THE PREZ.

By

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FADE IN:

SUPER: 1962

INT. ROOM - DAY

Three men sit around a table smoking cigars. The room is dark except for a single light bulb glowing above the table.

Cigar smoke hangs heavy in the air, a gossamer-like shroud.

In the center of the table sit a telephone and a bottle of whiskey. Each man has a glass. One other, empty, sits in front of an unoccupied chair.

FRANK, 40’s, pudgy face, silk tie, crisp white cotton shirt and suspenders, is the first to talk. He irritably looks at his watch.

   FRANK
   Where the fuck is he? You know I was always leery ’bout gettin’ caught up with these Micks. Buncha fuckin’ numbskulls.

PETER, 40’s, sharp features, neat haircut, double breasted pin stripe suit, leans forward, grabs the bottle and pours all three a large refill.

   PETER
   Guess we shoulda listened to you in the first place. These guys just do what they wanna do when they wanna do it. No fuckin’ respect!

DEAN, 40’s, sharkskin suit, quiffed oiled hair, puffs on his Davidoff, blue smoke scudding into the existing web of haze.

   DEAN
   Maybe we give him a chance to explain. S’gotta be tough tryin’ to control a boy like Jack.

Frank slams his hand down hard on the table.

   FRANK
   Y’see, this is the whole fuckin’ issue here...you’re gettin’ soft on us Dean. Just ’cos it’s his
FRANK
son...he should’ve slapped him
down, got him back in line.

Peter raises his glass to Frank, addresses Dean.

PETER
Gotta agree with him there pal. Joe
should’a kicked his ass a long time
ago.

The telephone rings. Frank snatches up the receiver.

FRANK
Yeah, good. Send him in.

Frank replaces the handset.

FRANK (CONT’D)
He’s here. You start Deano. Just
don’t be too easy, huh?

Dean shuffles in his seat, uncomfortable. The door opens.

The harsh exterior light cascades through, silhouetting the
frame of a tall man.

JOSEPH, 50’s, motionless momentarily, slowly enters. He
gently closes the door behind him.

Sporting a double-breasted charcoal gray suit, cut to
emphasise his athletic physique, he removes his Homburg and
reveals a mop of sandy colored hair. He places his hat on
the table.

As he peers through the gloom his round eye glasses reflect
the yellow light.

All three incumbents rise and shake Joseph’s hand.

JOSEPH
Frank, Dean, Peter. No Sammy?

PETER
C’mon Joe, you know they don’t like
him bein’ around.

Frank indicates the empty chair.

FRANK
Come my friend. Sit.

He grabs the whiskey bottle.
FRANK (CONT’D)

Drink?

JOSEPH
Sure. Sun’s up right?

The other three laugh. Joesph takes a large gulp, produces a pristine white handkerchief and wipes his mouth.

His demeanor changes, now serious, focussed.

JOSEPH
So...I guess this is important, callin’ me down here on a Sunday.

Frank looks at Dean and nods. Dean clears his throat.

DEAN
Thanks for makin’ it Joe---

Frank interrupts.

FRANK
Cut the crap Dean. Get on with it.

Joseph removes his glasses and stares at Frank hard, piercing blue eyes lasering through the fug.

DEAN
Okay...Joe, this is about Jack.

Joseph pouts, downs his drink, refills his glass and leans back in his chair.

JOSEPH
Shouldn’t you be talkin’ to him?

Frank jumps in.

FRANK
Don’t be a wise guy Joe. If it gets to that...you know what’s gonna happen.

Joseph doesn’t move his head, but his eyes are once again trained on Frank.

JOSEPH
Enlighten me, "my friend".

Peter chimes in.
PETER
We’ll take him out Joe, no shit.

Dean leans forward.

DEAN
Joe, look. We got Jack elected ‘cos we wanted him to run the show our way...but he just ain’t doin’ it.

Joseph swirls his drink around his glass, thoughtfully.

JOSEPH
How so?

FRANK
This guy---

JOSEPH
My son---

Frank shakes his head angrily.

FRANK
This guy...is way outta control...and you gotta reign him in.

JOSEPH
He’s his own man.

FRANK
Bullshit! He’s always been your puppet and now he’s ours. We’ve invested a lot here---

Dean tries to calm things down.

DEAN
What Frank’s sayin’ is that since Jack became president, he’s ignored us...ignored us all, and the families are pissed.

PETER
He’s runnin’ around like he owns the fuckin’ place. Can’t keep his dick in his pants and most of the time he’s bombed outta his head.

Dean leans across and touches Joseph’s arm.
DEAN
Jackie’s real embarrassed Joe. She ain’t been seen for weeks. I mean we all like to get some ass but he’s hawking that blond broad around and don’t give a shit. it ain’t right.

Frank is near exploding point.

FRANK
That’s one thing but our real beef is that he’s fuckin’ with our business...and when I say "our" I mean yours too.

Joseph looks concerned for the first time. Peter pours himself a drink.

PETER
Y’see Joe, we’ve heard that he’s planning to bring Bobby in---

JOSEPH
What’s wrong with that? He’s the smart one.

FRANK
Too fuckin’ smart for his own good. Word is he’s comin’ in to stop the girls and control our booze deals.

Frank pauses, looks fiercely at Joseph.

FRANK (CONT’D)
Thought that might get your attention...your two college boys are carving this whole thing up. There’s no respect here. Not for us, not for you...not for no one.

Joseph stands abruptly and sweeps his glass and the whiskey bottle from the table.

JOSEPH
This is fuckin’ shit! My boys wouldn’t do this...not to me...I’ve been supplying you guys for years...you’re wrong Frank.

Frank leans forward and pushes the telephone towards Joseph.
FRANK
Make the call, pal. Ask him yourself.

Joseph looks at the other two. They both nod.

DEAN
Gotta be done Joe. He might be the president but he’s gotta understand who put him there.

Joseph sits down slowly. He picks up the receiver and dials.

JOSEPH
Jack? It’s Pop...Yeah I’m here with Frank and the boys...They tell me you’re screwin’ around...in more ways than one.

Joseph listens intently.

JOSEPH (CONT’D)
But you can’t do that Jack. Just ’cos you’re in office don’t mean that you can piss on us...and Bobby had better not touch my deals here.

Joseph freezes. His face contorts with anger.

JOSEPH (CONT’D)
What did you say? You ungrateful, cocky little bastard!...Now you listen to me...Get your sorry ass over here now, we’re gonna settle this thing once and for all...and bring your brother with you.

He slams the receiver down.

JOSEPH (CONT’D)
Fuckin’ punks.

Frank smiles victorious.

FRANK
Good. Well done Joe. If he won’t listen...well let’s hope it don’t come to that.

PETER
If we can still bring the girls in the families’ll be happy again. We can’t lose the girls.
Frank looks across to Dean.

FRANK
Get two more chairs, scotch and glasses.

He turns his attention to Joseph.

FRANK (CONT’D)
Okay Joe. When they get here I want Jack to know that even the president has to do the right thing...Go through the right channels...You know, just last week the sonofabitch went and put up the green fees...I mean, this is our fuckin’ golf club, not his!

FADE OUT:

THE END.