starts crying.

INT. JAZZ CLUB - NIGHT

The other club in Haven City, the Jazz Club, is quite the place to be to dance and have a good time.

The music is good, and everyone is enjoying themselves.

Paulie, Vinnie, Neil, and Tommy are seated at a table, talking and laughing.

Paulie looks towards the door, and spots Michael, who just walked in.

PAULIE

Mikey!

Paulie waves him over, and Michael makes his way to them.

MICHAEL

Hey, fellas.

TOMMY

We were thinking you weren't going to make it.

MICHAEL

Well here I am.

NEIL

Good on you.

VINNIE

How's the misses? Shaken up pretty bad, yeah?

MICHAEL

Yeah, you could say that.

TOMMY

I can't believe they pulled a stunt like that.

PAULIE

Yeah, well -

CERINA (O.S.)

Excuse me.

Michael turns around to see Cerina smiling at him.

CERINA

You owe me a dance, mister.

MICHAEL

Indeed I do.

Cerina begins to lead Michael away.

PAULIE

Hey, now -

CERINA

I'll bring him back. Relax,
Paulie.

Cerina and Michael step onto the dance floor.

Paulie doesn't look overly happy.

And the two dance. Very well. They're having a lot of fun.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

When I was dancing with Cerina,
the whole world fell away, and it
was just her and I. Nothing else
entered my mind, and nothing else
matter. Not even my wife, as bad
as that may sound. I hadn't felt
that way since I was a teenager.
It was as if I was a school boy
again.

EXT. STUCCHIO MANOR - NIGHT

Michael walks Cerina up to the door of the manor.

CERINA

You're a good dancer.

MICHAEL

You're not too bad yourself,
little lady.

CERINA

That's not the only thing you're
good at, is it?

MICHAEL

Certainly not.

CERINA

Oh, yeah? What else?

MICHAEL

All sorts of things.

CERINA

Yeah? Show me.

INT. STUCCHIO MANOR, CERINA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Michael and Cerina are standing by her bed, kissing passionately.

Michael slowly undresses her, and she slowly undresses him.

The two get into bed and make love.

Afterwards, Cerina sleeps in Michael's arms, and Michael smokes a cigarette, looking up at the ceiling, deep in thought.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

Lying there with Cerina in my arms, everything finally felt right. I had betrayed my wife and broken the vows that I had promised to keep, but I was impassive. For the first time in a long time, I was content.

EXT. STUCCHIO MANOR - DAY

It's early morning. Dawn has just broken.

Michael quietly steps outside, gently closing the door behind him.

Michael turns around to find Paulie, who looks quite haggard himself. He also had a long night with a lady.

Paulie and Michael are both surprised to see one another, though Paulie is clearly angry.

PAULIE

Late night?

MICHAEL

Uh, look, this isn't -

PAULIE

Save it, Michael. I don't even want to hear it right now. We'll discuss this later.

MICHAEL

Paulie -

Paulie shoves his way past Michael, entering the manor.

MICHAEL

Shit.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Det. Gallagher sets down his pencil, smiling.

DET. GALLAGHER

And there it is. The moment of infidelity I was waiting for.

MICHAEL

Congratulations, you're a genius.

DET. GALLAGHER

You're much too kind. It doesn't seem like big brother Paulie is very happy about this little revelation.

Michael chuckles.

MICHAEL

No. Not in the least.

INT. STUCCHIO DINER - DAY

Michael is sitting in the diner, drinking a cup of coffee with Cerina.

Paulie is behind the counter, eyeing to two of them.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

And even though he was as pissed as he was, he never confronted me about it. I had begun to think he was as spineless as everyone said he was.

Cerina laughs at something Michael has said.

Paulie storms to the back in annoyance.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Michael and Cerina walk through the park together, talking and enjoying each others company.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

The more time I spent with Cerina,
the further I drifted from Judy,
and the better I felt.

INT. MICHAEL'S NEW HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Michael and Judy are seated at the kitchen table, eating dinner.

JUDY

I wasn't expecting you to be home
tonight. Otherwise, I would have
prepared a better meal.

MICHAEL

This is fine.

JUDY

Why are you home?

Michael takes a bite.

MICHAEL

They gave me the night off. There
was nothing going on tonight.

JUDY

Oh.

Judy moves the food around her plate with her fork.

MICHAEL

You're not hungry?

JUDY

Haven't been feeling well.

MICHAEL

Again?

Judy looks down at the table in shame.

JUDY

Yeah.

MICHAEL

I didn't mean -

JUDY

It's fine.

Judy wipes her mouth with a napkin.

JUDY

Excuse me.

Judy stands up and walks away from the table.

MICHAEL

Where are you going?

JUDY

To lie down.

Michael takes another bite, sighing.

He then drains his glass, wipes off, and walks away from the table.

EXT. STUCCHIO MANOR, BACK YARD - NIGHT

Michael waits outside the back door.

After a moment, Cerina opens the door.

CERINA

(whispered)

Hey. Come in.

Cerina moves out of the way, and Michael enters the manor.

INT. STUCCHIO MANOR, CERINA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Cerina is asleep on the bed, and Michael is getting dressed.

He stands up and leans down to kiss Cerina's forehead.

INT. HALLWAY

Michael steps out into the hallway, closing the door behind him.

He walks down the hallway, and rounds the corner.

Standing in front of a painting with a glass of brandy in his hand is Don Stucchio.

He turns to Michael.

DON STUCCHIO

Good evening, Michael.

Michael tenses up a bit.

MICHAEL
Don Stucchio.

Don Stucchio turns to the painting.

DON STUCCHIO
A magnificent piece of art, isn't
it?

Michael looks at the painting.

MICHAEL
Yes, sir.

DON STUCCHIO
It's been in my family for four
generations. Straight from the old
country. There isn't another like
it in the entire world.

MICHAEL
It's beautiful.

DON STUCCHIO
It's funny, the things we as men
hold dear.

Don Stucchio turns to Michael.

DON STUCCHIO
Come with me to the study. Have a
drink.

MICHAEL
Yeah, okay. Sure.

INT. STUDY

Don Stucchio sits behind his desk, and Michael sits down in front of him.

The Don pours Michael a glass of Brandy and hands it to him.

MICHAEL
Thank you.

Don Stucchio takes out a cigar and offers one to Michael, who declines.

The Don shrugs, and lights his cigar.

MICHAEL

You're up late tonight.

DON STUCCHIO

Eh, I don't sleep much. I never have. And when I do, it's with one eye open, you know?

MICHAEL

I can't see you having many enemies, besides the O'Brannon's. You're a good man, and you take care of your people.

DON STUCCHIO

Men with power always have enemies, Michael, regardless of how good they are.

Michael nods his head, and takes a drink.

MICHAEL

This is good.

DON STUCCHIO

The best, and it better be. That bottle didn't come cheap.

Michael takes another drink.

DON STUCCHIO

It's come to my attention that you've been spending quite a lot of time with my daughter. Seeing you here so late this evening merely confirms this bit of information as truth.

MICHAEL

Don Stucchio, Cerina and I -

DON STUCCHIO

The only person it seems to be bothering is Paulie.

MICHAEL

I see. He said something to you?

DON STUCCHIO

He did. Apparently he didn't have the balls to confront you himself.

Michael chuckles.

Don Stucchio takes a puff from his cigar.

DON STUCCHIO

You're a married man, Michael. Your wife, though ill, is still a good woman. However, how you handle your marriage and what you do or don't do is your business, not mine. When you bring my daughter into it, though, that makes it my business.

MICHAEL

I understand.

DON STUCCHIO

Either you make an honest woman out of my daughter, or you stop right now.

Michael nods his head.

DON STUCCHIO

That's all I'm saying on that matter.

Don Stucchio drains his glass, and pours himself another.

He then tops of Michael's glass.

DON STUCCHIO

You know, when I was your age, I was in your shoes. I didn't have much money, and I was someones lackey.

MICHAEL

Is that so?

The Don nods his head.

DON STUCCHIO

My father, he was a good man. An honest man. He came to America to open up a legitimate business. He paid his taxes. He obeyed the laws. He was as clean as you could get. You know where that got him? No where.

Don Stucchio takes another puff from his cigar.

DON STUCCHIO

As you know, he opened his diner. Business was good. Nothing spectacular, but good enough for us to get by without many problems. Then one day, a business man comes calling, by the name of Salvatore Francesco. He demanded twenty percent of my father's earnings. My father refused, and was beaten severely. Eventually he caved, and payed out every week. This crippled us.

Don Stucchio takes a drink.

DON STUCCHIO

I'd never seen my father, who was always so proud and strong, so broken. It destroyed my father. I swore that I would never be my father. I would never allow anyone to own me. I started working for that son of a bitch Francesco. My father disapproved, and threw me out of his house.

MICHAEL

Wow.

DON STUCCHIO

I worked my way to become Francesco's right-hand. His number two. A couple years after, Francesco was hit, and I was free to head up the organization, using his men as my own. I swore that I would own this city, and my income would come out of respect, not fear. You see, Michael, I provide a service for every person that pays out. Be it protection, laundering, or getting the heat to look the other way.

Michael sets his now empty glass onto the desk.

MICHAEL

And what of your father?

DON STUCCHIO

He died not long after Salvatore Francesco did.

MICHAEL

Did he ever try to make amends
with you?

DON STUCCHIO

No. I was dead to him. To him, he
didn't have a son. He never
understood that I was doing what I
did so that what happened to him
would never happen to anyone else
in Haven City. He didn't see that
there was no point in living
inside the lines of the law.

MICHAEL

Right.

DON STUCCHIO

I suppose that's why I have no
respect for the O'Brannon's. They
wish to gain their power through
fear and violence. They're power
hungry, and they show it every
time they try to move in on our
turf. That's not the way to do
things. Look through the pages of
history. How many kings and
kingdoms fell because of their own
greed? There's a simple rule when
it comes to any empire. If your
people aren't happy, you're as
good as dead.

MICHAEL

Yet you still kill men.

DON STUCCHIO

It's unavoidable.

Don Stucchio drains his glass and sets it down.

MICHAEL

What of your mother?

DON STUCCHIO

Mama? She signed the diner over to
me and went back to Italy, where
she died.

MICHAEL

I'm sorry.

DON STUCCHIO
It's life. We all go through
hardships, right?

MICHAEL
I suppose so.

Don Stucchio puffs his cigar.

DON STUCCHIO
I like you, Michael. You've been
good to me.

MICHAEL
Thank you.

DON STUCCHIO
I won't be here forever, you know.

MICHAEL
Yeah.

DON STUCCHIO
As tradition would go, I am to
pass the business to Paulie.

MICHAEL
I know.

DON STUCCHIO
What do you think?

Michael shrugs his shoulders.

MICHAEL
That's your decision, sir.

DON STUCCHIO
My son has neither the spine nor
scruples to run the business. He
lacks charisma and authority. All
qualities that are needed and that
I see in you.

Michael raises his eyebrows in surprise.

MICHAEL
Whoa. I'm honored that you would
even consider me, Don Stucchio.

DON STUCCHIO
You're a bright man. I see great
potential in you. I'm not setting
it in stone or anything, but
(MORE)

DON STUCCHIO (cont'd)
you're a candidate. Paulie's still
got time to grow into it.

MICHAEL
No. Yeah, of course.

Don Stucchio puts out his cigar.

DON STUCCHIO
We'll keep this conversation to
ourselves. It's just something to
think about.

INT. HALLWAY

Michael and Don Stucchio step out of the study.

They hug, and Michael walks away.

From the crack in his bedroom door, Paulie watches,
irritated.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Michael's car drives down the country road. It's raining.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
Business as usual commenced. It
was time for our monthly trip out
to the farm to get the booze.
Paulie didn't come this time. I
figured it was to avoid me, but he
claimed to be ill. He sent Neil
instead.

INT. MICHAEL'S CAR

Of course, Michael is driving.

MICHAEL
Hey, Neil, where's your brother
tonight? The two of you don't go
anywhere without each other.

NEIL
Vinnie's got a card game tonight.
He says he's going to win some big
bucks. "Like taking candy from a
baby," he says. I say he's going
to come back broke. Just you wait
and see.

MICHAEL

Yeah, he's not much of a card player. The couple times we've played I've cleaned him out.

NEIL

So, uh, what's up you and Paulie? Got some bad blood between ya now?

JOEY

There is. His sister.

Neil is surprised.

NEIL

You mean you and Cerina...

JOEY

C'mon, you'd have to be a complete imbecile not to see it.

NEIL

The Don know?

MICHAEL

Yeah.

NEIL

What about the wife?

MICHAEL

I haven't told her yet.

NEIL

Damn. So you're going to end it with her?

MICHAEL

It's the right thing to do.

JOEY

Enough small talk.

EXT. FARM - NIGHT

They pull up to the barn, and get out of the car.

Joey has his shotgun in hand.

Inside the barn, the lamps are burning. The driver's are still sitting in the truck. They seem to be sleeping.

NEIL
What's the deal?

JOEY
Wake 'em.

Neil slowly walks over towards the truck and opens the door.
The driver doesn't move.

NEIL
Hey, buddy.

Neil shakes the driver, who falls out of the cab. His throat has been cut.

NEIL
What the hell?

Neil takes out a pistol.

Automatic gunfire rings out, and Neil falls to the ground, hit.

Joey and Michael duck down behind the car.

Somebody laughs.

Steve Boyd is the man behind the laugh and gunfire. He has a Tommy Gun in his hand.

There's another IRISH THUG with him, who carries a pistol.

STEVE
What's the matter, boys, eh? Ain't ya prepared for a little payback? Stick your pretty little faces out so I can blow a big fuckin' hole in them!

Joey jumps up from behind the car and fires his shotgun.

Steve shoots back, filling Michael's car with holes.

Joey jumps up again and fires a couple more times, causing Steve and the Irish Thug to retreat some.

Michael looks at Neil, who is lying on the ground, bleeding.

NEIL
Mikey...

Joey puts a few more shells into his shotgun and pumps it.

JOEY

Grab him. I'll cover you.

STEVE

Give it up, you stupid wops! The
liquor business now belongs to us.
You guys are history in this town!

Joey jumps up and fires.

Michael runs over to Neil, staying low.

MICHAEL

Hold on. We're going to get out of
here.

Joey fires again, hitting the Irish Thug in the leg.

He falls to the ground.

Steve opens fire again, hitting Joey in the arm.

Joey drops his shotgun and falls down.

NEIL

Mikey, kill him.

Neil hands Michael his pistol.

Michael looks at it.

Steve slowly approaches Michael.

STEVE

My, my. You found yourself in a
bit of a predicament, haven't ya,
boy-o?

Michael turns around, and before Steve can raise his Tommy
Gun to shoot, Michael fires, hitting Steve in the heart,
killing him.

Michael sits there, gun still raised, shocked at what he's
done.

Joey gets up from behind the car, picks up his shotgun, and
walks over to Michael and Neil.

He lowers Michael's weapon for him.

JOEY

It's done now.

Michael is breathing heavily.

There is rustling behind them, and Joey turns around.

The Irish Thug is hobbling out of the barn, into the rain.

Joey pumps his shotgun, and guns him down.

JOEY

Rat bastards.

Joey turns to Michael, who is just sitting there.

JOEY

Don't just sit there, damn it!
Pick him up! He needs a doctor!

Michael shakes his head to clear it, hoists Neil up, and walks him over to the car.

JOEY

Get in the back with him, I'll
drive. You keep him awake, you
hear?

MICHAEL

Yeah.

The three get into the car, and Joey speeds away.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Joey is really booking.

INT. MICHAEL'S CAR

Michael is in the back seat with Neil, who is gripping Michael's hand and gasping for breath.

MICHAEL

Just relax, Neil. Keep breathing.

Neil coughs, shaking his head.

MICHAEL

C'mon, man. Stay with us!

NEIL

I'm cold. So cold.

MICHAEL

You're going to be fine.

Neil is bleeding all over the place. He has four holes along his abdomen.

NEIL

I never...wanted...this.

MICHAEL

I know. None of us did.

Neil grabs Michael's face, forcing him to look directly into his eyes.

NEIL

Get out. There's time...

Michael nods his head, his eyes slightly tearing.

JOEY

Stay awake, Neil! We're nearly there!

EXT. CITY STREETS

Joey tears through the city.

INT. MICHAEL'S CAR

Neil coughs again. This time, blood comes up.

MICHAEL

Shit. He's bleeding bad, Joey!

JOEY

Shut up! Keep him talking.

Neil groans.

NEIL

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm...sorry.
So sorry.

MICHAEL

You've got nothing to apologize for. You just hang in there. You're going to look back at this and laugh one day.

NEIL

Tell Vinnie...I...

Neil's head drops back and his eyes close.

Michael shakes him.

MICHAEL

Neil! Come on! Wake up! Neil!

EXT. HOSPITAL

They arrive at the hospital.

INT. MICHAEL'S CAR

Joey turns to them.

JOEY

We're here.

It's too late. Neil is dead.

Michael looks at Joey in sorrow.

INT. MICHAEL'S NEW HOUSE - NIGHT

Michael enters his house and solemnly walks to the bathroom, closing the door behind him.

INT. BATHROOM

Michael turns on the sink, and lets the water run.

He looks at himself in the mirror, and then down at his blood-stained hands.

Michael begins ferociously washing his hands in an attempt to get the blood off.

He then turns the water on in the tub, and cranks on the shower.

He strips, and steps inside the shower.

While in the shower, he scrubs and scrubs himself with soap and a washcloth to try to get clean. He's frantic.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

It was the first time I'd ever
held a gun, let alone shot
someone. I felt dirty. I felt
cold. I felt ashamed. Most of all,
I felt alone.

INT. BEDROOM

Michael climbs into bed next to Judy, and curls up into a ball.

INT. MICHAEL'S NEW HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Michael sits at the kitchen table, a blank look on his face.
He looks almost sick.

Judy enters the kitchen, wearing a robe.

JUDY
Morning.

MICHAEL
Mhm.

Judy looks at Michael curiously.

JUDY
You feeling all right? You look
sick.

MICHAEL
No.

Judy sits down in front of Michael and takes his hands in
her own.

JUDY
Talk to me, Michael.

MICHAEL
I can't.

JUDY
I'm your wife. If you won't talk
to me, then what am I still doing
here?

Michael looks down at the table.

MICHAEL
Neil is dead.

JUDY
What? My God! What happened?

MICHAEL
And I shot a man.

Judy releases Michael's hands in shock, tearful.

JUDY
Did you kill him?

MICHAEL

Yes.

Judy looks away from Michael.

JUDY

Last night?

MICHAEL

I don't know what to do, Judy.

Judy stands up.

JUDY

Damn you. I told you to walk away
from them.

Judy walks away.

INT. LIVING ROOM - A COUPLE DAYS LATER

Michael is sitting on the couch, spaced out.

There's a knock on the door, and it snaps Michael back to reality.

Michael gets up and answers the door. It's Joey and Vinnie. Vinnie isn't looking too hot, either.

Joey's arm is in a sling.

VINNIE

Hey, Mikey. Can we come in?

Michael steps out of the way, and the two step inside.

The three sit down in the living room.

MICHAEL

Can I get you guys anything?

VINNIE

No, thanks. The wife home?

MICHAEL

She's in bed.

VINNIE

Okay.

MICHAEL

How are you holding up?

VINNIE

I'm holding. That's about all I can say.

MICHAEL

I'm so sorry, Vinnie. I wish there's something I could have done.

Vinnie shakes his head.

VINNIE

It's not your fault. It's mine. I should have been there. It wouldn't have happened if I had been. All because of a stupid card game.

MICHAEL

It's not your fault.

JOEY

Where have you been, Michael? We haven't seen you in a couple days.

MICHAEL

I've, uh, just been trying to clear my head, you know? Is there something you guys needed?

VINNIE

Neil's funeral is tomorrow. We'd really like you to be there, and so would he.

Michael nods his head.

MICHAEL

Yeah, of course I'll be there.

VINNIE

When I get my hands on those sons of bitches...

MICHAEL

No good will come of more violence.

VINNIE

We'll see about that.

EXT. MICHAEL'S NEW HOUSE - DAY

Michael walks the two of them outside.

VINNIE

See you tomorrow, Mikey.

Vinnie walks to the car and gets in.

Joey turns to Michael, and takes a pistol out of his coat pocket.

He offers it to Michael.

JOEY

Take this. Carry it on you at all times.

Michael pushes the gun away.

MICHAEL

I don't want it. I'm not going to use one ever again.

JOEY

I know how you're feeling. The first time I killed someone, whoo, what a rush! Every alarm in you goes off. Your body goes in to over time. You're scared and excited. It's like having sex for the first time.

Michael looks at Joey like he's crazy.

Joey grabs Michael's hand and places the gun in it.

JOEY

It gets easier. Soon you won't even think twice about it, it'll come as easy as breathing, and feel just as natural. These are dangerous times. It's kill or be killed. Think about that.

Joey walks to the car.

Michael looks down at the gun in his hands.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

It's Neil's funeral, and the church is filled.

It's an open casket, and Neil looks peaceful.

A PRIEST is giving a eulogy.

Everyone from the Stucchio Family is there.

Michael stands in the corner, by himself, looking solemn.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

Neil's funeral was nice, as far as funerals go. I'd never seen so many people at one funeral. He was a popular guy, or at least many people respected the Stucchio's enough to show up and pay their dues. I couldn't help feeling that I should be in a coffin beside him. And I found myself wondering: Is Neil in hell? After all, he'd killed men in cold blood. And if that was the case, was I also damned?

Close in on the Stucchio family.

Theresa, Vinnie, and Cerina are crying. Paulie and Joey are impassive, and Don Stucchio just looks angry.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

Judy didn't come. The one time in who knows how long I wanted her by my side, she wasn't. She said she was sick, but I knew the real reason. I felt alone. I couldn't even begin to imagine how Neil's wife and kids felt.

Close in on Neil's grieving WIFE and two KIDS.

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

Neil's casket is lowered into the ground, and the PRIEST delivers the last rights.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

A month later, the Prohibition Act was ammended. Go figure.

INT. GAMBLING DEN - NIGHT

In the basement of some business, or perhaps someones house, is a large gambling den, complete with dice, cards, tables, the works.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

With the loss of income from the booze, we had to pursue other avenues. We decided on gambling. We opened several dens around Haven City.

Michael and Tommy walk through the Den, checking things over.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

Tommy was put in charge of the dens, since he had such a way with numbers. Vinnie stayed away from the dens, understandably.

Chief Everett shows up at the den, and Tommy hands him an envelope.

Chief Everett paws through it. It's filled with cash. He smiles.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

Of course, the chief still got his cut of the profits.

INT. STUCCHIO MANOR, STUDY - DAY

Joey, Vinnie, Michael, and Don Stucchio are talking in the study.

JOEY

Somebody talked.

MICHAEL

Come on, they just finally found us. It was bound to happen.

JOEY

Then what took so long? If they were going to figure it out, they would have done it a long time ago.

VINNIE

I'm with Joey on this one. I think somebody talked. There's no way in hell they would have found us, otherwise.

MICHAEL

You're just looking for vengeance.

Michael turns to Don Stucchio.

MICHAEL

What do you think about all this?

DON STUCCHIO

I like to think that I can trust those in my family. I like to think that nobody would betray that trust. Unfortunately, it's a possibility and worth looking in to.

JOEY

It's that rat bastard chief. I'll take care of him.

DON STUCCHIO

You'll do nothing until I say so, Joey. I said we'll look in to it. Nobody does anything until we know more.

Michael nods his head.

INT. STUCCHIO DINER - DAY

Michael and Cerina are in the diner, having lunch together.

Cerina leans over and kisses Michael.

EXT. STUCCHIO DINER

From outside the diner, through the window, Judy watches, mouth agape.

She turns and walks away, weeping.

EXT. MICHAEL'S NEW HOUSE - NIGHT

Michael pulls up in the driveway in a new car.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

Things had picked up again for me,
and I had begun to feel better.
That is, until I went home that
night.

Michael gets out of the car, and notices a cab waiting in
the street out front of the house.

Michael heads inside.

INT. MICHAEL'S NEW HOUSE

Michael steps through the door, and finds two suitcases
waiting by it.

MICHAEL

Judy? Are you having guests?

Judy steps out of the bedroom, her purse on her shoulder.

MICHAEL

Where are you going?

JUDY

I'm leaving, Michael.

MICHAEL

Where are you going?

JUDY

It's not your concern.

MICHAEL

You're my wife, I'd say that it
is.

Judy picks up the suitcases and looks at Michael.

JUDY

No, it's really not. Cerina is
your concern now.

Michael sighs.

MICHAEL

So, you know.

JUDY

Yeah, I know. Paulie showed me.

MICHAEL

Paulie?

JUDY

He stopped by the house on his lunch break and told me to come with him to the diner for a minute this afternoon.

MICHAEL

That son of a bitch.

JUDY

How long, Michael?

MICHAEL

A couple months.

JUDY

Did you plan on ending it with me, or did you want to see how far you could string me along?

MICHAEL

I was going to tell you. I just - I wanted to wait until you were better. Until you didn't need medication.

JUDY

Thanks for being so courteous. I hope you and that whore have a terrific life together.

Judy walks out of the house, heading for the cab.

Mid-way there, she turns around.

JUDY

You know, even after everything, I never once stopped loving you.

Judy continues to the cab, and gets in.

Michael watches, but says nothing, nor does he go to stop her.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

And she was gone. Cerina and I were free to do as we pleased. However, I was pissed at Paulie for doing what he did, and I wanted to have some words with him.

INT. STUCCHIO DINER - DAY

Michael storms into the diner.

Paulie is behind the counter, and knows why Michael is there.

PAULIE

Ah, shit.

MICHAEL

I'm going to kick your ass.

Before Paulie can even move, Michael reaches over the counter, grabs him, and slams him down on it, pinning him there.

MICHAEL

You son of a bitch! Why'd you do it?

Theresa comes rushing out from the back.

THERESA

Michael! What are you doing? Have you gone mad?

PAULIE

Let go of me, you asshole!

MICHAEL

I trusted you like a brother! Tell me why you did it!

THERESA

Michael! Let him go!

Michael releases Paulie, who stands up, composing himself.

THERESA

What's all this about?

PAULIE

Nothing, Ma. It's okay. Go back to the kitchen.

Theresa smacks Paulie across the back of the head, saying something in Italian.

THERESA

Don't you talk to your Ma like that. I might be old, but I still brought you into this world, and I can take you out.

PAULIE

Ma! Please. Let Michael and I talk.

Though she does not like it, Theresa nods her head. She turns to Michael.

THERESA

You put your hands on my boy like that again, Michael, you better have a damn good reason.

She turns back to Paulie.

THERESA

We're going to have words later, young man.

Theresa heads back into the kitchen.

Paulie looks at Michael, annoyed.

PAULIE

What is your problem?

MICHAEL

Why'd you do that to me?

PAULIE

It wasn't about you. "How could I do that to you?" How could you do that to her? Or my sister, for that matter.

MICHAEL

I knew it. You're still pissed about your sister and me. Why does it bother you so much?

PAULIE

Because she deserves better than you!

Michael is a little taken aback by this.

PAULIE

Cerina deserves better than all of this, as do I. It's too late for me, but I want her to get away, and if she's with you, she won't. All right?

Michael stands there a moment, unsure of what to say.

MICHAEL

Regardless, it wasn't your place.

PAULIE

Why the hell does it matter? You clearly didn't care about your wife and were going to end it with her anyway. I saved you the trouble.

Michael punches Paulie across the face, sending him falling to the ground.

MICHAEL

It wasn't your place, damn it.

Paulie sits up, lip bleeding.

Michael eases up.

MICHAEL

I'm sorry. You were right.

Michael leans down to help Paulie up, but Paulie pushes him away.

PAULIE

Don't touch me. Don't you ever touch me, Michael Soriano.

Michael leaves the diner.

INT. MICHAEL'S NEW HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Michael is in the kitchen, eating a sandwich.

His phone rings, and he answers it.

MICHAEL

Yeah?

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Michael stands in front of the Police Station, looking at it.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

The Don had been pretty pissed when he heard that I hit Paulie, so he kept me took me out of the action. A few days later, I got a call from Joey telling me there were a few leads to check out for the bad liquor deal.

Michael heads up to the station doors.

INT. POLICE STATION

Michael enters the Police Station, and walks up to the RECEPTIONIST.

MICHAEL

The Chief's office, please.

The Receptionist points him in the direction.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

Joey, Vinnie, and Paulie were each checking different leads, and, wanting to keep Joey away from him, the Don sent me to have a chat with the chief.

INT. CHIEF'S OFFICE

Michael enters Chief Everett's office.

The chief is on the phone, and doesn't look very happy to see Michael.

CHIEF EVERETT

I'll call ya back.

Chief Everett hangs up the phone.

Michael closes the door.

CHIEF EVERETT

What the hell do ya want?

MICHAEL

What do you know about Neil's murder?

CHIEF EVERETT

Murder? Is that what ya call it?

MICHAEL

Well, he's dead because Steve Boyd killed him. That makes it murder.

Chief Everett chuckles.

CHIEF EVERETT

I love how when one of your own is popped, it's murder, but when somebody else is killed by one of your own, it's business. Where does one draw the line, hmm?

Michael shifts uncomfortably.

MICHAEL

You know what I mean.

CHIEF EVERETT

Just ask what you came here to ask. Stop being a pussy by beating around the bush.

MICHAEL

Did you sell us out to the O'Brannon's?

CHIEF EVERETT

Now why would I go and do a thing like that?

MICHAEL

Money.

CHIEF EVERETT

Ha! The O'Brannon's don't have that kind of cash.

MICHAEL

Still, it makes sense. You weren't there that night.

Chief Everett stands up, agitated.

CHIEF EVERETT

If I said I didn't do it, I didn't, you understand, boy? And even if I had, what're you going to do about it? Hm? You going to kill me? I'm the law. You wouldn't make it out of this station alive.

(MORE)

CHIEF EVERETT (cont'd)
Don't ever come here threatening
me again. Now get the hell out of
here.

Michael turns around and opens the door.

CHIEF EVERETT
It seems to me you should be
looking around your own
organization.

Michael exits, and Chief Everett chuckles.

CHIEF EVERETT
Prick.

EXT. POLICE STATION

Michael walks out of the station, lighting a cigarette.

Paulie is in the street, waiting for him with a car.

MICHAEL
What are you doing here? I already
talked to him.

PAULIE
Get in the car, Michael.

Michael and Paulie get into the car. It drives away.

INT. CAR - DAY

Michael looks out the window, and then turns to Paulie.

MICHAEL
Where are we going?

PAULIE
Just enjoy the ride.

MICHAEL
What's going on?

PAULIE
We're going to meet some people.
That's all you need to know.

Michael looks back out the window, sighing.

EXT. CLOVER PUB - DAY

The car pulls up in front of what appears to be a pub, though it is still being renovated. The sign reads "CLOVER PUB: OPENING SOON"

Paulie and Michael get out of the car.

Michael looks at the pub and turns to Paulie.

MICHAEL

What the hell are we doing here?
This is an Irish place.

Paulie takes out a snub-nose gun, and pulls the hammer back.

Michael puts his hands up defensively.

PAULIE

Get inside.

MICHAEL

What the hell?

PAULIE

Now.

Michael heads towards the door.

INT. CLOVER PUB - DAY

Michael and Paulie enter the pub.

Several CARPENTERS are finishing work on the bar. A few other PEOPLE are setting up tables and chairs. A WOMAN is hanging decorations on the wall.

MICHAEL

Now what?

PAULIE

Upstairs.

Michael and Paulie head to the side of the pub, and walk up the stairs.

A big, burly IRISH THUG is waiting at the top of the stairs in front of a door.

IRISH THUG

State yer business, wop.

PAULIE

We're here to see the O'Brannon's.

IRISH THUG

I gathered that. I'm not a fuckin' idiot.

MICHAEL

Could have fooled me.

IRISH THUG

The fuck you just say to me, boy-o?

Before Michael can say more, Paulie interjects.

PAULIE

They're expecting us. Go ahead and check. Tell them Paulie Stucchio is here with Michael Soriano.

The Irish Thug eyes him for a minute, then turns around, knocks on the door, and pokes his head in.

A moment later, he turns back to Paulie.

IRISH THUG

You're clear.

The Irish Thug opens the door, and moves out of the way.

Before Michael can pass, the Irish Thug pokes Michael's shoulder.

IRISH THUG

Watch what you say 'round here. Next time, I'll bash your fuckin' skull in.

Michael pushes past him, saying nothing.

INT. PUB, OFFICE

Paulie and Michael enter the office. Paulie closes the door behind them.

Sitting behind a desk is JOHNNY O'BRANNON.

Leaning against the wall beside him, arms crossed, is SHAUN O'BRANNON.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

It was the first time I'd even seen the O'Brannon brothers, Johnny and Shaun. They presented themselves well, and weren't quite the dumb, violent thugs I had always invisioned.

Paulie faces the O'Brannon brothers.

PAULIE

Johnny, Shaun, this is Michael Soriano.

JOHNNY

Sit down, boys.

Paulie sits down.

Michael stands there, staring at Paulie.

MICHAEL

It was you. You sold us out at the barn. You got Neil killed.

SHAUN

Looks like we got ourselves a bright one, don't we, Johnny?

JOHNNY

I suppose we do.

Michael is getting angry.

MICHAEL

How could you turn your back on your own family? Your blood?

JOHNNY

(to Michael)

Sit down.

PAULIE

(to Michael)

I don't expect you to understand them, but I have my reasons.

MICHAEL

You're goddamn right I don't understand!

SHAUN

Michael.

Michael continues to ignore the O'Brannon's.

PAULIE
Just relax, Mike.

JOHNNY
Hey!

Michael turns to Johnny.

JOHNNY
Plant your ass in the chair before
I get angry.

Michael sits down.

Johnny takes out a cigarette and lights it.

JOHNNY
I suppose you're wondering why
you're here, aren't ya, boy-o?

MICHAEL
Something like that.

SHAUN
And I'm supposin' you're wondering
even more why you're still alive,
huh?

Michael nods his head.

SHAUN
Believe it or not, we're civilized
people, Mr. Soriano.

MICHAEL
I'm sure you are.

SHAUN
Oh, come now. What we do is no
different than what you or any of
the Stucchio's do.

JOHNNY
Though I don't reckon you'd know,
would ya? Considerin' you shoot at
us every time you see is. Killed
Steve, didn't ya?

MICHAEL
Can we not waste anymore time here
and cut to the chase?

Johnny looks to Paulie.

JOHNNY
Perhaps you'd like to tell him?

Paulie shakes his head.

PAULIE
The honor is yours, Johnny.

JOHNNY
What's even more interestin' than
Paulie betrayin' his own blood is
how badly he wants you dead.

Michael looks at Paulie, who looks away.

MICHAEL
Why not just do it yourself,
Paulie?

SHAUN
Because he's a pussy.

Paulie looks at Shaun, offended.

PAULIE
Hey -

SHAUN
There's no point in arguin'. It's
true. You're a pussy. Everyone
knows it.

Shaun walks over to Paulie, and stands behind him, patting
his shoulder.

SHAUN
But we wouldn't have you any other
way.

JOHNNY
(to Michael)
You see, one day Paulie comes to
us, wantin' to make a deal. He
says: "Wipe out Michael, and you
get the family." We get the city,
he gets out. We all win.

PAULIE
And my sister gets out, too.

JOHNNY

Yeah, whatever.

MICHAEL

Well, how wonderful.

JOHNNY

You know what we hate more than the Stucchio's, Michael? Spineless cowards that will betray their own family. That's the lowest of the low.

PAULIE

Wait -

Before Paulie can even move, Shaun takes out a garrote and wraps the steel wire around Paulie's throat.

Paulie thrashes and struggles, trying to break free. All his struggling does is make the wire cut into his neck.

After a few moments, Paulie is dead.

Shaun slams Paulie's face onto the desk, and Paulie falls to the floor.

Michael watches, shocked.

Shaun walks back over and stands beside Johnny.

SHAUN

Exhilaratin'.

JOHNNY

You're lookin' a bit confused, boy-o.

MICHAEL

Why not kill me? Why Paulie?

Johnny puts out his cigarette.

JOHNNY

You're worth something to us. We've got plans for you.

MICHAEL

I'm not for sale, if that's what you're getting at.

SHAUN

Everybody has a price.

Michael stands up.

MICHAEL
I don't. This conversation is
over.

SHAUN
It's not that simple.

Michael looks at them.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Det. Gallagher looks at Michael, waiting for him to say something.

DET. GALLAGHER
Well?

MICHAEL
Well, what?

DET. GALLAGHER
What was said? What happened?

MICHAEL
Be careful, detective. You're
starting to sound legitimately
interested in what I have to say.
The details aren't important.

Det. Gallagher shrugs.

DET. GALLAGHER
As you wish.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

A car pulls up to the police station.

The doors open, and Michael and Shaun get out of the car.

Michael has been beaten up pretty bad.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
They dropped Paulie and I back at
the station after roughing me up a
bit, leaving me with the business
of delivering Paulie's dead body
with the news of the betrayal.

Shaun helps Michael load Paulie's corpse into his car.

From a distance, Joey watches Shaun and Michael do this, and then shake hands.

Shaun gets back into the car, and drives away.

JOEY
Son of a bitch.

EXT. STUCCHIO MANOR - DAY

Michael unloads Paulie's body.

Theresa and Cerina come running out, screaming and crying.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
Dropping Paulie off wasn't fun,
and neither was the ensuing
conversation I had with the Don.

INT. STUCCHIO MANOR, STUDY - DAY

Don Stucchio throws his bottle of Brandy across the room, shattering it.

Michael stands in front of him, his head down.

DON STUCCHIO
You bring me my son's body, and
tell me he was with the
O'Brannon's!? You feed me that
bullshit!?!

MICHAEL
It is what it is, Mr. Stucchio.

DON STUCCHIO
Then why kill him? Hm? To piss me
off? To start a war?

MICHAEL
I don't know.

DON STUCCHIO
And why are you alive?

Michael shrugs.

MICHAEL
Would you prefer if I wasn't?

DON STUCCHIO
I would prefer my son still being
alive!

MICHAEL
You think I had something to do
with his death?

Don Stucchio turns his back to Michael.

DON STUCCHIO
Get out of my sight, Michael. I
don't want to see you around here
for a while.

Michael nods his head.

MICHAEL
Very well.

Michael turns to leave.

Joey enters the study, and gives Michael a dirty look.

JOEY
I need to speak with you, Mr.
Stucchio.

DON STUCCHIO
Not now.

JOEY
It's important.

Michael walks out of the study, closing the door behind him.

EXT. MICHAEL'S NEW HOUSE - NIGHT

Michael sits on his porch swing, drinking a beer.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
Even though Paulie betrayed me and
his own family, I grieved his
loss. I know he just wanted him
and his sister out. He figured it
was his only option. I'd known
Paulie for years; better and
longer than the others. I had seen
him as my big brother.

Michael sets his beer down, stands up, and goes for a walk.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - NIGHT

Michael lights up a cigarette.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

I was losing everything. My life had been so good, and then everything started falling apart. I kept wondering where I went wrong.

INT. BLUES CLUB - NIGHT

Michael sits at the bar, alone.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

I spent my nights drinking. Cerina didn't want to see me. She blamed me for her brother's death.

Michael downs a shot.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

I was depressed. Everything finally had gotten to me. Neil's death. Killing Steve. Losing Judy. Paulie's betrayal and my ensuing rejection from the family. Everything.

Sarah Goodman sits down next to Michael.

SARAH

Hey, cowboy. Why are you drinking alone tonight?

MICHAEL

It's complicated.

SARAH

I heard about Paulie. My condolences.

MICHAEL

Yeah.

SARAH

Come on, you should have a lady on your arm. Where is she?

Michael shakes his head.

MICHAEL
Don't have one.

SARAH
Hm.

Sarah stands up, and pulls on Michael's arm.

SARAH
Come with me.

INT. BLUES CLUB, OFFICE

Sarah is sitting on her desk, her legs wrapped around Michael, who thrusts a couple times.

SARAH
I've been out a lot of money since that liquor thing went under. Can you get me in with anything else?

Michael stops, and turns around, zipping up his pants.

SARAH
What? Come on!

INT. MICHAEL'S NEW HOUSE - DAY

Michael sits in the kitchen, reading the paper.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
I wasn't invited to Paulie's funeral, but I read about it in the paper. Apparently it was nice.

Michael's phone rings.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
Then, one day, I got a phone call.

Michael answers the phone.

MICHAEL (V.O.)
It was the Don. Apparently, there had been talk that I was in bed with the O'Brannon's, and killed Paulie myself to pin it on him. The Don had a job for me to prove I was still on his side.

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

Michael pulls up to the Hotel, and heads for the doors.

INT. HOTEL - DAY

Michael makes his way through the lobby and heads for the stairs.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

Shaun O'Brannon was supposed to be meeting with yet another backstabber within the family. I was to get in, whack them both, and get out.

INT. 5TH FLOOR HALLWAY

Michael heads down the hallway.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

I wasn't willing to kill anyone again, but I figured I could at least find out who it was, wound them, and inform the Don.

Michael stops at Room 528, takes a deep breath, draws the gun that Joey gave him, and enters the room, closing the door behind him.

INT. ROOM 528

Michael enters the room, and sitting on the couch is Vinnie, a pistol in his hand.

Michael is surprised to see Vinnie there.

MICHAEL

Vinnie. It's you?

Vinnie stands up.

VINNIE

No, Michael. It's you. You're the traitor.

MICHAEL

Come on, Vinnie. You can't honestly believe that.

VINNIE
You got Neil killed, and you
whacked Paulie.

MICHAEL
That's horse shit. You know that.

VINNIE
Just stop pretending, Michael.
Joey saw you shaking hands with
the O'Brannon's. You've been
caught with your hand in the money
jar.

Michael sighs.

MICHAEL
So, now what, then?

VINNIE
The Don wants you dead. You
shoulda stayed on our side.

MICHAEL
I did.

Vinnie cocks the hammer of his pistol, but before he can raise it to shoot, Michael fires his handgun, shooting Vinnie in the stomach.

Vinnie drops to his knees, gasping and bleeding.

INT. 5TH FLOOR HALLWAY

Joey walks down the hallway, and from his trench coat, he pulls out a shotgun.

INT. ROOM 528

Michael kicks Vinnie's pistol out of his reach.

MICHAEL
I'm sorry, I didn't want this, but
I can't have you trying again.

INT. 5TH FLOOR HALLWAY

Joey stops in front of Room 528, pumps the shotgun, and kicks open the door.

INT. ROOM 528

Joey bursts into the room, and fires at Michael.

Michael jumps out of the way, and Vinnie takes the hit, falling to the ground, dead.

JOEY

Damn it!

Joey pumps the shotgun.

Michael runs for the bedroom, blindly firing behind him.

Joey fires again, just missing.

Michael heads out the bedroom window.

EXT. HOTEL, FIRE ESCAPE - DAY

Michael steps out onto the fire escape.

From inside the bedroom, Joey fires again, blasting the window apart.

Michael begins descending down the fire escape.

Joey leans out the window, and fires down at Michael.

The fire escape absorbs the bullets.

Michael fires up a couple times, and Joey ducks back inside.

Michael keeps climbing until he reaches the ground. He takes off running.

Joey steps out onto the fire escape, and unloads down at Michael, who gets away.

JOEY

Fuck!

INT. MICHAEL'S CAR - DAY

Michael drives. Again, he looks sick, and he's shaking.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

The Don had put a price on my head.

EXT. MICHAEL'S NEW HOUSE - NIGHT

Michael pulls up to his house. It's on fire.

He doesn't even bother to get out of his car. Instead, he drives away as the sirens approach.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

A tear falls onto the table. It's Michael's. He's crying.

He looks at Det. Gallagher.

MICHAEL

Do you have any idea what it's like to lose everything in your life? I was living on borrowed time. Every minute I was alive I counted as a miracle.

Det. Gallagher gives Michael a cigarette and a match.

Michael looks at Det. Gallagher for a moment, and then lights the cigarette.

MICHAEL

You know how they say killing gets easier the more you do it? It doesn't. I just felt blank.

Det. Gallagher nods his head.

DET. GALLAGHER

So, what happened next?

INT. CLOVER PUB - DAY

Michael makes his way to the stairs in the pub.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

With a price on my head, I knew I wouldn't last long without friends, so I went to try and make some.

INT. PUB OFFICE

Michael sits down in a chair.

Shaun sits down beside him, and Johnny sits behind the desk.

JOHNNY

You know, I gotta say, it takes some stone balls to come back here willingly.

SHAUN

So we're gatherin' that you've found yourself in a bit of a pinch, yeah?

MICHAEL

Yeah. I need help.

Johnny chuckles.

JOHNNY

Well, of course you do. You're a marked man.

MICHAEL

So, you know?

JOHNNY

Know? We had the whole thing planned from the beginnin'!

Michael appears confused.

MICHAEL

What are you talking about?

JOHNNY

The moment Paulie came to us, we knew that this was our way to bring the Stucchio's down.

SHAUN

You see, Michael, Paulie wanted you dead. We wanted you dead. However, we saw how useful you could be to us. So, we took out Paulie, and left you with the task of delivering him.

JOHNNY

We knew that Emelio would never believe that his own son would give him away. And you, I mean, come on, it was perfect. An outsider, not related by blood. Young, ambitious, smart. Any respectable Don would see you as someone wantin' to take over.

It dawns on Michael, the realization spreads across his face.

MICHAEL

You're using me to take them out.

SHAUN

It's genius, if you sit down and think about it. There's no way to tie us to it. We take out Paulie, they try to take you out, you plug a few of 'em, and the family slowly falls apart.

MICHAEL

So, then the offer you made me?

JOHNNY

We knew you wouldn't take it. You're a loyal guy, Michael. Why do you think we didn't kill you when we had the chance? You were far too useful to us.

MICHAEL

And it doesn't matter that they've destroyed my life and taken everything from me?

Shaun laughs. Michael looks at him, irritated.

SHAUN

Why would we give a fuck about what happens to you? You're just a pawn.

JOHNNY

It was theirs to take, Michael.

Michael looks at Johnny.

JOHNNY

Everything you have, you only have because they gave it to you. They have all the right in the world to take it back. You owe them, not the other way around.

Michael stands up.

MICHAEL

It was a mistake coming here.

SHAUN

Plant your ass back in the chair.

MICHAEL

Forget it.

Michael turns to leave.

Shaun stands up.

SHAUN

Hey! I said sit the fuck down.

Michael turns, thinks for a minute, and then sits back down.

JOHNNY

How did you think this was going to end, Michael? We'd forget you killed one of ours? You thought Don Stucchio would take your word over his son's corpse?

SHAUN

This is how it ends, boy-o. There are no happy endings, and there is no salvation for us.

JOHNNY

Do you believe in God, Michael?

Michael thinks a moment.

MICHAEL

I don't know. I think if there is a God, he doesn't believe in me.

Johnny pours himself a drink.

JOHNNY

God is very important to us, isn't that right, Shaun?

SHAUN

That's right. Our mother raised us Roman-Catholic, and our father raised us drunk.

JOHNNY

We attended mass every Sunday, and spent an hour a day readin' the Good Book. You see, every night our father would come home, and he'd be drunk from stoppin' at the

(MORE)

JOHNNY (cont'd)
bar to get loaded.

SHAUN
He wasn't a friendly drunk, you see.

JOHNNY
And he'd curse us, and he'd beat us. We prayed for God to take us away. We had complete faith in the Lord, and knew he was testin' us.

Johnny hands Shaun a drink, and he begins pouring another.

JOHNNY
Then one day, our father was gunned down by the IRA. My mother fled with us over here, with nothing but a Bible and faith. We came from nothin'. We owe everything we have to God.

SHAUN
You're nothin' without belief, Michael.

MICHAEL
If you do believe as you say you do, then you must know you will never see Heaven.

JOHNNY
Our father, when he wasn't drunk, was a good man. A devout man. He did more good than most in his lifetime. If he's found his way into Heaven, we don't want to meet him there.

Johnny hands Michael a glass.

JOHNNY
You've got a long journey ahead of you, Michael. And right now, you're bein' tested. Will you succeed, or will you crumble once you meet resistance?

Michael thinks, then shrugs.

MICHAEL

I don't know. I suppose we'll see, won't we? Now, are you going to help me, or am I wasting my time?

SHAUN

Be grateful for the time you have, boy-o.

Johnny stands up, and opens up the cabinet behind him. He sets a Tommy Gun down on the desk.

JOHNNY

This is all we have for you. I'll tell you right now, if the Stucchios don't kill you, get out of town, because we will if we meet again.

Michael nods his head.

Johnny picks up his glass, and raises it.

JOHNNY

A toast: To Michael Soriano. May you be in Heaven half an hour -

SHAUN

Before the Devil knows you're dead.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Michael puts out his cigarette, and looks at Det. Gallagher.

MICHAEL

Later that day, I went to settle with the Stucchio's. Unfortunately, while I had been chatting with the O'Brannon's, some stupid cop decided to bust their gambling den.

Det. Gallagher smiles, and shrugs.

DET. GALLAGHER

Hey, I was just following a lead. I had no idea I was going to be cracking down on the Stucchio's.

MICHAEL

Yeah, you surprised quite a few people, including the chief. He was there at the time, wasn't he?

DET. GALLAGHER

Much to his dismay. He's playing the undercover card right now.

MICHAEL

Yeah, but you knew as well as I did that they would walk.

DET. GALLAGHER

I had an idea, yeah.

MICHAEL

Aren't you scared of what the chief will do to you when the dust settles?

DET. GALLAGHER

I try not to think that far ahead. Besides, after everything you've told me, I don't think he'll be walking away from this.

Michael chuckles.

EXT. CITY HALL - DAY

Michael is sitting in a car, just in front of City Hall, waiting. Tommy Gun in hand, cigarette in mouth.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

The rest you know. The week of the trial and investigation, I sat around, waiting for my moment to strike. As long as they were under investigation, I was safe.

Michael cocks the Tommy Gun.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

I also realized I didn't have a chance in Hell of hitting them at their home, and since I no longer cared what happened to me, I had to take them by surprise, and what better place than when they walked out of their trial?

Don Stucchio, Joey, and Tommy emerge from the doors of City Hall, escorted by a POLICE OFFICER.

They make their way down the steps, a throng of REPORTERS waiting for them on the sidewalk.

TOMMY

This whole thing is going to set us back a considerable amount of money.

DON STUCCHIO

We'll take care of that later.

Down in the street, Michael gets out of the car, Tommy Gun raised.

He spits out his cigarette, and turns to City Hall, Tommy Gun raised.

Joey sees him.

JOEY

Son of a bitch!

All is silent.

Joey reaches for the Police Officer's pistol, takes it, and shoves the Police Officer down the stairs.

He aims the pistol at Michael ready to fire.

Don Stucchio isn't sure at first what is going on, until he sees Michael, and his face is at first shocked, and then understanding.

Tommy covers his face with his arms in terror.

All of this happens in mere seconds.

And then, the silence is broken by the rattle of the Tommy Gun.

The bullets spray the steps of City Hall, and riddle Joey's, Tommy's, and Don Stucchio's bodies with holes.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

I was filled with so many feelings at once. Sorrow, satisfaction, anger, fear. But I felt comforted by my actions, and found solace in the knowledge that no longer would they hold sway over me, or anyway

(MORE)

MICHAEL (cont'd)

else.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Det. Gallagher sets down his pencil, and gathers his papers together.

MICHAEL

That's everything. That's my story.

DET. GALLAGHER

Will you testify in court against the rest of the Stucchio family?

MICHAEL

Yes.

DET. GALLAGHER

And the O'Brannon's? With your cooperation, we can bring them down for the murder of Paulie Stucchio and conspiring with Neil Veltri's murderers.

MICHAEL

I don't see why not. As I've told you, there's nothing left for me.

DET. GALLAGHER

You're helping to bring down dozens of criminals. I can appeal to the judge to reduce your jail time in exchange for you testifying.

MICHAEL

Do what you can, detective, but I won't sit here and hold my breath.

DET. GALLAGHER

We wouldn't want you to suffocate. You realise that after this, you'll have to go into hiding? You'll never be able to return to your old life. You're out, and you're out for good?

MICHAEL

I have no desire to return to the life.

Det. Gallagher nods his head.

DET. GALLAGHER
Let's go ruffle some feathers.

Det. Gallagher extends his hand.

Michael looks at it a moment, and then shakes it.

FADE TO BLACK

TITLE CARD:

IN THE MONTH'S THAT FOLLOWED, DETECTIVE MARK GALLAGHER ARRESTED AND SUCCESSFULLY CONVICTED NINE MORE MEMBERS OF THE STUCCHIO CRIME FAMILY, WITH TESTIMONY AND FULL COOPERATION FROM MICHAEL SORIANO. THE DUO ALSO PROSECUTED JOHNNY AND SHAUN O'BRANNON, AS WELL AS CHIEF EVERETT, THUS ENDING THE WAVE OF ORGANIZED CRIME IN HAVEN CITY. DETECTIVE MARK GALLAGHER WAS PROMOTED TO CAPTAIN, AND WAS THEN RECRUITED BY THE FBI AS A SENIOR AGENT IN THE ORGANIZED CRIME DEPARTMENT. UNDER PROTECTION, MICHAEL SORIANO LEFT HAVEN CITY, AND WAS NEVER HEARD FROM AGAIN.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

In a brightly lit conference room, seated along a long, rounded table, are several MEMBERS and BOSSES of various crime families.

A figure stands at the head of the table, facing a fire.

The figure slowly turns around. It's Michael. He's a little older, but it's him all right.

MICHAEL
Gentlemen, let's talk business.

FADE OUT.