

"The Nightowl"

Written By

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EXT. MANHATTAN SKYLINE - NIGHT

Beneath a moonlit sky, a large stately owl soars past jewel encrusted towers to the park where he glides over the reservoir.

EXT. 1069 FIFTH AVENUE - NIGHT

In front of the elegant high rise, the avenue is jammed with stalled cars, riotously HONKING their horns as a pair of drunken BUMS stagger across.

The owl lands on a high parapet and turns his glowing eyes upon a penthouse where the lights suddenly blink on, revealing the lavishly decorated living room inside.

Seen through an open window, FRANKIE PAZZO (52), a clumsy, small-time burglar in a black jumpsuit, tiptoes into the room. He snatches a silver statuette of Venus off a table and dumps it in a duffel bag.

INT. PENTHOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Frankie looks around the room, overjoyed by his incredible good fortune in finding a private gallery of precious artifacts.

He sits on a plush couch and admires a gold chess set before tossing all the figures into his sack.

At the mantelpiece, he grabs a clock with a gilded cuckoo bird, but nearly drops it on the floor, smashing the crystal against the fireplace.

At a bronze-trimmed secretary, Frankie opens a humidor filled with long cigars and stuffs five in a breast pocket and another one in his mouth.

Proud as a Wall Street banker, he studies his profile in an antique mirror, then looks around the desk for a lighter and picks up a silver-plated toy revolver. He pulls the trigger, giggling happily as a bright flame jets from the muzzle.

INT. PENTHOUSE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Rookie cops MCENTIRE and BENTLEY, overfed, not very intelligent suburbanites, draw their pistols and quietly slip along a wall covered with expensive oil paintings.

INT. PENTHOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Frankie contentedly puffs on his cigar, while aiming the toy revolver around the room, as if he were on the SWAT team target range.

Suddenly McEntire jumps through the entryway and drops into a tense crouch with his .38 pointed dead center at Frankie's chest.

MCENTIRE
(shouting)
Freeze, slimebag, and drop the
pistol!

FRANKIE
Don't shoot! It's just a toy!
See?

Frankie turns the silver-plated lighter sideways and pulls the trigger, igniting a flame.

McEntire panics when he sees the muzzle flare and FIRES twice, catapulting Frankie backwards into the fireplace and scattering the stolen booty all over the floor.

The two cops rush to the slain burglar's side and nervously cover him with their pistols.

Bentley drops a boot on Frankie's wrist and pries the shiny revolver loose. He hefts it respectfully, then realizes it's only a toy and pulls the trigger, igniting a flame.

BENTLEY
Hey, McEntire, this is just a
cigarette lighter!

MCENTIRE
You're telling me I shot an
unarmed man! Don't tell me
that!

CONTINUED

JUMP CUT:

McEntire and Bentley sit gloomily on the couch as a busy group of MEDICAL TECHNICIANS and POLICE PERSONNEL, including PLAINCLOTHED DETECTIVES, examine Frankie's dead body or catalogue the stolen property.

The Medical Technicians hoist Frankie onto a wheeled stretcher and begin to zip up a body bag. Uniformed SERGEANT LUSKY, a bored cynic, watches coldly.

MEDICAL TECHNICIAN 1
(to Lusky)
He's going straight to the
morgue.

SERGEANT LUSKY
Okay. Make sure they fingerprint
the corpse immediately, though, I
have no idea who the dummy is.

Across the room, plainclothed DETECTIVE CHARLEY CUCCIOLONE, a wise, disillusioned, thirty-year veteran, roughly pushes his way through the other cops.

CHARLEY
Wait a minute, lemme take a
look.

Charley arrives at the stretcher just as the Technician zips the bag over Frankie's pale drawn face. Charley pushes the Technician's hand away and quickly unzips the bag. He is painfully shocked to recognize a dear old friend.

CHARLEY (Cont'd)
Frankie?! Frankie Pazzo? No!

Moaning mournfully, Charley leans over the cadaver and strokes the dead man's cheek. The Sergeant is disgusted.

SERGEANT LUSKY
What are you doing, Charley?
That's a burglary suspect!

CONTINUED

CHARLEY
Shut up! Get a priest!

SERGEANT LUSKY
It's too late. What's he to you
anyway?

CHARLEY
My best friend!

Patrolman 1 brings over the toy revolver, holding
it up with a pencil through the trigger guard.

PATROLMAN 1
(to Lusky)
Here's the weapon.

Charley angrily snatches the lighter away.

SERGEANT LUSKY
Hey, don't get your goddamned
prints all over the thing!

CHARLEY
(incensed)
Frankie never carried a pistol!
He never hurt anyone in his
whole, useless life!
(ignites the flame)
What's this, a flamethrower?

SERGEANT LUSKY
Give it back.

CHARLEY
(shouting)
Who shot Frankie? Jesus, you
better tell me!

McEntire has been watching with dismay and when Charley
homicidally stares him in the eyes, the youthful Cop
blubbers and bursts into tears.

SERGEANT LUSKY
(yelling)
Charley, he's just a kid!

CONTINUED

Charley lunges at McEntire, overturning a coffee table and smashing a vase. A pair of muscular cops can barely restrain him as he struggles and snarls at McEntire, who stands on a couch and cowers against a wall.

MCENTIRE

Get away from me!

CHARLEY

You are dead!

EXT. 1069 FIFTH AVENUE - NIGHT

The avenue is jammed with HONKING cars as the Medical Technicians carefully load Frankie on board their ambulance. An angry MOTORIST yells.

MOTORIST

Get that thing outta here!

At the pinnacle of the roof, the owl anxiously flutters his wings and launches into flight.

EXT. PRECINCT - DAY

On a busy east side street narrowed to one lane by double-parked police cruisers, an unmarked car halts below the steps of the twin-globed station house.

Charley steps out and impatiently watches a long-legged MOTHER in a mink coat push her baby pram. He pins his gold detective's badge to a breast pocket and runs up the steps.

INT. PRECINCT - DAY

It's the afternoon shift change and a crowd of bored COPS, some arriving for work and some headed home, file by Sergeant Lusky who is seated behind a long high counter. Lusky calls to Charley.

SERGEANT LUSKY

Cucciolone! Charley!

CONTINUED

Charley irritably stops at the counter.

SERGEANT LUSKY (Cont'd)
You scared McEntire so much,
he asked to transfer to another
precinct.

CHARLEY
He shot Frankie Pazzo down cold,
Lusky. I can't apologize to a
heartless moron!

SERGEANT LUSKY
Yeah, save your sympathy for the
criminals. But check in with
Captain Kunkle; he's got the
tenant from last night's bur-
glary in his office.

INT. CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - DAY

A spacious cubicle with a half dozen file cabinets and
a view of a brick wall.

CAPTAIN KUNKLE, a barrel-chested, no-nonsense
administrator, and NEVIL FARQUAHAR, short-tempered heir
to an oil fortune, are seated on either side of a metal
desk as Charley enters the room.

The Captain politely stands to introduce Farquahar but
the burglary victim sniffs unhappily and remains
seated.

CAPTAIN KUNKLE
I was explaining to Mr. Farquahar
our policy about keeping stolen
property as evidence.

FARQUAHAR
Utter insanity! Why all the
damned inconvenience?

CHARLEY
Are you aware that a human being
was killed inside your apartment,
Mr. Farquahar?

CONTINUED

Farquahar bolts out of his chair, clenches his fists and gesticulates angrily as he answers.

FARQUAHAR
Who cares what happened to the
bloody thief?

CHARLEY
Me.

FARQUAHAR
First I'm victimized by a stink-
ing criminal, now I'm victimized
by the stinking police! When do
I get back my stuff?

CHARLEY
After the case is closed.

FARQUAHAR
How long will that be?

CHARLEY
Could be months from now.

Farquahar whips a leather bound notebook and a gold pencil out of his jacket.

FARQUAHAR
Gimme your name, Officer.

CHARLEY
Detective Charles Cucciolone.
C-u-c-c-i-o-l-o-n-e.

Farquahar scribbles frantically, snaps the notebook shut and crams it in a pocket. He stares at Charley like a maniac.

FARQUAHAR
Italian, huh?

CHARLEY
Possibly . . .

FARQUAHAR
Translate your name into English.

CONTINUED

CHARLEY

Cute little puppy dog.

FARQUAHAR

Don't you dare trifle with me!
I'm represented by one of the
most powerful law firms in New
York City! They'll get you
fired!

Farquahar looks threateningly from Charley to the
Captain, but neither man seems impressed. Farquahar
marches to the door and throws it open.

FARQUAHAR (Cont'd)

Up yours!

He exits, slamming the door shut behind him. The
Captain beams a conciliatory smile at Charley.

CAPTAIN KUNKLE

It might take even longer to get
back his stinking stuff. Maybe
a year or two.

CHARLEY

Maybe never?

The Captain puts on bifocals and glances at a memo
before handing it to Charley.

CAPTAIN KUNKLE

An Assistant Commissioner heard
you were very close to the de-
ceased perpetrator.

CHARLEY

Like a brother. Frankie and me
grew up together. My sadness is
he died with his sins still on
his head.

CAPTAIN KUNKLE

He will have a proper funeral.
We decided you should take a few
days off and attend. Make the
bereaved widow understand how
upset we all are at her husband's
passing.

CONTINUED

A tear wells in the corner of Charley's eye.

CHARLEY

It won't do much good, Captain.
She's gotta raise six small
children by herself.

The Captain comes around his desk.

CAPTAIN KUNKLE

Take care, Charley. The depart-
ment sincerely feels your loss.

CHARLEY

Sure, dump it on my shoulders. I
know what to do.

EXT. QUEENS CEMETERY - DAY

A grey expanse of headstones and scrubby turf near a
highway that ends beneath the towers of Manhattan.

The owl flutters down from above, lands on the head of
a marble angel and hoots softly.

Not far away, a funeral is being held under a black
awning. A polished ebony coffin covered with flowers
lies in an open grave above which stands a PRIEST with
a bible and an ALTAR BOY holding a silver cross.

The formally dressed party includes the tearful,
fiercely loyal widow, MRS. PAZZO, and her six
frightened CHILDREN, as well as a sad group of
NEIGHBORS, all of them torn by pity for the grieving
family.

Charley, in black trenchcoat and fedora, is the last to
arrive. He silently places a handful of black roses on
the coffin, stands opposite the widow and bows his head
respectfully.

Recognizing him through a torrent of tears, she
suddenly throws back her veil and yells in agony.

MRS. PAZZO

Assassino!

CONTINUED

Mrs. Pazzo furiously circles the grave and slugs Charley in the arm. He peacefully turns to face her.

MRS. PAZZO (Cont'd)
Lousy no good cop!

Everyone is shocked but the Priest who begins his sermon by calling down into Frankie's grave.

PRIEST
Let the day perish wherein I
was born; let that day be dark-
ness!

The widow adopts a fighter's stance and throws a flurry of punches at Charley's chest. He endures the onslaught bravely, ineffectually blocking the blows.

MRS. PAZZO
I should kill you just like
your crooked buddies murdered
my darling Frankie!

A roundhouse punch connects with Charley's jaw.

PRIEST
(to Mrs. Pazzo)
Man that is born of woman is
of few days and full of trouble;
he comes forth like a flower and
is cut down!

MRS. PAZZO
(to Charley)
Worthless bum!

She grabs Charley by the throat and chokes him with all her might, kicking at his legs.

PRIEST
(to the Children)
God is mighty and despises no
one; they that hate thee shall
be clothed with shame!

CONTINUED

Among the mourners is smooth EDDIE MOMO in a double-breasted, leather overcoat, a prosperous burglar tied to the mob.

The Priest nods at him and waits while Eddie reluctantly joins the combatants and gently peels Mrs. Pazzo off Charley.

EDDIE

Stop, sweetheart, your mascara is running all over!

Mrs. Pazzo pulls out a mirrored compact and a hanky and studies her face, wiping away the black streaks. Eddie quietly leads her back to the Children. The Priest continues, solemnly addressing Charley.

PRIEST

Be a father to the poor; gird
up thy loins now like a man;
look on everyone that is wicked
or proud and trample them down!

Thunder BOOMS from the clouds above. The Priest pauses significantly. All turn towards Charley. Tears fill his eyes as he bows his head obediently. The Priest makes the sign of the cross.

JUMP CUT:

Late afternoon, the funeral limousines slowly glide through the cemetery, followed at a distance by Charley and Eddie on foot. Eddie thumps the detective on the back admiringly.

EDDIE

You did the right thing, Charley,
she don't really blame you now!

Charley fishes a money order out of his pocket and gratefully hands it to Eddie.

CHARLEY

For the widow from me.

CONTINUED

EDDIE

A thousand bucks! Very nice!
It ain't the end of her problems,
though. Frankie had no in-
surance and almost no money!

CHARLEY

Wish I could be more help.

EDDIE

You do?

CHARLEY

Yeah, but I gotta wife and two
little kids of my own.

EDDIE

We can find a way. Let's get
a drink some place and put our
heads together.

CHARLEY

Okay.

Suddenly, the owl dives from a tree, knocks off
Charley's fedora and lands nearby. Eddie yells at the
bird as Charley chases his hat.

EDDIE

Stupid animal, you got no
respect!

EXT. PEACOCK BAR AND GRILL - NIGHT

On a broad boulevard in Queens, a stream of evening
traffic quickly glides by as Charley stops Eddie from
entering the garish, neon-signed tavern.

CHARLEY

Wait, this is a mob joint.

Loitering HOOKERS in hot pants and gaudy wigs stare at
him insolently.

EDDIE

You some kind of snob?

CONTINUED

CHARLEY
(hesitantly)

No.

Eddie throws open the leather upholstered door and they enter to the dulcid sounds of smoothly played jazz.

INT. PEACOCK BAR AND GRILL - NIGHT

The plush lounge is bathed in colored lights and has WAITRESSES in scanty peacock outfits. A vibraphone combo on the bandstand plays for a packed room of mostly rich MOBSTERS and their LADIES, all vulgarly overdressed.

Eddie stops and waves at DON TONY VITELLO, a godfatherly gangster with a shaved head and a pencil mustache, who is seated by a fat BLONDE wearing a dozen diamonds.

CHARLEY
(whispering to Eddie)
Tony Vitello, the mafia boss of
all bosses?

EDDIE
Shh! That ain't how he's known
in this joint. He just comes
here for relaxation.

The Blonde smiles lustily for Charley, leaning over to show off her huge breasts.

CHARLEY
How's he gonna relax sitting
next to a woman like that?

EDDIE
He's had a million women.
(to Vitello)
Tanti auguri, godfather.

Vitello smiles graciously, showing off a mouthful of gleaming gold teeth.

CONTINUED

EDDIE (Cont'd)
(to Charley)
He likes you. C'mon, let's
sit at the bar.

The mirrored wall behind the bar is loaded floor to ceiling with a hundred brands of poisonous liquor served by a shapely, six foot tall, Afro-American BARTENDER sprouting multicolored feathers from her satin covered rear.

Eddie and Charley squeeze in between a pair of TOUGHS who glare at them angrily, then leave.

BARTENDER
Eddie Momo. The usual?

EDDIE
(winks slyly)
Yeah and one for him too.

The Bartender blows Charley a voluptuous kiss.

EDDIE (Cont'd)
(to Charley)
She's a genius. Her specialty is
a Javanese concoction called
tears of the dragon.

CHARLEY
Sounds dangerous.

EDDIE
It'll cheer you up.

The Bartender brings the drinks. Charley and Eddie touch glasses and each takes a sip. Charley turns ghostly pale and shakes his head woozily.

CHARLEY
Suddenly, I feel very dizzy.

EDDIE
Get a grip, pal. I wanna talk
seriously about poverty and
injustice, the real reasons
behind Frankie's death.

CONTINUED

CHARLEY

A senseless waste.

EDDIE

Then does it make any sense to
earn a living the way you do?
How many years as a cop?

CHARLEY

Ever since I left the old neigh-
borhood in Brooklyn; thirty hard
years.

EDDIE

Hundreds of burglaries you
worked on, in the homes of the
wealthy; rich spoiled punks
who've never learned the value
of a dollar, much less what it
means to be poor! Every one
of them an ungrateful miser.

Charley icily swigs down his drink. The Bartender
quickly gives him a refill.

CHARLEY

They weren't all ungrateful.

EDDIE

Oh yeah? In all those years of
protecting the rotten booty of
the rich, did one of those big
spenders ever offer you a tip
or a gift or even once take you
out to dinner?

CHARLEY

No.

(pauses thoughtfully)
I wouldn't accept it anyway.

EDDIE

Why? Because of departmental
rules?

CONTINUED

CHARLEY

No, because they usually spit in my face.

EDDIE

Call that gratitude? I say you're being exploited. You ought to switch sides, Charley. In my world, kindness is repaid by kindness.

CHARLEY

(ironically)

The Mafia is filled with saints!

EDDIE

Actually, some of us do have a very strong code of honor. I never exploit or steal from little people.

Charley moans and sips his drink. For an instant, the room becomes a warm, unfocussed blur of cheerful color.

CHARLEY

Whooo! This stuff ought to be illegal.

EDDIE

It is!

A sexy Waitress wiggles over to Charley with a silver platter under a pink napkin. She indicates Vitello's table across the room

WAITRESS

Don Vitello offers one of New York's finest his sincere compliments.

CHARLEY

Huh? How's he know I'm a cop?

Charley pulls away the napkin revealing a big stack of hundred dollar bills. Eddie peaks over his shoulder and sighs greedily.

CONTINUED

EDDIE
Understand about kindness?

CHARLEY
(to Waitress)
Send this back.

EDDIE
Don't be an idiot, Charley, take
the money!

CHARLEY
I'm not for sale.

Eddie gestures meaningfully at the Waitress who returns the platter to Vitello and whispers in his ear.

The mafia boss frowns sadly at Charley, then shrugs operatically and smiles. Eddie waves reassuringly.

EDDIE
No harm done, he's not offended.
His offer still stands.

CHARLEY
He could be arrested for that.

EDDIE
He just wants to make a contribu-
tion to Frankie's memorial fund.

CHARLEY
And what kind of favor would the
godfather expect in return?

EDDIE
The opportunity of serving the
suffering poor with your help.

CHARLEY
Don't fool with me so much,
Eddie.

CONTINUED

EDDIE

(impassioned)

Take from the rich and give to
the poor, Charley, that's what we
do! Join the mafia and live like
Robin Hood!

CHARLEY

I'm a police detective!

EDDIE

You won't be the only one
in our merry band.

CHARLEY

I didn't hear a word!

EDDIE

At least think it over.

CHARLEY

(pauses)

No way . . . my heart is bro-
ken about Frankie, but no.

Eddie slaps him playfully on the forehead.

EDDIE

You always had a strong head,
even as a kid. That's why we
all respect you.

Charley nods mournfully at his empty glass. Eddie
signals the Bartender.

EDDIE (Cont'd)

Two more, honey!

EXT. CHARLEY'S HOME - NIGHT

A humble, one-family red brick in a quiet little
neighborhood in Queens. There are plastic ducks around
a reflecting pool on the front lawn.

Charley glides up in a battered Toyota, jumps the curb,
RIPPING his muffler, then comes to a jerky halt. He
SLAMS the door open against a tree and staggers out,
nearly falling.

CONTINUED

Across the street, lights blink on in a two-story, gingerbread house and out comes flabby retiree VITO PISANO in knee-length, paisley undershorts.

VITO
(shouting)
Birdbrain, you woke up my wife!

Charley can barely see Vito, but snaps at him.

CHARLEY
So? Want me to help her fall
back asleep?

VITO
Pig!

CHARLEY
Slob!

Vito spits, goes back inside and the lights blink off. Charley limps up his lawn, knocking over the plastic ducks.

INT. CHARLEY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

In shirtsleeves in front of the color TV, Charley watches with disbelief as a NEWSLADY interviews Nevil Farquahar outside Police Headquarters.

NEWSLADY
(to camera)
. . . in this most unusual case,
involving the accidental shoot-
ing by police of a burglar in
the apartment of playboy oil
billionaire, Nevil Farquahar.
(to Farquahar)
Are you satisfied with the police
response now?

FARQUAHAR
Hell no! Both the Mayor and the
Commissioner have said I'll be
returned most of my precious

CONTINUED

FARQUAHAR (Cont'd)
belongings by the end of the
week. But who can repay me for
all my misery and suffering?

Charley's two small pajamaed kids, SALLY and DOUG,
quietly watch from the staircase.

Enraged by Farquahar, Charley draws his off-duty
revolver and waves it unsteadily at the wall.

FARQUAHAR (Cont'd)
The dead criminal's family?
How can they pay? They're
dirt poor! To hell with the
Pazzos!

Charley homicidally aims at Farquahar, lurches forward,
catches a toe on a coffee table, then dives head first
into the TV, knocking the offending image off the
screen.

MARIA CUCCIOLONE, an attractive housewife with a short
temper, runs down the stairs past her children and
anxiously rolls her husband over. When she sees the
glazed look in his eyes, she sneers contemptuously.

The kids follow and cheerfully inspect their
unconscious father. Doug curiously picks up the
pistol, points the barrel at his sister. Maria
immediately snatches the weapon away and drops it in
her bathrobe pocket.

MARIA
(to Doug, angrily)
What did I tell you about guns?

DOUG
Daddy tried to shoot the people
on TV!

MARIA
Help me.

Maria jerks Charley's arm while the kids push from
behind. As she drags Charley onto his feet, he belches
loudly and exhales amorously into her mouth.

CONTINUED

CHARLEY
Maria, my pussycat!

SALLY
Daddy's drunk!

MARIA
(to the kids)
Upstairs, get in bed

The kids stall, fascinated by their woozy, disheveled father.

DOUG
Is daddy gonna get sick?

MARIA
Right now!

Sally and Doug sprint ahead as Maria laboriously helps Charley clumsily climb upstairs.

INT. CHARLEY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Maria drops the pistol in a night table drawer, letting Charley collapse heavily on their double bed.

MARIA
Disgusting.

When she starts to unbutton his shirt, he throws a muscular arm around her neck, sensuously pulling her down on top of him. She patiently endures a sloppy kiss, then roughly pushes him away.

MARIA (Cont'd)
Not like this. First in the shower!

Charley teeters upright, leers romantically and unsteadily limps into the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Still clothed, Charley falls backwards in the tub and turns on the shower.

CONTINUED

JUMP CUT:

Charley snoozes peacefully under the running water. Maria enters with an overflowing ice bucket and dumps its contents in his lap. He groans in agony.

MARIA
Casanova!

CHARLEY
Jesus!

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

In a striped night shirt, Charley sheepishly sips coffee and chews on toast while the kids, already dressed for school, cruelly tease him.

SALLY
Daddy has a hangover.

DOUG
How much does it hurt?

Frowning unhappily, Maria circles the table and pours her husband more coffee.

MARIA
Think before you speak, your children could grow up to become alcoholics.

CHARLEY
I hope so.

She swats him on the back of the head with a rolled up newspaper.

MARIA
Corrupt my kids?

She tosses the paper in his lap.

MARIA (Cont'd)
Hide your face in the news.

The kids finish breakfast, kiss their father goodbye and exit to the street where a school bus is waiting.

INT. UNMARKED CAR - NIGHT

DETECTIVE MURRAY MYERS, a dryly humorous 45-year-old, absentmindedly drives while Charley adjusts the squelch on their two-way radio.

They cruise up Third Avenue, stopping at a street corner where a pair of TEENAGERS dancing to a boombox mime a police arrest and assume the position.

MURRAY

Whoops, we blew our cover.

Charley irritably watches a muscular YOUNG MAN in a wheelchair effortlessly glide across the street.

MURRAY (Cont'd)

What's the matter? Upset about Frankie?

CHARLEY

(growling)

Mind your own business! He was nothing to you.

MURRAY

Hey, take it easy on me. Just trying to sympathize.

Charley stares angrily, then calms down.

CHARLEY

Sorry, Murray, you know how I feel.

MURRAY

Sure, but I'm just as unhappy about it as anyone.

The police radio sputters a half-formed sentence.

POLICE DISPATCHER (O.C.)

. . . a possible burglary in progress, the sixth-floor apartment at 896 East 75th Street.

CONTINUED

CHARLEY
Let's roll!

Murray snaps the car in drive while Charley places a magnetized emergency light on the roof.

EXT. THIRD AVENUE - NIGHT

The uptown traffic slows to a halt behind the flashing beacon of the unmarked car as it diagonally crosses the avenue and speeds up a side street.

EXT. 896 EAST 75TH STREET - NIGHT

A large, six-story townhouse at a dead end with a scenic view of the East River. The unmarked car rapidly halts and the passenger door flies open.

INT. UNMARKED CAR - NIGHT

Revolver in hand, Charley barks at Murray.

CHARLEY
I'll take the stairs, you cover
the alleyway.

EXT. 896 EAST 75TH STREET - NIGHT

As Charley runs up the stoop into the building, Murray draws his gun and throws open the iron gate of a narrow passageway.

Next door, an OLD MAN in overalls picks tin cans out of the garbage.

INT. TOWNHOUSE STAIRWAY - NIGHT

Charley silently leaps the steps two at a time, racing across each landing until he reaches the fourth floor, where a timid STOCKBROKER in spectacles is nervously waiting at the entrance to his apartment with a thick volume in hand. They whisper.

CHARLEY
Police.

CONTINUED

STOCKBROKER

(shaking uncontrollably)
I'm a stockbroker! When I went upstairs to return this book, the door was open and you could absolutely hear someone rummaging inside the apartment. Oooh, it wasn't Maurice at all! He's not even due back from Rio until Monday!

CHARLEY

Calm down and lock up tight.

The Stockbroker nervously shuts his door, clicking the lock. Charley gracefully tiptoes up the last two flights of stairs, until he is outside the apartment on the sixth floor.

Through a vestibule, a dark-clothed CAT BURGLAR in a stocking mask can be seen quietly removing silver candlesticks from a breakfront cabinet in the living room.

Charley checks the pistol's ammunition, then cautiously slips inside, hugging the wall.

INT. TOWNHOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The room is opulently furnished with antiques and priceless objets d'art.

The Cat Burglar squeezes the candlesticks into a bulging knapsack.

Charley sidles up next to him and presses the revolver barrel against his temple.

CHARLEY

Drop the bag.

Charley backs away. The Cat Burglar drops the knapsack and slowly raises both hands.

CHARLEY (Cont'd)

Take off the mask.

CONTINUED

The Cat Burglar removes his stocking mask, revealing the sardonic smile of Eddie Momo.

EDDIE
Make up your mind, Charley,
pull the trigger or put the
pistol away.

Surprised, Charley jabs at him with the revolver.

CHARLEY
Eddie Momo?! What the hell
are you doing?

EDDIE
What I always do. So shoot
me! Shoot! I ain't no better
than Frankie.

Charley looks at Eddie like he's crazy, then holsters the gun.

CHARLEY
Just a precaution. I never
fired a round at anyone.

EDDIE
Wouldn't it be sweet if your
first victim was a childhood
friend?

Charley rakes a hand through his thinning hair and sits on a silk covered ottoman.

CHARLEY
(tiredly)
Go on, get lost.

Eddie leans over to pick up the knapsack.

CHARLEY (Cont'd)
No, leave the bag. You can go,
the booty stays.

CONTINUED

EDDIE

That's fine with me, but where
does it leave Frankie's widow?
I've got to raise more money
for her and her six babies.

CHARLEY

(shaking his head)
The godfather. Remember, he had
a load of cash he wanted to give
away?

Eddie makes himself comfortable in an ancient gilded
armchair.

EDDIE

Because you're a big deal gold
shield. He won't help me unless
I steal for him. You should've
taken that money and given it to
Mrs. Pazzo. She's getting more
and more desperate.

CHARLEY

I know she's gonna be alright,
Eddie.

EDDIE

Famous last words.

CHARLEY

Go on, beat it.

Eddie stands, looks wistfully at the knapsack, then
climbs through an open window and noiselessly exits up
the fire escape. Charley covers his face with his
hands.

INT. CHARLEY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

The next morning, Charley is having sandwiches to
opera on the radio when Maria enters from the hallway.

MARIA

Eddie Momo, honey. I wish you'd
tell that gangster not to call
here. What if Doug or Sally
answer the phone?

CONTINUED

CHARLEY
Not to worry, he's okay.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Charley picks at a freshly roasted chicken while speaking on the wall phone.

CHARLEY
Don't call me here anymore.

INT. PIZZERIA - DAY

A South Brooklyn eatery with checker-clothed tables and a computer game arcade. Neighborhood PUNKS gamble at a martial arts video while Eddie speaks into a coin telephone.

EDDIE
Frankie's widow --

INTERCUT EDDIE AND CHARLEY

CHARLEY
We already been through this.

EDDIE
She's dead.

CHARLEY
(stunned)
What?

EDDIE
She shot herself this morning.
They found her in the bedroom
lying in a pool of blood.

CHARLEY
(pauses)
What about the six children?

EDDIE
With relatives. They'll probab-
ly end up in an orphanage. Not
too late to help though.

CONTINUED

CHARLEY

No . . . no . . . Eddie, please
don't call me anymore . . . sorry.

Eddie hangs up hopelessly and watches a tall Punk and his fat, little buddy at a computer game.

On the video screen, a lady kickboxer lands a spike heel between a sumo wrestler's eyes, knocking him out.

INT. BASEMENT WORKSHOP - DAY

Charley enters down a rickety flight of stairs and crosses the room to a work table covered with hand tools and scrap wood.

He leans down, opens a file cabinet and pulls out a weathered photo album. Sighing miserably, he sits in a homemade rocker under a bare lightbulb.

In the center of the photo album is a page of yellowed pictures of Charley and his neighborhood pals as children.

A newspaper clipping is headlined "THIRD PLACE LITTLE LEAGUE CHAMPS." Circles are drawn around the heads of two team members with the names "Charley" and "Frankie" penned in.

Charley sadly leafs through the album until he reaches a page of wedding pictures. One image is captioned "The Pazzos" and shows a youthful Frankie and his pretty Bride happily sharing wedding cake.

Other snapshots are of his friends' children playing under a sprinkler or at a backyard barbecue. He studies a pretty, little girl's innocent face. Tears fall and he moans regretfully.

Maria trots halfway down the stairs and regards her husband confusedly.

MARIA

Why in the world?

CONTINUED

Charley turns his face up to the light and it glistens with tears.

CHARLEY

Get out!

Shocked by her husband's tone, Maria puts a hand on her blushing throat.

MARIA

Honey?

CHARLEY

I can't let you see me like this.

Outraged, she does a sudden about face and swiftly climbs the stairs. Charley stands resolutely and closes the album. He replaces it in the file cabinet.

He picks up a piece of scrap wood and fiercely SNAPS it in half, then rapidly dials a telephone on the worktable. After several RINGS, a man's voice answers.

INT. PIZZERIA - DAY

Eddie is on the payphone.

EDDIE

Ten minutes ago you told me to pee off!

INTERCUT EDDIE AND CHARLEY

CHARLEY

I have to get even for the Pazzos!

EDDIE

You're as crazy as me! Where do we meet?

CHARLEY

Know where Owen Clyde lives?

EDDIE

The whole world does. Hollywood's worst actor and he gets 20 million dollars a picture.

CONTINUED

CHARLEY

In money raised from the sale of illegal narcotics. Dress like a photographer and be outside his place at 8:00 P.M. tonight!

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

Charley argues insistently with Lusky at the Sergeant's desk while the other Cops file in and out. Lusky regards Charley suspiciously.

SERGEANT LUSKY

Having a mid-life crisis?

CHARLEY

I just felt like working by myself for a change. Murray don't need me; he's as good as any two cops together.

SERGEANT LUSKY

Absentminded though. One time, he left a suspect handcuffed to a guard rail on the highway for three days.

CHARLEY

We can cover more ground separately and get twice the work done.

SERGEANT LUSKY

Take the green Chrysler.

CHARLEY

In my own car.

Lusky nods reluctantly and Charley joins the foot traffic headed for the door. Charley sees Murray and winks pleasantly, then nearly collides violently with McEntire. The rookie cop cringes in fear as Charley brusquely pushes him aside. Murray stops at the desk.

MURRAY

What's with Cucciolone?

SERGEANT LUSKY

Thinks he's Zorro.

EXT. EAST 83RD STREET - NIGHT

Charley's battered car limps into a parking spot on a corner opposite the museum.

He climbs out, opens the trunk and rakes through a mound of trash until he finds a 35mm camera and a leather jacket which he throws over his windbreaker.

EXT. 970 PARK AVENUE - NIGHT

A wired crowd of PAPARAZZI carrying flash cameras violently jockey for position as the harried DOORMAN spreads his arms apart and ineffectually pushes them away from the entrance. A long limo waits by the curb.

Camera in hand, Charley nervously arrives and subtly exchanges signals with Eddie who is waiting incognito near some bushes along a wall.

OWEN CLYDE, arrogant matinee idol, and his foxy, golden-haired co-star, VANESSA TURLOCK, materialize in skintight mauve tuxedo and peekaboo rhinestoned gown.

Vanessa seems stunned by the crowd, while Clyde savagely makes a fist at them and roughly drags Vanessa towards the limo at the curb. The photographers rush in, led by a gushing VIDEO NEWSTEAM.

VIDEO ANNOUNCER

(into microphone)

Owen and Vanessa will attend the gala Times Square opening of their anxiously awaited super-action bombshell, Vortex of Evil! How about an interview, Mister Clyde?

A dozen flashes EXPLODE simultaneously. Clyde brutally yanks at a photographer's camera, breaking the strap. He SMASHES it like a sledge hammer against the pavement, demolishing the lense.

CLYDE

(shouting)

Back off everyone or I'll sue!

CONTINUED

Another photographer bravely steps forward and flashes a close-up right in Clyde's scowling face. The actor viciously tries to snatch the camera away but the agile lensman ducks and weaves around his flailing arms.

CLYDE

Why you! I'll, I'll --

At the back of the crowd, Charley pushes hard like a football lineman, causing the rest of the Papparazzi to squeeze tightly against the movie stars. The Doorman frantically tries to shove back as the flashes go off like fireworks. Clyde murderously claws at a video cameraman.

CLYDE (Cont'd)

I'll destroy you.

Eddie and Charley sneak inside the apartment house.

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

The excited burglars pull on rubber gloves.

CHARLEY

The servants have the night off and there are no neighbors. We've got the upper two floors all to ourselves.

EDDIE

What planning! Cops really make perfect burglars.

CHARLEY

Ever broken an Oxford lock? It's supposed to be impossible.

Eddie fishes a ring full of keys out of his overcoat pocket and smugly selects one.

EDDIE

Special skeleton key. Works on all the Oxford locks.

CONTINUED

CHARLEY

Mind if I question you about a dozen other burglaries the precinct hasn't solved yet?

EDDIE

True professionals never give away all their secrets.

INT. CLYDE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The burglars snap on the lights as they slip inside a palatial, skylighted duplex with flying staircase and sunken parlor. It has outrageously colorful, new wave artifacts and furniture.

EDDIE

Makes me wanna vomit! We'll need a tractor trailer to cart away all this garbage.

CHARLEY

Don't bother about the big stuff. He's got a safe full of valuables in the bedroom.

Eddie fondles the breast on a large sculptural abstraction and they quickly climb upstairs.

INT. CLYDE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The enormous, plush-carpeted room features a gallery of modern art portraits of Clyde, mostly in nude poses.

EDDIE

He sure is fond of himself. How can that sexy little broad he's boffing love such a vain schmuck?

CHARLEY

Maybe she's in love with his money.

(changes the subject)

After the last burglary up here, Clyde installed extra security devices, which he made the stupid mistake of describing to Detective Hanrahan. We won't

CONTINUED

CHARLEY (Cont'd)
need a skeleton key for the safe.

Charley pecks inside a flower pot and finds a large key. He steps over to the wall and removes a painting behind which is a metal safe.

Using a small screwdriver, Charley feels around the safe until he finds a tiny opening into which he inserts the screwdriver, making a nearly silent click.

CHARLEY
Only one alarm.

He fits the key in the lock and the safe door heavily swings open, revealing a glittering treasure trove inside. Eddie takes over, rapidly emptying the booty onto the bed.

JUMP CUT:

Laid out on a black satin cover in neat piles is a fortune in cash and precious collectibles. Eddie uses a pencil as pointer.

EDDIE
50,000 in unmarked one hundred dollar bills; about half a million bucks in jewelry and negotiable bonds; those baseball cards and the gold doubloons are probably worth at least a few hundred thousand!

CHARLEY
Pocket change to Clyde. Imagine what he's got in the bank.

Charley wistfully picks up an ancient baseball card.

CHARLEY (Cont'd)
The 1935 world series winners. How does that mediocre putz deserve this?
(pauses)
Make the split.

CONTINUED

EDDIE

Slow down, pal. How are you gonna fence the stuff? Better leave it to me and we'll split the take later, minus my service fee, of course.

CHARLEY

I dunno.

EDDIE

C'mon, it's too late not to trust me.

CHARLEY

That's not the problem. I'm thinking about who really should benefit.

EDDIE

A little for us, more for the poor; the rest we pay to the mob as dues. Tony Vitello is an incredible philanthropist who has amazing charitable ideas.

CHARLEY

Can't we work without involving the godfather?

EDDIE

(dismayed)

Not easily.

Reaching in a pocket Charley produces a small ditty bag which unfolds into a very large piece of soft luggage. Eddie neatly packs in everything.

CHARLEY

Down through the courtyard; we won't be seen.

EDDIE

You thought of everything.

INT. CHARLEY'S BEDROOM - DAY

The alarm clock on a night table reads 11:00 A.M. Charley is still in bed, fast asleep. Maria, in sweatsuit and flowered apron, shakes him by the shoulder until he groans awake.

MARIA
You slept more than 10 hours,
Charley, up! I wanna make
the bed.

As Charley tries to turn over, Maria reaches under the covers and pulls his legs out sideways, forcing him to sit up.

CHARLEY
Dreaming, pussycat.

MARIA
(disapprovingly)
Hope it was about the kids.
They didn't get a chance to see
their father at breakfast this
morning.

Charley stands unsteadily and Maria immediately starts stripping off the sheets.

Her shapely rear is turned towards him and he leans against it, wrapping his arms around her waist, gently rocking back and forth. Maria moans involuntarily, then suddenly yells.

MARIA
No! Not after the strange way
you've been acting lately!

She shrugs off his embrace and they both stand, with Charley's chin balanced on top of her head.

CHARLEY
But honey --

MARIA
Wait until my anger wears off.
Next week sometime.

CHARLEY
Please.

CONTINUED

MARIA

Go get your own breakfast. I
won't serve you today.

Charley sighs unhappily, finds slippers, puts them on.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Sipping his coffee, Charley stares bleary-eyed at a newspaper headline: "HOLLYWOOD ACTION STAR HIT IN EAST SIDE BURGLARY." He tosses the paper on the floor and moodily stares at a hand which is trembling.

EXT. PRECINCT - NIGHT

Charley gently drags a wrinkled, handcuffed THIEF out of his car. He slowly pushes the elderly criminal up the steps.

THIEF

For Christ's sake, this ain't
necessary, I swear ['] never
do it again!

CHARLEY

Sure, sure, let's go talk to the
Sergeant inside.

INT. PRECINCT - NIGHT

The place is nearly empty at 9:00 P.M. Charley and the wizened Thief face Sergeant Lusky at the desk. Lusky is discontentedly munching a bread stick.

CHARLEY

He won't give me his name and
he wants me to let him go.

SERGEANT LUSKY

(to Thief)
What's your name, sir?

THIEF

(looking away)
Can't remember at my age. I'm
very forgetful.

CONTINUED

SERGEANT LUSKY
 (to Charley)
 Tell me more.

CHARLEY
 I caught him coming out of a
 sweet shop on York Avenue with
 a dozen imported candy bars
 in his pockets. The place had
 already closed for the night.
 He had burglar tools.

Charley dumps the lock-picking tools and a dozen fancy
 Swiss chocolate bars on the counter. Lusky drops the
 bread stick and ogles the candy hungrily.

SERGEANT LUSKY
 This stuff is worth over fifty
 bucks. Book him! Breaking
 and entering and larceny.

THIEF
 My name's Larry Merlin! You
 know me, Sarge, gimme a break.
 I have a killer sweet tooth and
 a pension that don't even pay
 the rent.

Lusky sadly exchanges glances with Charley while the
 Thief stares hopelessly at a sign which says "ALL
 PRISONERS MUST BE PROCESSED AT CENTRAL BOOKING."

SERGEANT LUSKY
 He'll probably have a heart at-
 tack if we don't let him go.

Charley unlocks the handcuffs and the Thief dashes out
 the door. Lusky dumps the confiscated evidence in a
 wooden tray.

SERGEANT LUSKY (Cont'd)
 (sardonically)
 Some bust, Charley. By the way,
 Captain Kunkle wants to see you
 again in his office.

CHARLEY
 About what?

CONTINUED

 SERGEANT LUSKY
 (ominously)
 Wait and see.

INT. CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

A salt and pepper team of tall plainclothed cops, CHANDLER and LEE, inquisitorial investigators from the Internal Affairs Division, stand to be introduced as Charley timidly enters the room.

 CAPTAIN KUNKLE
 Detectives Chandler and Lee from
 Internal Affairs.

The IAD men sternly offer handshakes, but Charley refuses, tensely hiding both hands behind his back.

 CHANDLER
 Officer McEntire has been seeing
 the department psychiatrist about
 you, Cucciolone. He's very upset.

 CHARLEY
 (sighs relievedly)
 Because I bumped into him on the
 way out the door yesterday?

 CHANDLER
 Several witnesses heard you yell
 at McEntire: You are dead, quote
 unquote.

 LEE
 We have a report on our desk that
 says he's neurotically obsessed
 with the thought you plan to mur-
 der him in revenge for shooting
 your friend, Frankie Pazzo.

 CHARLEY
 He told that to the department
 headshrinker? He really is nuts!

Charley's hands swing to his side as he pleadingly regards the Captain.

CONTINUED

CAPTAIN KUNKLE

I told them it wasn't personal, Charley, you impulsively lost your temper because Frankie was a dear old friend.

LEE

(to Charley)

We need an explanation from you here or we'll have to take you down to the Internal Affairs Division.

CHARLEY

(smarmily)

I promise never to frighten or threaten to murder McEntire again. I only see him now when the shift changes. Want me to transfer out of the precinct?

Reassured, Lee shakes his head at Chandler and they both sit down. Charley uncomfortably leans back against the Captain's desk.

CHANDLER

We believe you honestly regret attacking him. One other thing, though, why haven't you been working with your partner, Murray Myers, for the past two days?

CHARLEY

Guess I felt like working alone.

CHANDLER

But you missed the call on the big Owen Clyde burglary last night.

CHARLEY

So, Murray and the uniforms got all the glory.

LEE

There are still no suspects and no leads. A million dollar case! Maybe Murray needed your help.

CONTINUED

CHARLEY
(apologetically)
Couldn't help because I was busy chasing a pair of kids who were stealing a Rolls Royce near the Metropolitan Museum. You can read my report.

LEE
(to Captain, reluctantly)
Okay, we'll have to be satisfied with that.

The Captain shakes hands with Chandler and Lee and the IAD men exit. Kunkle looks at Charley through hooded eyelids.

CAPTAIN KUNKLE
Make sure you keep your nose clean from now on. We don't need any more trouble from those, uh, --

CHARLEY
Dirty rats?

CAPTAIN KUNKLE
Right!

INT. INTERNAL AFFAIRS CAR - NIGHT

Chandler turns on a light and leafs through a tabloid newspaper as Lee suspiciously looks at the trunk of Charley's car which is double-parked ahead of them.

LEE
Cucciolone's jalopy. What a wreck!

Chandler stares at a photo spread depicting Owen Clyde outside his apartment building the night before.

CHANDLER
Hey, Lee, take a look at this.

A news photo shows Clyde throwing a punch at one photographer while two others sneak inside his apartment building, their backs turned to the lens.

CONTINUED

CHANDLER (Cont'd)

See the guy in the black leather jacket, you can almost see his profile? Could it be Charley Cucciolone from behind?

Lee studies the photo closely.

LEE

Could be. What do we do now? That won't get us a warrant to search the house.

Chandler studies the trunk of Charley's car.

CHANDLER

Tomorrow's his day off. Suppose he does something like drive to Atlantic City and gamble away a load of cash?

LEE

A judge would be very curious about where the money came from.

Lee shifts their car into drive and enters traffic.

EXT. FLOWER SHOP - DAY

Charley's car is parked in front. He opens the door and carefully places a bouquet of flowers on the passenger seat.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Hidden behind a large monument, Chandler and Lee silently watch Charley as he sadly lays the bouquet on Frankie's grave, which now has a polished granite headstone.

Charley's eyes fill with tears as he reads the words carved in stone: "FRANCO PAZZO, 1950 - 1999, OUR BELOVED HUSBAND, FATHER AND FRIEND." Hands clasped, he looks beseechingly up towards heaven.

The owl lands on the monument above Chandler and predatorily hoots at him.

CONTINUED

Extremely fearful, Chandler tugs at the pistol under his belt, but Lee raises a warning finger. Chandler crouches lower to the ground and the owl turns around, raises his tail and defecates, hitting him on the forehead.

Charley's chest heaves painfully as he sobs aloud.

INT. INTERNAL AFFAIRS CAR - DAY

Chandler vigorously rubs his scalp with a handkerchief while Lee drives across the 59th Street Bridge.

LEE

We'll be wasting our time unless
we hear about a suspicious bur-
glary involving Cucciolone.

Chandler squints in a car mirror, dismayed to see he has developed a nasty red rash where some hair has pulled loose.

CHANDLER

I'm gonna make the bastard pay
for what that owl did to me!

INT. CHARLEY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Charley hangs coat and hat in a closet and tiredly sits on the couch. Maria rushes into the room and roughly throws a heavy canvas mailbag at his feet.

MARIA

Know what's in there?

CHARLEY

Honey?

MARIA

Your friend Eddie came by and
dropped this on the stoop, then
left before I could speak with
him.

Suddenly she upends the bag and dumps a huge load of soiled currency onto Charley's lap and the floor.

CONTINUED

MARIA (Cont'd)
(yelling)
What'd you do, Charley?

CHARLEY
(whining)
Nothing wrong, sweetheart!
Private business.

She picks up an armful of bills and violently throws them at him.

MARIA
Liar! Stolen money! Twenty-
five thousand dollars at least!

She furiously slings the cash bag in his apologetic face.

MARIA (Cont'd)
They'll take away your job and
throw you in jail! My kids will
grow up without a father!

CHARLEY
No one knows, pussycat! No one
but Eddie Momo and us!

She slams a heel loudly against the floor.

MARIA
Get it out of my home right now!
Don't even think of sleeping in
this house until you get rid of
all of it!

Charley scrambles on the floor, quickly stuffing cash back in the bag.

CHARLEY
(pitiably)
Forgive me, Maria!

MARIA
Only God can forgive you!

She storms out of the room.

EXT. TELEPHONE BOOTH - DAY

On a deserted corner near an entrance ramp beneath an elevated highway. Charley talks excitedly over the sound of the rushing cars above.

CHARLEY

Eddie, Maria knows the cash is stolen!

EDDIE (O.C.)

So I made a booboo.

CHARLEY

Dope!

INT. PIZZERIA - DAY

Sitting at a table with a stained napkin around his neck, Eddie polishes off a slice of mushroom pizza while speaking on the phone.

EDDIE

I'm a dope?! You gotta be America's dumbest criminal of all time! Because of you, our pictures got taken at the scene of the burglary!

INTERCUT CHARLEY AND EDDIE

CHARLEY

(panicking)
Really?

EDDIE

Yeah, we were in all of last night's papers! That's what I get for working with a cop!

CHARLEY

Did they photograph our faces?

EDDIE

No, almost. Ditch that leather jacket and the camera before one of the stool pigeons you work with finds the evidence. We may have to pay them off.

CONTINUED

CHARLEY

I'm not worried about the guys
I work with.

EDDIE

Well you ought to be. It costs
the rest of us a lot to keep them
off our backs.

CHARLEY

I ain't paying protection. Help
me get rid of the money some other
way.

EDDIE

Like we said, you're Robin Hood
and you help the poor. Know
Louie's place down by the docks?
Meet me in the lobby of the
building next door in an hour.

EXT. BROOKLYN PIER - DAY

Charley wraps his camera in the leather jacket, then
tosses it in the river, and waits impatiently until the
bundle submerges completely.

INT. TENEMENT LOBBY - DAY

Carrying the bag of cash, Charley breathlessly squeezes
into the narrow corridor where Eddie is sloppily eating
a veal and pepper hero.

EDDIE

(mouth full)

Time for you to meet the kind
of poor people we'll be helping.

CHARLEY

Why not Frankie's kids?

EDDIE

Already sent them to Mrs. Pazzo's
sister in Florida with more than
enough money for their upbringing.
A decent parochial school
for the older boy. Don't worry!

CONTINUED

CHARLEY
Who lives here?

EDDIE
Mrs. Schiaffo, a wonderful but
needy lady, who has suffered much
more in this life than she de-
serves.

Eddie slowly waddles up the stairs, continuing to eat,
while Charley trudges behind.

INT. MRS. SCHIAFFO'S APARTMENT - DAY

A tiny parlor with baroque imitation couch and chairs
under yellowed plastic slip covers. MRS. SCHIAFFO is
a piano-legged, wrinkled sixty-four-year-old in worn
out housedress. She speaks haltingly in a heavy
Sicilian accent.

MRS. SCHIAFFO
Eddie and his handsome friend!
Sit down. I serve the café con
laté.

Charley and Eddie sit on the couch and she exits to the
kitchen.

EDDIE
Mr. Schiaffo died unexpectedly
in an argument over a dockwork-
er's wallet.

Mrs. Schiaffo limps back into the room with brimming
cups of coffee for her guests. After serving them, she
falls heavily into an armchair.

MRS. SCHIAFFO
Doof-ah! Sorry, I have only
the café. My husband, he never
work an honest day in his life
and he leave me nothing!

EDDIE
She was crazy about Mr. Schiaffo
when they were younger.

CONTINUED

Mrs. Schiaffo points at an old framed photograph on a table.

MRS. SCHIAFFO
He was most beautiful man who
ever live in the whole world!

In the photograph, her husband is dressed like an old-time Chicago gangster with mutton chop sideburns. He is winking obscenely.

CHARLEY
(kindly)
How many children by him?

MRS. SCHIAFFO
(proudly holds up
three fingers)
All boys!

EDDIE
Poor babies, they can't even help
her.

CHARLEY
Too young?

EDDIE
No, they're all in prison for
life. Federal conspiracy charges.

MRS. SCHIAFFO
Disgraziati! I tell them never
get caught, but they don't lis-
ten to me and leave me complet-
amente solo!

Charley's eyes water sympathetically, he stands and opens the cash bag, showing Mrs. Schiaffo.

CHARLEY
Yours.

She looks inside, makes a mental calculation, then grabs the bag and carries it to a table by the window where she unloads several stacks of bills.

CONTINUED

MRS. SCHIAFFO
You are too generous, padrone!
Keep the rest, give to someone
else who need, please.

CHARLEY
But --

MRS. SCHIAFFO
(whispers lustily)
I cannot be selfish. I am not
familia to you.

Charley looks away bashfully, with a lump in his
throat.

EDDIE
She's right.

Mrs. Schiaffo squeezes Charley until his spine CRACKS.

EXT. TENEMENT - DAY

Eddie and Charley watch a pair of BOYS wrestling on the
sidewalk across the street. Charley's still holding
the bag.

CHARLEY
(eagerly)
Who's next on the list?

EDDIE
Wiser to pay something to the
mob as protection before we
help anyone else.

CHARLEY
(cynically)
Tony Vitello? What could he poss-
ibly want from me?

EDDIE
He's taken care of a lot of ex-
penses for a lot of good people
for a long time.

CONTINUED

CHARLEY

Anh anh. Every penny goes to
someone who's desperately in need.

EDDIE

C'mon not all of it, buddy,
that's a big mistake.

Charley stares angrily and Eddie trembles timidly.

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - DAY

Far Rockaway. Charley and Eddie pick their way across
a garbage strewn lot towards a ramshackle gothic ruin.
They halt by a graffiti artist's sign which reads,
"STAY OUT OR BE MURDERED."

EDDIE

(points at house)

She lives there, another damsel
in distress waiting to be rescued
by you!

CHARLEY

How can a human being live in a
garbage dump?

EDDIE

Strange, isn't it? She was once
a rich man's mistress. Frankie
found her after she'd been aban-
doned and they fell in love.

CHARLEY

Frankie cheated on his wife?

EDDIE

He was a doomed man!

INT. BEACH HOUSE - DAY

Like the lot outside, the interior is littered with
debris and spray painted everywhere in graffiti. Eddie
leads Charley down a narrow hallway to a rubbish-
filled room overlooking the seashore.

INT. RUBBISH-FILLED ROOM - DAY

Charley is halted, not by the squalor but by the transcendent beauty and seductive charm of ESTRELITA MENDEZ (24), an illegal immigrant.

EDDIE

Estrelita came to America with a dictator who was later assassinated during a violent coup. The new regime in her home country has vowed to execute her if she ever returns.

Charley studies Estrelita's enormous almond-shaped eyes, her shining mane of raven hair and her swanlike neck. He is deeply in love.

CHARLEY

(stammering)

We came to love -- I mean help -- you!

ESTRELITA

Thank you, Jack.

CHARLEY

She lives in such misery!

EDDIE

This was the only hideout Frankie could afford. If Estrelita shows her face around town, the Feds will deport her back to Central America. She'll be shot.

Charley empties the cash onto a stained mattress. Estrelita falls to her knees in grateful amazement.

CHARLEY

You must find a better place to stay! Understand me?

ESTRELITA

(tearfully)

Thank you, Jack!

CONTINUED

EDDIE

Those are the only words of
English she knows.

Estrelita anxiously rakes through the cash until she finds a porcelain doll in a wedding dress, which she pathetically hugs against her breast.

Charley kneels down and offers a handful of bills. Estrelita throws her arms around his neck and passionately kisses him on the lips, the throat, the chest. He gently resists at first.

CHARLEY

But I'm married. Esposito!

ESTRELITA

Thank you, Jack!

She caresses him feverishly until he can hold out no longer, hungrily responding kiss for kiss. She pulls him down on the mattress and rips at his clothes.

Eddie discreetly backs out of the room.

EXT. BEACH HOUSE - DAY

Eddie stands atop a scrubby sand dune with the gothic ruin behind him. He has a sick expression on his face as he throws pebbles at a flock of seagulls by the water.

A shrill voice ECHOES from the house.

ESTRELITA (O.C.)

Thank you, Jack! . . . Thank
you, Jack! . . . Thank you,
Jack!

The waves CRASH along the shore.

INT. CHARLEY'S CAR - DAY

Parked by the pizzeria. Near the curb, a FAT GUY in a ripped tee shirt plays with a glowing yoyo as Eddie and Charley speak.

CONTINUED

EDDIE
(sheepishly)
Sorry, buddy. Gonna go home and
face the music now?

CHARLEY
(crestfallen)
No, the steam room at the gym.
Maria can never find out how I
shamed her today!

EDDIE
Don't blame yourself, Charley!
You were agitated, a frayed wire,
ready to explode! Thank God it
wasn't on the job, you'd have
shot another burglar!

CHARLEY
Eddie --

The gangster throws the door open and gets half way
out.

EDDIE
Don't say nothing. Call me when
you're ready to work again.

INT. STEAMROOM - DAY

A dozen, overweight, middle-aged BUSINESSMEN swelter in
the swirling mists as Charley takes his place among
them. Businessman No. 1 FARTS loudly and gets up to
leave.

BUSINESSMAN NO. 1
Cheese it, fellows, the cops!

Charley waves a half-hearted good-bye, and pours a
metal ladle of cold water over his head.

INT. CHARLEY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Doug and Sally watch fascinated from the stairs as
Maria fiercely slaps Charley's face scarlet.

CONTINUED

MARIA
 First you steal money, now you've
 been with a whore! It's written
 all over your face!

CHARLEY
 No! No! Never!

MARIA
 (to the kids)
 Pack and get dressed.
 (to Charley)
 Wait!! I tell mother!

EXT. CHARLEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dressed in their Sunday best and carrying suitcases,
 Maria and the kids stiffly march down the walk from the
 house with Charley humbly trailing behind.

CHARLEY
 Sweetheart, pussycat, I'm plead-
 ing with you!

MARIA
 (yelling)
 Go plead with a priest! We've
 heard enough of your lies!

The lights flick on in the house across the street and
 Vito appears in his wife's flowered bathrobe.

VITO
 (shouting)
 Shaddap! How many times I
 gotta complain?

Charley violently gives him the up yours salute.

CHARLEY
 Just once more!

A cab rushes up to the curb and the DRIVER gets out to
 load the luggage as Maria and the kids get inside.
 Charley pulls at the door but it is locked. The cab
 quickly drives away.

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

Landmark Fifth Avenue headquarters to a famous clan of robber barons. Polished limousines and uniformed CHAUFFEURS crowd the driveway and curbside.

INT. BANQUET ROOM - NIGHT

An enormous, turn-of-the-century classic, with silver chandeliers, opulent hangings and gold trim.

Pampered, bejeweled society MATRONS and their bullnecked, penguin-suited HUSBANDS gluttonously gorge on roast beef, pheasant, wine and champagne.

At the dais are a pompous group of dignitaries, including the bufoonish host, WHARTON THROCKMORTON III, leader of a vast conglomerate empire; Deputy Mayor OTTO SNARK, realpolitik conservative; and Commissioner HUGO BUNKER, Machiavellian police chief.

Throckmorton rudely bangs a silver serving spoon against a crystal wine decanter, silencing the room.

THROCKMORTON

First, the bad news: the cream of New York society and you eat like a herd of starving buffalo!

The audience politely TITTERS.

THROCKMORTON (Cont'd)

Now the good news: you have the hearts of angels and the check-books of saints!

The audience enthusiastically APPLAUDS.

THROCKMORTON (Cont'd)

My crime compensation fund, made up of taxes and your charitable donations, has passed the eighty million dollar mark under the shrewd guidance of

(pointing)

Deputy Mayor Otto Snark!

To loud CHEERS, Snark athletically jumps up, dragging his tie through a tureen of brown gravy.

CONTINUED

SNARK

Thanks to the visionary wisdom of our generous host, Wharton Throckmorton III, the big apple has become an oasis for the rich and famous!

Loud CHEERING. Snark's tie dangles in a glass of water. He anxiously wrings it out.

SNARK (Cont'd)

Criminals beware! If you rip off the good citizens of the upper east side, we're gonna nail you cold; and we're gonna pay back the victims every stolen penny, no matter how much it costs the taxpayer!

More CHEERS.

THROCKMORTON

(pointing)

Police Commissioner Hugo Bunker!

Bunker knocks back a large glass of champagne and stands unsteadily, gripping his wife's fat shoulder as a crutch. The audience rise and APPLAUD feverishly.

BUNKER

Critics have called our program welfare for the wealthy, but we don't give a fig what the bleeding liberals say! The New York City Police Department is determined to stamp out crime here in the silk stocking district!

Polite APPLAUSE.

EXT. COURTYARD - NIGHT

Dressed in dark jumpsuits, wool caps and greasepaint, Eddie and Charley slyly watch the proceedings through a window. A pair of plainclothed BODYGUARDS have their backs turned to them.

INT. BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

Snark and Bunker sit. Throckmorton ostentatiously pulls an oversized check from an envelope and shows the adoring philanthropists.

THROCKMORTON

Our first check for ten thousand dollars goes to Nevil Farquahar, who was recently the pathetic victim of a burglary at his home only a few blocks away!

Farquahar makes a sham of being pitiable as he shuffles up to the podium, encouraged by drippingly sympathetic cooing from the audience.

EXT. COURTYARD - NIGHT

Charley slides his pistol out of an ankle holster. Eddie is aghast. They whisper.

EDDIE

What are you doing?

CHARLEY

I'm gonna shoot Farquahar.

EDDIE

That's not why we're here.

CHARLEY

He's the real reason Frankie's dead! Revenge is what I want.

EDDIE

Yeah, but I don't want to end up in prison as a murder accomplice!

Reluctantly, Charley reholsters the gun.

CHARLEY

Okay, but only on account of you're my friend, Eddie.

Eddie sighs relievedly and noiselessly scrambles past the banquet hall windows. Charley stealthily follows. They stop beneath a stone wall etched in toe-sized footholds.

CONTINUED

 EDDIE
The third floor bedroom. Do
exactly as I do and hang on
tight.

EXT. STONE WALL - NIGHT

With surprising grace, Eddie effortlessly scales the second story ledge, glancing down for an instant at Charley who climbs much more cautiously.

At the third floor, Eddie stops outside a window and peers through the curtains at a luxuriously furnished bedroom. A large number of furs hang on makeshift racks and the bed is covered in women's purses and handbags.

Eddie hears a loud SCRAPING NOISE and is dismayed to see Charley barely clinging to the ledge below. Eddie holds a warning finger against his lips.

INT. BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

The Bodyguards open a window and suspiciously survey the courtyard, but don't spy Charley's ankles dangling above them.

 BODYGUARD NO. 1
Must be an alleycat!

EXT. STONE WALL - NIGHT

Charley strenuously chins up, gets a foot on the ledge and inches over by Eddie, who has the third floor window open. They quietly slip inside.

INT. MANSION BEDROOM - NIGHT

Charley rummages through the pockets of the furcoats while Eddie quickly empties the handbags on the bed. Eddie finds wads of money, credit cards and checkbooks.

 EDDIE
 (whispering)
Don't waste your time. Over
here!

CONTINUED

Charley joins in, adding a mass of loot to the pile.

Suddenly they hear a noise from the corridor. Eddie immediately shovels the booty into a sack, then drops on his palms and scurries under the bed.

Charley rushes into a closet, leaving the door open a crack as Throckmorton and Snark conspiratorially enter the room.

Using a platinum lighter, Throckmorton fires up a jumbo sized cheroot, and does the same for Snark. Snark puffs contentedly, savoring the aroma, until his countenance is disfigured by an expression of sadistic delight.

SNARK

You're in big trouble, Wharton!
We have proof the laborers at
that sweatshop in Queens are
receiving less than the minimum
wage!

THROCKMORTON

(coughs)
Huh? So what?

SNARK

Slave wages for heavy labor,
buster!

THROCKMORTON

Nonsense!

SNARK

I could have you put away forev-
er. Those workers were kidnapped
and brought up here from the
Mississippi swamps. You've got
them living in subhuman condi-
tions at your warehouse in the
Bronx!

Under the bed, Eddie turns his head sideways so he can listen more closely.

Throckmorton tenderly adjusts the lapels on Snark's jacket.

CONTINUED

THROCKMORTON

Otto, this attitude is such a shocking change. As my silent partner, you will certainly receive a handsome share of all my profits!

Throckmorton crosses the room and reaches inside the closet, taking an attaché case, without noticing Charley hidden behind the clothing. He closes the closet door and Charley nervously reopens it a crack.

Throckmorton arrogantly throws the case open on the bed, displaying neat stacks of hundred dollar bills in bank wrappers. Snark ogles the money greedily.

THROCKMORTON

A quarter of a million in cash from the crime compensation fund!

Under the bed, Eddie throws a hand over his mouth, stifling a gasp.

SNARK

Mine?

THROCKMORTON

Absolutely! Now will you rejoin the rest of my guests downstairs and socialize in a more civilized manner? And forget those charges of slave labor, Deputy Mayor.

SNARK

What charges?

THROCKMORTON

Good. The attaché case will be here when you leave.

Throckmorton slides the briefcase under the bed and Eddie hugs it against his chest.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

The upper level, overflowing with expensive cars. Alone, Charley and Eddie wipe the greasepaint off their faces with rags, then rapidly slip out of their jumpsuits and lock them in the trunk of Charley's car.

Eddie grabs for the attaché case but Charley violently snatches it away. He opens it, dumps thirty thousand dollars on the hood of the car, and slams the briefcase shut.

EDDIE

What the hell are you doing?
Suppose someone comes by?

CHARLEY

That's yours.

Eddie hurriedly stuffs the bills under his shirt and in pants pockets. Charley walks around the car, opens the driver door, throws the attaché case in the back and sits behind the driver wheel.

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

Luridly lit by the strobing beacons of a half-dozen blue and white cruisers. Uniformed Police block the exit which is crowded with partygoers anxiously struggling to get out. The limousine Chauffeurs philosophically watch their panicking employers.

Nevil Farquahar roughly pushes PATROLMAN 2, as big as a basketball player, but the impassive officer won't budge.

PATROLMAN 2

No one is allowed to leave the
crime scene unless the detectives
say so.

FARQUAHAR

Brute! I'll have your badge
for this!

Siren SCREAMING, beacon blazing, an unmarked cop car SCREECHES to a halt behind a limo. Chandler and Lee jump out, rush up to the mansion and show their gold shields to the uniformed Police as they push inside.

CONTINUED

CHANDLER
Internal Affairs!

INT. BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

The room is a chaos as Detectives and Police Officers question the frazzled crowd of outraged, wealthy victims. Chandler and Lee find Murray Myers meekly debriefing Throckmorton, Bunker and Snark, who are boiling mad.

LEE
(to Bunker)
Chandler and Lee of the IAD, Commissioner, please excuse us!
(to Murray)
Has anybody seen Charley Cuccione?

Murray is shocked to hear his former partner's name mentioned by the IAD.

MURRAY
I heard he called in sick earlier tonight. Said his wife left him.

SNARK
Coochie-cool! Some big time burglar, huh? If that animal's caught, I want him flayed alive!

BUNKER
Calm down, Otto, Charley Cuccione is not the culprit. He's one of the NYPD's best burglary detectives.
(to Lee, warningly)
Right?

LEE
(to Snark)
The best, Deputy Mayor. We're on a routine crime scene inspection. We know of no leads in this case as yet.

THROCKMORTON
My reputation as a host in New York is ruined!

CONTINUED

Murray watches upset as Bunker roughly takes Chandler and Lee a distance away from the others.

BUNKER

Make it quick. My own wife lost nine credit cards and six hundred bucks in cash! Don't tell me Cucciolone's a suspect in this burglary?

CHANDLER

Yes, this one and one other. But so far we have no hard evidence, Commissioner.

BUNKER

(suddenly explodes)
Find the evidence or I'll take off both your heads! I don't care if there's a scandal. Do whatever you have to!

CHANDLER and LEE

Yes sir!

As Chandler and Lee hastily exit, Snark sidles up to Bunker.

SNARK

It was one of your own cops who masterminded the job, eh, Police Commissioner?

BUNKER

If he did, his days on earth will soon be over!

SNARK

He'll be a slippery eel to catch. Write down the name. I have a very influential underworld contact who always can help clear up this kind of embarrassing mess.

BUNKER

(reluctantly)
Okay, but don't get me involved.

Bunker takes a pad and pencil out of an inside pocket.

EXT. HARLEM RIVER DRIVE - NIGHT

Charley's car eats up the road at 80 MPH, careening wildly, almost forcing a slow moving truck to crash.

INT. CHARLEY'S CAR - NIGHT

Eddie clings for dear life to a handstrap while Charley threads the needle like a racecar driver, nearly ramming a dozen cars.

EDDIE
(yelling)
Lemme out!

CHARLEY
Go ahead, jump!

EDDIE
Crazy sonofabitch!

EXT. BRONX WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

With Eddie frantically chasing after, Charley runs up a flight of metal stairs to the top landing where he stops and catches his breath. Eddie desperately tugs at the briefcase, but Charley won't let go.

EDDIE
You can't!

CHARLEY
Try and stop me!

Charley powerfully shrugs Eddie off, nearly throwing the burglar down a flight of stairs.

EDDIE
(staggering and gasping)
I've been paying protection for both of us. If the mob doesn't get at least half the action this time, we'll both get killed!

CHARLEY
Good! Now I'm sure I'm doing the right thing!

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Charley turns on a light, revealing a group of poor, godfearing, southern LABORERS, both white and black, lying on rusty metal cots, shocked and frightened at being discovered.

Only feisty old JEREMIAH, a withered former sharecropper with one blind eye has enough courage to stand and face Charley and Eddie, his fist clenched in warning.

JEREMIAH
 (croaking like a bullfrog)
 Lord have mercy on our bad luck
 souls! We don't mean no one no
 harm.

CHARLEY
 (pitiably)
 Are you the workers from the
 Throckmorton factory?

JEREMIAH
 Yowsuh! Mr. Wharton Throck-
 morton, he a mighty mighty man!
 If you ain't the devil hisself,
 is you the sheriff, come to take
 us back down on the prison farm?

The other Laborers moan fearfully. AHAB, a tall white man with bleeding blisters around both ankles, whimpers hopelessly.

CHARLEY
 No. How did that man get his
 wounds?

JEREMIAH
 Ahab escaped off a chain gang!
 He still got buckshot in his
 head!

AHAB
 If you brung any hound dogs,
 just keep 'em away from me! I
 been bit so hard, I can never
 have no children!

Eddie violently shakes Charley's shoulders.

CONTINUED

EDDIE

Let's get the hell outta here,
Charley, we're in deep deep
water!

Suddenly Charley slugs him, snapping his head around.
Eddie rubs his jaw painfully. Jeremiah raises his arms
and shakes his hands as if warding off an evil spirit.

JEREMIAH

Get thee behind me, Satan! Evil
as our foreman who don't allow
us no time off except to eat and
sleep!

CHARLEY

Slavery!

JEREMIAH

(lowers his arms)
Unh unh, Mr. Throckmorton said
we gets wages, benefits and a
pension when we retire.

CHARLEY

How much?

JEREMIAH

Been workin' five years and after
payin' my room and board, I got
thirty dollars saved up, all told,
except the bossman ain't give it
to me yet.

The other laborers rumble unhappily. CHESTER, a fat
toothless man, throws back his bed covers and a rat
jumps out and runs across the floor.

CHESTER

(points at the
rat, whining)
I ain't satisfied. We don't get
enough food to keep little Louise
from bitin' my legs at night!

Charley walks across the room and opens the attaché
case on a metal work bench against the wall.

CONTINUED

The Laborers gasp incredulously. Ahab shuffles over and strokes the money with shaking hands.

AHAB

One night the good Lord above
promised me a miracle and here
it is just like he said!

Charley removes twenty thousand dollars and gives it to him. Ahab shuffles away, muttering hysterically.

CHARLEY

Never work in that sweatshop
again!
(to the others)
The rest of you. Come and get
your shares.

Eddie's throbbing jaw hangs open as the others line up and gratefully receive twenty thousand dollars each, with thank yous and pats on the back for their benefactor. When Charley's done, Eddie stares remorsefully at the empty briefcase.

CHARLEY

Sorry about hitting you, Eddie.

Eddie spits angrily.

JUMP CUT:

The Laborers have lined up in two ranks as a gospel choir, with Jeremiah leading the singing.

JEREMIAH

(basso)
Hmmm!

THE CHOIR

I called up to heaven and the
angels heard my plea; yes, their
riches poured down on me!

Ahab solos baritone.

AHAB

I cried Jesus be my savior and
he saved my family!

CONTINUED

THE CHOIR

Jesus be my savior and he saved
my family!

JEREMIAH

Hmmm!

THE CHOIR

The Lord took me in his hand and
he raised me up on high, now the
whole, wide world can see . . .

Charley throws an arm across Eddie's back and hugs him warmly. Eddie frowns irritably.

AHAB

(shedding tears)

Mister Charley is my savior and
he saved some cash for me!

INT. CHARLEY'S CAR - NIGHT

Eddie stares poisonously at Charley as he slowly drives along the Triborough Bridge. Charley glances back contritely.

CHARLEY

Gimme a break, Eddie.

EDDIE

You're a very sick man!

CHARLEY

I already apologized. What else
can I do?

EDDIE

You didn't keep one fucking
dollar for yourself!

CHARLEY

It was your idea.

EDDIE

The mob requires members to keep
at least a share of the take or

CONTINUED

EDDIE (Cont'd)
they can't be trusted. How much
longer are you gonna play Robin
Hood without pay?

CHARLEY
Forever.

EDDIE
Even if every penny goes to char-
ity, no one works forever in this
business. One day the feelings
of guilt become overpowering.

CHARLEY
I'm gonna confess to a priest.

EDDIE
(upset)
Careful! Which one?!

CHARLEY
Father Finnegan.

EDDIE
(relieved)
Oh, he's okay.

CHARLEY
Then Maria may forgive me and
she'll come back home.

EDDIE
(cagily)
Yeah, I need to talk to some-
one myself.

INT. INTERNAL AFFAIRS CAR - NIGHT

Chandler and Lee clandestinely watch as Charley fumbles
at the lock to the door of his house.

CHANDLER
Looks tired. Is he drunk?

CONTINUED

Charley suddenly steps backwards, leans over and pulls down his pants revealing his naked behind. Head positioned upside down between his legs, he smiles sardonically.

LEE
Shit, he made us.

CHANDLER
Smug imbecile!

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

A multi-spired, gothic pile on a narrow side street. The owl flies around the steeple, lands on a stone post and hoots at a gargoyle.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Charley waits impatiently at the head of the line by the confessional. A voluptuously shaped REDHEAD comes out of a stall, blowing her nose noisily in a hanky. Charley stares longingly at her undulating hips as she leaves the church.

INT. CONFESSIONAL STALL - DAY

Charley genuflects and faces the screen dividing his compartment from the Priest's.

CHARLEY
Forgive me Father, for I have
sinned . . .

JUMP CUT:

INT. CHURCH - DAY

A trio of pimple-faced TOUGHS crack up as Charley sprints out of the confessional, pursued by FATHER FINNEGAN, a fire and brimstone traditionalist, who waves his clenched fists angrily at the fugitive, then cuffs one of the Toughs, knocking a cigarette from his surly mouth.

INT. PEACOCK BAR AND GRILL - DAY

The chairs are upside down on the tables. The room is empty except for Tony Vitello and the fat Blonde who are quietly sipping espresso in a corner.

Eddie arrives downcast, guiltily staring at the floor.

VITELLO

Eduardo Momo, there can be no feelings of shame between us.

Eddie tearfully raises his head.

EDDIE

I have so much for which I must apologize, Don Vitello --

VITELLO

Forgiveness is yours without asking. You have always been like a good son to me. Kiss the ring to show your loyalty.

The Don offers an outstretched hand which has an egg sized ruby on the pinkie. Eddie reverently kisses the stone, covering it with spittle. Vitello wipes the ruby with a napkin and turns to the Blonde.

VITELLO

Biz-a-nessa, my love!

She blushes politely and stands, grazing Vitello's chin with her opulent chest. Vitello pulls a wad of cash out of a coat pocket and stuffs it between her breasts.

BLONDE

(squeakily)
You're a real prince, Tony baby!

VITELLO

Go and flirt in Manhattan. Buy some bum a night in paradise!

She giggles musically, amorously winks at Eddie and sexily exits.

CONTINUED

VITELLO

I joke, but she is pure as
a Madonna, completely mine!

(pauses)

Eduardo, your silence chills
my heart. Sit and tell me
what is in your troubled mind.

Eddie sits for a moment, anxiously twisting a napkin
between his fingers.

EDDIE

(choking)

We are betrayed by the detective
I brought you, a man so proud he
shows you absolutely no respect.

VITELLO

(hissing venomously)

He robs, he steals and he pays
me nothing?

EDDIE

(blinks shamefully)

I hoped his feelings of charity
would make him a soldier in our
army and that one day we could
trust him. Instead, he makes
fools of us by giving the poor
much more than they deserve:
the share that rightfully is
yours, godfather!

VITELLO

You helped Charley Cucciolone
become Robin Hood only so he
could thief from me! Silencio!

The Don's eyes cross as he stares up at the ceiling in
agony. He keens in a shrill voice and bites a knuckle
until it bleeds, then punches a buzzer on a gilded
telephone.

A baldheaded THUG with a frankenstein scar enters the
room, warily followed by Chandler and Lee. Vitello
jabs at a pair of chairs. The investigators bow
respectfully and sit.

CONTINUED

VITELLO

(to Eddie)

From the police internal affairs.
We have their full cooperation
in destroying our enemy. You
will work for them and do as they
command, no matter what it is.

Eddie suddenly breaks down and sobs uncontrollably.

EDDIE

Charley was my brother!

VITELLO

Did I destroy my own mother
because she opposed me?

EDDIE

(stammering)

Yes, godfather.

VITELLO

Then be as brave as me!

Eddie moans in anguish. The Don sternly frowns at
Chandler and Lee who exchange confident glances.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

In bathrobe and slippers, with a day's growth of beard,
Charley holds the phone to his ear listening to a busy
signal ten times before hanging up.

He rummages through a cabinet until he finds a half
empty bottle of cooking sherry and swallows it in a
single gulp.

He hungrily searches the other cabinets and finally
finds a sixpack of beer. He pops one open, spraying
foam at the picture of a hawk on a wildlife calendar.

JUMP CUT:

Seated at the kitchen table in a stupor, Charley lies
face down in a puddle of suds draining the six
overturned beercans. The phone RINGS five times before
he picks it up and drunkenly answers.

CONTINUED

CHARLEY
Hello?

MARIA (O.C.)
What time is it, Charley?

His eyes blurrily focus on a wall clock with a smile button face.

CHARLEY
Maria? Six o'clock!

MARIA (O.C.)
We expected your call at noon.
The precinct expected you at
work two hours ago.

CHARLEY
Honey?

MARIA (O.C.)
Drunk again. Did you confess
to Father Finnegan?

CHARLEY
Yes, pussycat!

MARIA (O.C.)
Will you do as he asked?

CHARLEY
It's not possible, Maria, I
can't do all of that!

MARIA (O.C.)
Slut! Die of loneliness!

The phone CLICKS loudly, causing Charley to hang up and rub his ear painfully.

The phone RINGS again and Charley immediately answers.

CHARLEY
Sweetycakes?

CONTINUED

SERGEANT LUSKY (O.C.)
Sergeant Lusky. Look out the window, buster, those two stool pigeons from IAD have set up camp in your driveway.

CHARLEY
What should I do?

SERGEANT LUSKY (O.C.)
Avoid showing them your naked behind again and come in on time tomorrow.

CHARLEY
But what do they want?

SERGEANT LUSKY (O.C.)
Hey, if you don't know, then I don't know either.

Charley hangs up and apprehensively looks through the curtains at the IAD car outside. Chandler sees him and nods menacingly.

INT. CHARLEY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

On a night table, the phosphorescent clock reads 3:00 A.M. In bed, Charley sits up, turns on the light, listens alertly. He takes the revolver out of a drawer.

INT. BASEMENT WORKSHOP - NIGHT

A penlight bobs about in the darkness. The overhead bulb clicks on, shocking Chandler and making him drop his flashlight. Charley is at the head of the stairs with the pistol aimed at him. The IAD cop tensely holds up his hands.

CHANDLER
(sarcastically)
Thought it was a burglar, huh, Cucciolone?

CHARLEY
Got a search warrant?

CONTINUED

CHANDLER
Put the gun away.

Charley jabs at an open basement window.

CHARLEY
Leave the way you came in.

CHANDLER
Tell me what happened to the
quarter of a million first.

CHARLEY
Dirty money.
(jabs again)
Now get out!

Chandler nervously climbs on top of the workbench to reach the window.

CHANDLER
Nailing you could make me an
inspector.

CHARLEY
Shooting you would only be an
accident!

Chandler hastily crawls through the window, shutting it behind him.

INT. PRECINCT - DAY

Charley stands at the desk unhappily haggling with Lusk as the Cops file in and out.

SERGEANT LUSKY
Ride with Murray as a precaution.
Whatever goes down tonight, he'll
keep you honest and be your alibi.

CHARLEY
After thirty years as a detective
in this precinct, I need an alibi?

CONTINUED

SERGEANT LUSKY

Wanna get in trouble? Keep working alone!

CHARLEY

Guilty until proven innocent.
Thanks for the vote of confidence.

Upset, Lusky turns his back and studies a clipboard against the wall. Charley joins the Cops headed for the door.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - NIGHT

Charley's car glides to a halt near a bus stop on the park side. He climbs out and stretches, then nonchalantly follows a sexy overweight DOGWALKER with a pair of pink poodles into the park.

INT. INTERNAL AFFAIRS CAR - NIGHT

Chandler and Lee have stopped midway up the block. Lee holds Chandler's arm.

LEE

He's probably only using the bushes.

CHANDLER

He can be arrested for that too!

Chandler throws the car door open.

LEE

Let him go.

CHANDLER

He might commit an armed robbery!

LEE

You're both crazy!

CHANDLER

So call the department psychiatrist.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - NIGHT

Chandler rushes the park entrance like a fullback, causing a frightened ROLLER SKATER to crash into a BICYCLIST.

100 feet behind the IAD car, Charley slips over the park wall and quickly sneaks across the avenue.

JUMP CUT:

INT. INTERNAL AFFAIRS CAR - NIGHT

Chandler collapses in the passenger seat, completely out of breath.

CHANDLER

Disappeared! Did you see him?

Lee shakes his head negatively as he pulls a miniature cellphone from a pocket.

LEE

No. But we might hear from Eddie Momo. I gave him a cellphone. He calls with the next burglary location as soon as he gets it from Charley.

CHANDLER

Kiss the phone goodbye. Eddie won't call.

LEE

He will, otherwise he gets killed. That was a mob payoff they stole from the Deputy Mayor.

CHANDLER

You saying a Deputy Mayor collects protection money for the Mafia?

LEE

How else could he arrange our introduction to the godfather? This is a vendetta! Cucciolone's numero uno on the mob shit list.

INT. PARK AVENUE PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

The windows of the classically furnished Victorian living room have a sparkling view of midtown, featuring the Empire State and Chrysler buildings.

Standing by a jewelry filled display case, Charley pockets a triple string of pearls and an emerald brooch, then delicately handles a large diamond tiara. The legend on a glass shelf reads "Maharani of Rajputana, 1875, \$12,000,000."

Eddie enters the room carrying a velvet tray covered with precious stones. Each one has a little white tag.

EDDIE

This guy is incredibly vulgar for a private collector! He has the price attached to everything.

CHARLEY

He's a dealer. Uses this apartment as a showroom.

EDDIE

What a cheapskate, though. I have a better burglar alarm in my own place.

CHARLEY

Arrogance! The rich never seriously figure they'll get taken.

EDDIE

Cause they never figured on badass Charley Cucciolone or mean Eddie Mammerjammer!

Eddie dumps the stones in his bag.

CHARLEY

Careful! Those are worth a fortune.

EDDIE

Tell me how to do my job? I gotta go powder my nose.

Eddie exits.

INT. PENTHOUSE BATHROOM - NIGHT

Eddie sits on a marble-topped jacuzzi by a silver swan. He whispers into a cell phone.

EDDIE

. . . the corner on Park Avenue. Penthouse C . . . Another ten minutes.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Out of breath, Chandler and Lee eagerly wait at either side of the doorway.

INT. PARK AVENUE PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Charley has his stash bag strapped over a shoulder. As he opens the door, Eddie comes up close behind him. Suddenly, Chandler and Lee spring into the opening with their guns aimed right at his head.

CHANDLER and LEE

Surprise!

Charley tries to back up but Eddie violently pushes him forward. Charley rapidly feints, spins around, trips Eddie into the stunned IAD men, making them all stumble backwards into the hallway.

CHANDLER

(shouting)

Don't let him get away!

Charley rushes to a window, throws it open, jumps out onto the ledge.

EXT. PENTHOUSE LEDGE - NIGHT

Charley gasps when he looks at the street below, fourteen stories straight down. He about faces, falls on his knees, then drops, hanging from the narrow ledge by his fingertips.

Chandler and Lee poke their heads out the window and frantically look to either side.

LEE

He's gone!

CONTINUED

Eddie looks up over them.

 EDDIE
 The roof! I taught him how to
 climb!

INT. PARK AVENUE PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Eddie, Chandler and Lee scramble for the door.

EXT. PENTHOUSE LEDGE - NIGHT

Exhausted, Charley tries to chin up, but the ledge suddenly crumbles, he plummets one flight onto a cornice, teeters perilously over the avenue, then SMASHES through a window.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Charley lands in a shower of glass behind a sumptuous buffet table, shocking a crowd of PROFESSIONAL ATHLETES in striped cardigans and letter sweaters. A pennant on the wall reads "VICTORY CLUB." A QUARTERBACK spills his plate of goose liver and yells.

 QUARTERBACK
 Burglar! Tackle him!

A LINEBACKER charges at Charley and gets stopped cold by a silver punch bowl over the head. He wobbles crazily and CRASHES into a piano, collapsing its legs.

Charley throws over the buffet table, spilling roast beef, turkey and trimmings all over the floor. He races through the crowd, roughly pushing frightened, paralyzed Athletes aside.

At the exit, an enormous lady BASKETBALL PLAYER gets in the way, but he stomps on her giant-sized foot, making her fall face first between the breasts of a seven-foot-tall Teammate who smiles ecstatically.

EXT. ROOF - NIGHT

Eddie, Chandler and Lee futilely search for Charley.

CONTINUED

EDDIE

He tricked us! The lobby!

INT. STAIRWAY - NIGHT

Charley plunges downward three steps at a time.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Eddie, Chandler and Lee wait impatiently for the elevator. Lee slams the button angrily.

LEE

Maybe he took the stairs!

CHANDLER

Maybe he fell fourteen stories
to his death!

EXT. PARK AVENUE - NIGHT

Charley runs out between parked cars and nearly gets hit by an open topped Porsche which halts with a SCREECH.

A mustached PLAYBOY angrily climbs out the driver side. Charley powerfully hoists the Playboy's platinum-haired GIRLFRIEND from the car, dumps her on the hood of a Rolls Royce, jumps in the Porsche, ROARS away.

PLAYBOY

{moaning}

My brand new, hundred thousand
dollar Porsche!

Eddie, Chandler and Lee stumble off the curb and watch hysterically as the sportscar disappears in traffic.

INT. PORSCHE - NIGHT

Charley double clutches and downshifts, then takes a corner at thirty, almost rearending a cab.

INT. INTERNAL AFFAIRS CAR - NIGHT

Eddie's in the backseat, Lee's at the wheel, Chandler's on the radio.

CONTINUED

RADIO DISPATCHER (O.C.)
What about the license plate?

CHANDLER
"Mr. Poo Poo."

RADIO DISPATCHER (O.C.)
Are you fucking with me?

CHANDLER
(disgustedly)
A red Porsche with personal
license plate, "Mr. Poo Poo."

The radio SQUELCHES loudly.

RADIO DISPATCHER (O.C.)
Ten-four, IAD unit twelve.

EXT. FIRST AVENUE - NIGHT

In an intersection, a MUGGER gets slugged in the gut struggling with the Young Man in the wheelchair for his purse.

One block away, Charley expertly cuts in and out of traffic, making the light as it changes. The license on the Porsche reads "Mr. Poo Poo."

The Mugger has a purse strap in his hand when Charley sees him and floors the accelerator, homicidally ROARING straight at him.

When the Young Man suddenly frees his purse, the Mugger nearly gets hit by the swerving Porsche and he staggers back against a stalled truck.

Traffic halts as the Young Man rams the Mugger in the knees with his wheelchair.

The IAD car stops behind a van. Chandler and Lee jump out and rescue the grateful Mugger from the angry cripple.

Eddie follows, pleading hysterically.

EDDIE
You're letting Charley escape!

EXT. WILLIS AVENUE BRIDGE - NIGHT

The Bronx side. Charley careens into the darkness.

EXT. ABANDONED LOT - NIGHT

Charley parks by a burned out building and hands the car keys to an emaciated VAGRANT by a trash barrel fire.

VAGRANT
How long will you be?

CHARLEY
She's yours!

He hobbles away. The fascinated Vagrant gets in the driver's seat, works the ignition and the gearshift; the Porsche jerks backwards, striking a wall with a THUD and a brick falls, DENTING the trunk.

EXT. BRONX APARTMENT HOUSE - NIGHT

A humble, five-story walkup. Charley jogs into the lobby.

INT. BRONX APARTMENT LOBBY - NIGHT

Charley hastily scans the apartment directory until he finds "Mrs. L. Borgia, #3F." He anxiously presses the BUZZER twice, then holds it down. The speaker sputters on.

MRS. BORGIA (O.C.)
Whaddya want this time of the night?

CHARLEY
It's me! Lemme in!

MRS. BORGIA (O.C.)
Get outta here, ya bum! Maria don't wanna see ya!

The speaker sputters off, but Charley BUZZES over and over until he hears his mother-in-law's voice again.

MRS. BORGIA (O.C.)
She's gonna skin you alive!

INT. BRONX HALLWAY - NIGHT

Charley knocks insistently at 3F until the door swings open on the chain. Mrs. Borgia, a four by four battleaxe in black, resentfully peers at her son-in-law.

MRS. BORGIA
You're in trouble, I can smell it!

CHARLEY
Five minutes with the kids are all I want.

MRS. BORGIA
And what about Maria, you cutrate Casanova?

CHARLEY
(eyes watering)
Please lemme in! I'll make it up to her.

INT. BRONX SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Like a shrine, with religious paintings and statuary. Charley and the kids hug on the couch while Mrs. Borgia looks on disapprovingly.

SALLY
We missed you so much, Daddy!

Sally hides her head in her father's armpit. Doug begins to cry.

CHARLEY
I'm gonna take us all home soon!

DOUG
(wipes away the tears)
When you make up for your sins, pop?

CHARLEY
Yes, punkin puss!

In a faded housedress, Maria enters the room. Her coldness melts when she sees Charley with the kids.

CONTINUED

When Maria approaches her husband, Mrs. Borgia throws an arm in the way.

MRS. BORGIA
Make him leave, he's in an awful
load of trouble!

Charley tenderly kisses each child and stands.

CHARLEY
I'll go.

Maria pushes past her mother and rushes to hug him. The kids watch bashfully as their parents passionately kiss.

MARIA
When it's safe, we'll come back
to you.

MRS. BORGIA
Now go!

Charley bows his head obediently.

INT. RED CLOVER BAR - NIGHT

A seedy saloon with geriatric PATRONS sipping flat beer under fluorescent lights. Charley speaks at a wall phone in the rear. A hand held tape recorder is attached to the phone receiver.

CHARLEY
I can only talk about this to
Don Tony Vitello.

INT. PEACOCK BAR AND GRILL - NIGHT

At Vitello's table, the baldheaded Thug hands his boss the telephone.

VITELLO
We expected your call a long
time ago. Perhaps you finally
wish to pay me the respect you
owe, Mr. Cucciolone?

CONTINUED

INTERCUT VITELLO AND CHARLEY

CHARLEY

Yes. But what I have to give is much more than you are owed.

VITELLO

Okay, Eddie told me. No more than half a million for the jewels. You failed to show me respect once too often!

CHARLEY

Meet me at 11:00 A.M., the east side of the Gowanus Canal by the ruined warehouse.

Vitello hangs up and winces painfully at the Thug who slides the pistol out of his shoulder holster and fits a silencer over the muzzle.

INT. RED CLOVER BAR - NIGHT

Charley drops a quarter in the phone and nervously dials ten digits. He waits while it RINGS four times.

CHARLEY

Hello, FBI . . .

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

A neon sign blinks on and off outside the window and shadows from the venetian blinds dart across the wall. In bed and still clothed, Charley restlessly stares up at the ceiling, muttering under his breath.

EXT. NINTH STREET STATION - DAY

A windy cloudless morning. The view from atop the railroad trestle is of the Gowanus Canal, with a cement yard, abandoned piers and a half sunken barge.

Carrying his satchel, Charley comes out the exit at street level followed by a small group of COMMUTERS. He looks about warily, then walks up the road under the trestle.

EXT. RUINED WAREHOUSE - DAY

On a dock by the canal is a one-story, blue rectangle with holes in the roof and a weathered sign: "U.S. GOVERNMENT PROPERTY, NO TRESSPASSING."

Charley slips through a gap in a chainlink fence and walks along the pier until he sees a limousine parked at the edge of the water.

Vitello, the Thug and Eddie Momo pompously appear from inside the limo. The Thug carries a metal suitcase which he sets down in front of Charley.

Charley approaches, removes his satchel and hands it to the Thug who passes it to Vitello. Charley puts a hand on the suitcase and the Thug pulls his pistol.

THUG

Wait!

As the godfather suspiciously examines the contents of Charley's satchel, Charley regards Eddie with mingled reproach and hatred.

VITELLO

It's okay, take the money. But never forget how you once cheated me.

CHARLEY

Just like Frankie Pazzo did before he got killed?

There is a long pause as they exchange venomous stares. Charley kneels, snaps open the case, sees it is filled with cash, snaps it shut again, then stands and cautiously strolls backwards.

Suddenly, the Thug crouches, levels the silenced pistol and fires, hitting Charley in the arm. Charley convulses, the suitcase falls open and a gust of wind sends the cash swirling over the pier and the water.

In a spastic frenzy, Eddie leaps after the bills while Charley runs over to the warehouse and yells inside.

CHARLEY

Now!

A pair of unmarked cars race out of the building and SCREECH to a halt on the pier.

CONTINUED

Vitello and the Thug scramble inside the limo. The wheels SCREAM as the vehicle flies in reverse halfway off the dock.

A dozen SPECIAL AGENTS in FBI windbreakers swarm out of the unmarked cars with pistols drawn.

AGENT NO. 1
FBI! Drop the weapon and
come out with your hands up!

Vitello and the Thug step out of the limo and it suddenly upends and SPLASHES into the dirty canal sending up a wave of brown water.

While one Agent disarms the Thug, two others slap Vitello and Eddie in handcuffs. The godfather is soaked with slimy water and looks like a sewer rat.

Charley limps over as the Agents load the confiscated bags of evidence and two gangsters in one of their cars. Eddie stubbornly stalls and spits at Charley.

EDDIE
Nothing but a pig, you dirty
double-crosser.

Charley lunges and Eddie recoils fearfully.

CHARLEY
You're the one who set up
Frankie! You're the reason
he's dead!

Eddie moans in terror. An FBI Agent pushes him into the car and SLAMS the door shut.

Charley worriedly inspects his wounded arm, which is soaked in blood.

INT. CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Captain Kunkle finishes reading a report, then smiles at Chandler and Lee, who stand uncomfortably with arms stiffly at their sides.

CAPTAIN KUNKLE
Your report reads like a com-
mendation. You have recom-

CONTINUED

CAPTAIN KUNKLE (Cont'd)
mended that Detective Cucciolone
be cited for his outstanding
undercover work.

CHANDLER
(coughs nervously)
We wrote that at the suggestion
of the FBI agent-in-charge.

CAPTAIN KUNKLE
The FBI's been trying to bust the
godfather for years. Charley's a
real credit to our department,
isn't he boys?

LEE
(discombobulated)
Sir, the sting operation was run
in a highly irregular way! The
FBI should never have been
called!

CAPTAIN KUNKLE
Forget about that! I hope you
plan to attend when the Mayor
awards Charley the distinguished
service medal.

CHANDLER
The Mayor?!
(choking obediently)
We'll be there, Captain Kunkle.

EXT. PRECINCT - DAY

Exiting, the IAD men meet Charley coming up the steps.
Although Charley's arm is in a sling, he blocks the
way, making them walk around him.

CHARLEY
Stool pigeons! Try to nail
a fellow cop!

LEE
We ain't through with you yet!

Lee twitches threateningly, but Chandler drags him the
rest of the way down the steps.

INT. PRECINCT - DAY

Charley gloats at Lusky.

CHARLEY

Sorry I couldn't let you in on the sting.

SERGEANT LUSKY

(sighs)

Cuccioione, you are some piece of work! Take your medical leave and don't show that ugly face around here again for at least a month!

EXT. CITY HALL - DAY

A police department awards ceremony is being held to much flourish on a very crowded speakers' platform above a large formally dressed AUDIENCE, including OFFICERS in uniform. NEWSPEOPLE, cameras and equipment cram the City Hall steps. A TV control van is parked below.

The MAYOR, a balding, squinty-eyed midget with a squeaky voice harangues the hushed throng.

MAYOR

(fist clenched)

Today, gangsters everywhere in New York City fear to show their frightened, shameful faces in public thanks to the courageous action and undercover derring do of our brave honoree, Detective Second Grade Charley Cuccioione!

Perched perilously at the edge of the stage, Commissioner Bunker and Deputy Mayor Snark clap uncomfortably as Charley, his arm still in a sling, rises from the audience to CHEERS and loud APPLAUSE. Maria and the kids beam proudly.

MAYOR (Cont'd)

(arms outstretched)

Come on Charley, come on up to the podium and get what you deserve!

CONTINUED

All the news cameras are on Charley as he squeezes out of the audience and up the steps.

When he reaches the stage, a VIDEO ELECTRICIAN suddenly pulls a cable which catches Charley's ankle. He stumbles into the chairs of Snark and Bunker, knocking them off the dais.

Chandler and Lee rush out of the audience and dust off their bosses while Charley is embraced by the Mayor. A tall pretty AIDE hands the Mayor a medal on a ribbon.

MAYOR
 (to Charley)
 For distinguished service to the
 people of the City of New York,
 I award you this medal!

The audience ROARS its approval as the Mayor reaches up and drapes the ribbon over Charley's broad shoulders, then grabs him by the neck and plants a wet kiss squarely on his lips.

INT. TV CONTROL TRUCK - DAY

A pair of disbelieving TV TECHNICIANS watch the award on a monitor. Charley breaks loose from the Mayor, frowns at the camera and disgustedly wipes off his mouth.

INT. CHARLEY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The same image is on the home TV. Maria is amazed, Charley is proud, Doug and Sally hurrah loudly.

DOUG
 Daddy's a hero!

SALLY
 Daddy's the biggest hero!

The kids jump on Charley and shower him with kisses as Maria turns off the TV.

MARIA
 Doug, Sally, you can't miss
 school tomorrow.

CONTINUED

The kids hug their father good night and Maria herds them up the stairs. Charley leans back heavily on the couch and closes his weary eyes.

INT. CHARLEY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Asleep, Charley turns over and throws his injured arm over Maria's chest. She awakens and worriedly inspects the bandage.

Charley's eyes open and he regards his wife with intense love and longing. When he comes closer, she tries to push him away.

CHARLEY

Honey, for what I did to us,
I deserve to be put in jail!

All her resistance softens as he caresses her throat. She sighs sensuously and his hand touches her breast.

EXT. OWL'S NEST - DAY

On a tree branch in the Cucciolone backyard is a cozy nest with a mama owl and two chicks. The papa owl lands on the branch and inches over to the mama, hooting softly. They peck each other lightly about the beak, then tend to the chicks.

CLOSE UP: The papa owl's face is deliriously happy.

The End