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### Still Water

Louis Foglia

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Still Water  
by  
Louis Foglia

LMFOGLIA@GMAIL.COM  
1307 E ADAMS ST.  
SYRACUSE, NY 13210  
(201) 954-3751

INT. MANHATTAN RESTAURANT. NIGHT

"SIPPILINI FOR DISTRICT ATTORNEY" fund-raiser.

A CROWD OF SUITS AND TIES do the cocktail party mingle.

ANDREW SIPPILINI, deteriorated by old age, abstains from all the glad-handing. At this stage of life, Andrew's just waiting.

CARMINE CORSETTI's personal charisma has made him the tabloids' favorite dapper don. He spots Andrew.

CARMINE  
Mr. Sippilini.

They kiss on both cheeks.

ANDREW  
Carmine, how are you?

CARMINE  
You know - the same old bullshit.  
(He laughs) How are you feeling?

ANDREW  
Like I'm getting old.

CARMINE  
Not just you, we all are.

The candidate, RICHARD SIPPILINI, is trapped in a conversation across the room. He listens with the practiced patience of a politician. The man just looks like a leader.

CARMINE (CONT'D)  
So what do you think: Is Richie gonna pull off the big upset?

ANDREW  
He deserves it. Whether or not he gets elected is another story.

CARMINE  
Yeah, politics is shit. It makes my business look like the Red Cross. That old kike Silver is going to be tough to beat.

DIANE SIPPILINI, the Italian mom/housewife, excels at trite conversation. It's important to her that everyone's at ease, having a good time. She sees her father-in-law and Carmine chatting. She excuses herself from conversation and heads toward them.

DIANE

Carmine.

CARMINE

Hey, Diane.

They kiss on both cheeks.

CARMINE (CONT'D)

This really turned out great. I'm sorry I haven't been able to get to one sooner. Looks like you got some crowd here too. Congratulations.

DIANE

Oh, thank you. Yeah, they've been coming along. You know, we're gearing up for the primary, just a few days away. I'm sorry I haven't been able to say hello until now, I've been running around all night playing the politician's wife.

CARMINE

How about a glass of red to unwind a bit?

Look at the time!

DIANE

I'd love to Carmine, but it's getting late and I want to get Dad home. *(To Andrew)* You ready?

Andrew struggles out of his seat.

ANDREW

Whenever you are.

Over at the bar:

ADAM SIPPILINI, 20, finds a seat next to his brother, MICHAEL SIPPILINI, 26. Michael's absorbed in a cocktail. He's disinterest is a permanent characteristic. He just can't be bothered.

ADAM

I'm not sure how many more of these I can stand.

Whereas his older brother is misanthropic, Adam is quick with a smile and a disarming comment.

MICHAEL

Well, at least they sprung for an open bar this time.

Michael shoots a peace sign at the BARTENDER. Two shots, coming up.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

To your third year in college and my seventh year in high school.

Bottoms up.

Diane comes up behind her sons.

DIANE

Michael, always the positive role model, feeding alcohol to your underage brother.

MICHAEL

Care for one?

DIANE

No-no-no. I'll leave the boozing to my boys. I'm taking your grandfather home.

MICHAEL

I'm headed home too.

He finishes his drink, gets up.

DIANE

You could stay for a while. See if they need any help wrapping up.

MICHAEL

Wrapping up?

Michael gives his mother a look: "Yeah Right"

Diane kisses her two sons goodbye.

DIANE

Are you guys coming over for dinner on Sunday?

ADAM

Yup.

DIANE

Michael?

MICHAEL  
Tentatively, maybe.

DIANE  
It would be nice if we could have  
family dinner every once and a  
while.

MICHAEL  
Good night, mom.

ADAM  
See you Sunday.

DIANE  
See you then.

Diane walks away. She spots her husband headed toward the  
bathroom.

DIANE (CONT'D)  
Richard.

RICHARD  
Hey.

DIANE  
So I see Carmine decided to show  
up. That's just what we need. A  
scandal on our hands.

RICHARD  
Yeah, well, there's really nothing  
I can do about it. I'm not going to  
tell him he can't come. Let's just  
hope he wasn't hob-knobbing with  
any journalists. How's my father  
holding up?

DIANE  
He looks rundown. I'm going to take  
him back home.

RICHARD  
Yeah, it's getting late anyway. I  
shouldn't be too much longer. I'll  
see you in an hour or so.

He leans and kisses her on the cheek.

Richard walks into the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Richard sets himself in front of a urinal. STEVE FRIEDMAN, Wall Street power broker, pisses next to him.

STEVE

Ah, the candidate. Richard Sippilini. I'm Steve Friedman. Nice to meet you.

Richard fumbles at his crotch.

STEVE (CONT'D)

*(He laughs)* How about I catch you in a minute?

RICHARD

*(He laughs)* Fair enough.

PISS.

STEVE

I got to meet Carmine Corsetti. He's an interesting man.

RICHARD

Yeah, Carmine's a childhood friend. I kind of lost track of him for awhile, but I was glad to see him here.

STEVE

I was *surprised* to see him. It may not be in your best interest to have.... such nefarious characters associate themselves with your campaign.

How do you respond to that?

Steve's first to flush. Richard follows him to the faucet.

STEVE (CONT'D)

You know, a lot of us on Wall Street are pulling for you.

RICHARD

Well, that's always nice to hear.

STEVE

Yeah, D.A. Silver is a scumbag.

Polite laughter.

STEVE (CONT'D)

No, I mean a real fucking scumbag.

Faucets off. Dry hands. They shake. Friedman's business card.

STEVE (CONT'D)

I'm going to stop by your  
headquarters this week. I have  
something that might interest you.

INT. DIANE'S LUXURY CAR - MANHATTAN - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Andrew dozes in the passenger seat. Diane's driving. She  
pulls up in front of an apartment building.

DIANE

Come on Dad, we're here.

Hazard lights. We're here already?

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET - CONTINUOUS

Diane double parks and helps Andrew out of the car.

DIANE

It's all right Dad, take it nice  
and slow.

ANDREW

It's just this knee.

Slow to the building.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

I'm all right here, Di, really.

DIANE

No, I'm coming up. I want to make  
sure you take your medication.

ANDREW

I'll take it. You'll get a ticket.

DIANE

No, come on. It will take a minute.

EXT. LOWER EAST SIDE APARTMENT BUILDING - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Michael's building is jammed between two bohemian  
storefronts. He enters.

INT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Three flights of stairs to his apartment. The door is unlocked. Strange.

Michael snaps on the light. Everything looks in order.

Light flickers from the bedroom. What the fuck?

Michael creeps in. Candles are lit. What's going on? All of a sudden, he's tackled onto the bed. He turns over to face his attacker. What a relief: it's Erica! She wearing the Catholic School Girl costume.

ERICA

You better do exactly what I say,  
buster, or you're really gonna get  
it.

MICHAEL

Oooh, I think I can handle you.

He gains the upper hand. They go at it.

EXT. ANDREW'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Diane exits the building. Luckily, no ticket.

INT. DIANE'S LUXURY CAR - CONTINUOUS

Finally, the night's over and Diane has a moment to herself. Big breath. She puts the car in park.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET - CONTINUOUS

Diane pulls out, but she doesn't bother to check if anyone is coming down the street. A GREEN SEDAN swerves to avoid hitting her. Losing control, the green sedan crashes into a parked car. CRASH!

The green sedan speeds away.

Diane jumps out of her car and rushes to the damage.

Oh my god, that's a person lying in the street. It's a young girl!

Halfway down the block, a DOG WALKER notices the scene.

DOG WALKER

Hey! Is everything okay?

Diane panics. Lights come on in the windows above. A NEIGHBOR sticks his head out a window.

NEIGHBOR  
Hey? Should I call an ambulance?  
What went on down there?

Diane rushes back to her car and gets in.

INT. DIANE'S LUXURY CAR - CONTINUOUS

Diane is hysterical. She sets the car in drive and speeds away.

DIANE  
Lord, forgive me.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM - MORNING

THE ALARM CLOCK BEEPS. Michael opens his groggy eyes to the site of Erica dressing. She's changing back into her school girl outfit - silk blouse, plaid skirt, black stockings. This time, she's preparing for her school day.

She notices Michael waking and crawls into bed.

ERICA  
Good morning Mr. Sippilini.

MICHAEL  
Morning.

They kiss and separate.

ERICA  
I put some coffee on.

She hops out of bed and checks her hair in the mirror. Last night, she didn't look so young, but you could never really tell with beautiful young girls. She applies lipstick with a small wand. She's only 17, but you can't blame Michael. God, that girl is gorgeous!

ERICA (CONT'D)  
I have a quiz with Devron that I haven't even thought about. I can't believe the guys quizzing us on the first week of school. I'm not even sure if I bought the book yet.

MICHAEL  
Erica?

ERICA  
Yes, dear?

MICHAEL  
How did you get into my apartment  
last night?

ERICA  
I'm sneaky. I have my ways.

MICHAEL  
Erica?

ERICA  
Assume I picked the lock.

She walks over and gives Michael another kiss.

ERICA (CONT'D)  
I gotta get going. See you in  
fourth period. And you better not  
even consider giving us a pop quiz.

INT. SIPPILINI CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS. MORNING.

Richard enters the storefront. It's a war room - maps,  
posters, data. ANGELA and STACY go about filing. SETH's on  
the phone. EVERETT, the veteran, old-reliable, doesn't afford  
Richard a second.

EVERETT  
Good, you're here. We've got  
seniors, students, and housewives  
today.

Everett hands Richard a copy of the day's itinerary.

At seven we've got volunteers from  
the Knights of Columbus to man the  
phone bank. And if we're lucky, I  
think a reporter from the Times  
might shadow us after lunch. I just  
got off the phone with the guy. I  
think he might be on our side.

RICHARD  
Good morning Everett, by the way.  
Good morning Stacy, Angela, Seth.  
Students, ha? Where?

Everett flips through the pages in his clip board.

EVERETT

Ah, undergraduates at Columbia.

RICHARD

Brilliant. Sounds like a group unlikely to be registered in Manhattan.

Richard picks up a newspaper from a desk.

EVERETT

Yeah, well, we need youth on our side.

RICHARD

Why's that?

Richard scans the paper.

EVERETT

Because Silver has the elderly vote, the black vote, the Hispanic vote, the rich vote, women, Jews, all the important unions. Fuck, I think he's even got the dead vote.

RICHARD

Yeah, but does he have the support of Wall Street?

EVERETT

Do we?

RICHARD

Apparently. That's what Steve Friedman told me last night.

EVERETT

Steve Friedman? Who's that.

RICHARD

I don't know. He said he was going to stop by headquarters sometime this week.

Richard hands over Friedman's business card.

EVERETT

Hmm. Senior executive at a brand name bank. Sounds like he could be a useful supporter.

RICHARD

I get the impression that he's more of a Silver opponent than a Sippilini supporter.

EVERETT

Probably makes him more valuable. I'm sure he's got a good reason. I'll look into it.

RICHARD

How did we do last night? Were people feeling generous?

EVERETT

Actually, too generous.

Everett picks up a pile of checks on his desk and hands them to Richard.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

They're all over the maximum amount, for starters, which is great, because we desperately need the money, but of course....

Richard flips through the checks.

RICHARD

Christ, this is like a who's who of the Gambino crime family.

EVERETT

Yeah, and all those names are going to show up on our donors' list, and then in every newspaper article about the campaign.

RICHARD

Fuck. I'll speak to Carmine about it.

EVERETT

Yeah, about Mr. Corsetti...

RICHARD

I know, I know. I'll take care of it. He's going to feel that I betrayed him. Loyalty is a big thing with his sort.

EVERETT

Well, politeness isn't worth the campaign.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM. DAY

The all female population in Michael's high school English class are taking a quiz. Erica is among them.

MICHAEL

For today's bonus question, briefly explain to me the difference between the words 'tragedy' and 'catastrophe?'

A punk Asian girl, TONY, interrupts.

TONY

What? That wasn't in the book.

MICHAEL

I know, Tony, that's why it's a bonus question.

Michael regards the girls scribbling their answers. He checks out their youthful legs, their blooming chest, the soft fuzz of hair along their ears.

Ariel, a busty blond, is chewing gum.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Ariel.

ARIEL

Yeah?

MICHAEL

Are you chewing gum?

ARIEL

You're yelling at me for chewing gum?

MICHAEL

No, I don't mind. But if you're concerned with your figure, and I know you are because you snack on those flavorless balls of rubber....

He points at a package of diet fruit snacks on her desk.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

...that gum is just empty calories. Brush your teeth in the morning. It lasts all day.

Some of the girls snicker.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

When you're done with the quizzes, you may leave. Remember, start reading the first act of Othello for Thursday. Don't wait until the last minute. There's always the possibility of a pop quiz.

The quizzes trickle in. Erica lingers in the classroom until she and Michael are alone.

ERICA

Empty calories? Dick head.

MICHAEL

She was being rude.

ERICA

Did I get the bonus question right?

Michael checks her sheet. It reads "I Love It When You Fuck My Face." Michael crumbles the piece of paper into a ball and shoves it into his pocket.

MICHAEL

I'm not sure that profanity has any place in a Catholic school, Ms. Curtis, but I like the sentiment. Half credit.

ERICA

Only half?

Erica gives Michael her bedroom eyes.

MICHAEL

Now, now, don't forget the time and place.

A GIRL walks into the classroom, cutting the tension. Erica smiles and leaves.

INT. MANHATTAN CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY

Diane sits in a pew near the confessionals. She's got the Church to herself.

An ELDERLY MAN steps out of the confessional. Now it's her turn. Can she do it?

FATHER DUBINI, sophisticated and benevolent, steps out of the confessional.

FATHER DUBINI

Diane? Were you waiting for me? I didn't think anyone else was here.

He checks his watch.

DIANE

Oh no, Father, I was just looking for a place to pray.... to sort of pull some things together.

Dubini considers her unsteady voice, her nervous appearance.

FATHER DUBINI

Diane.

Diane looks toward the elderly man praying.

DIANE

Yeah, it's just that...I don't know.

FATHER DUBINI

Why don't you walk me to the rectory? I've got a meeting in fifteen minutes, but we can talk for a bit.

EXT. CHURCH STEPS - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Diane and Fr. Dubini walk down the steps.

FATHER DUBINI

How's the campaign going?

DIANE

Stressful. It's a lot of work. A lot of running around. Richard handles it all so well, that's just his personality, God Bless him. But me, Father, I don't know. It's all too fast paced for me. I wasn't cut out for this.

They head toward the rectory.

FATHER DUBINI

I can't imagine all the work that must go into it.

DIANE

It's nonstop. There's always something to do, someplace to be.

(MORE)

DIANE (CONT'D)

And you've got to be smiling. You always have to make it seem like you're doing the most natural thing in the world and you're having fun doing it. It's like wearing a mask.

FATHER DUBINI

And your father-in-law, how's he been holding up?

DIANE

Not well. I'm afraid he's lost his spirit. After Tilda passed - I don't know, he's all alone in that apartment. His health is declining. He doesn't take his medication... he hardly eats... With Richard occupied with the campaign... the boys are wrapped up in their own lives... you know, the responsibility falls on my shoulders. And it's tough. I'm really feeling the strain.

They pause in front of the rectory door.

FATHER DUBINI

You know, Diane, I'm starting to think that God puts us through purgatory while we're still on earth. Life's challenges - the hardships - they all seem to be a way to fortify the spirit, to prepare the soul for a perfect world.

Diane begins to cry.

FATHER DUBINI (CONT'D)

You have the strength within yourself, Diane. God resides in your heart. You can access him for support, for the will to carry on and do his work.

Father Dubini comforts her.

FATHER DUBINI (CONT'D)

Come on now, Diane. It's all right.

DIANE

I know. I'm sorry. You're right.  
I'm just venting more than anything  
else. It's nice to finally have  
said something to someone....

She wipes away tears.

FATHER DUBINI

Christ struggled. Christ suffered.  
But through his suffering, he  
redeemed the world. We are also  
given crosses to bear. But they are  
opportunities - for growth, for  
communion with God.

Diane has something else to say.

DIANE

Father -

Father Dubini checks his watch.

FATHER DUBINI

I hate to cut this short, Diane,  
but I don't want to keep Ms.  
Rollins waiting. God's placed a  
tremendous burden on her shoulders.  
Her daughter was killed last night  
in a car accident.

DIANE

A car accident? Where?

FATHER DUBINI

Actually, I think it was right in  
front of your father-in-law's  
building. Late last night, she must  
have been crossing the street, and  
she struck by a hit-and-run driver.  
Just twelve years old.

DIANE

Twelve?

FATHER DUBINI

There's nothing you can say to a  
mother that's lost her child.  
There's just nothing.

Diane stifles a sob.

A cab pulls to the curb. VIRGINIA slides out of the back  
seat. The spirit has been drained from her body.

FATHER DUBINI (CONT'D)  
That's her.

DIANE  
She's so young.

Father Dubini leads Virginia to the rectory.

FATHER DUBINI  
I'm so sorry.

Virginia nods her head.

FATHER DUBINI (CONT'D)  
Virginia, this is Diane Sippilini.  
She's a long-time member of the  
parish.

DIANE  
I'm so sorry for your loss.

Virginia barely acknowledges Diane.

FATHER DUBINI  
Excuse me, Diane. I'll speak to you  
soon.

INT. PUB. DAY

Richard enters the pub. Carmine is already seated, a glass of red in front of him.

CARMINE  
Richie!

Richard composes himself and walks to the table.

CARMINE (CONT'D)  
Hey, kid, how's it going?

RICHARD  
Hey, Carmine.

They embrace and take seats.

CARMINE  
What's with this place? I asked the  
waiter for a wine list and he told  
me they've got two wines: white and  
red.

RICHARD

They've got the best burger in the city.

CARMINE

Ah, I guess I'm just an old school ginzo. Just give a bowl of spaghetti and a meatball and I'll be happy.

RICHARD

Well, I'm sorry for disappointing you. Thanks for meeting me.

CARMINE

Hey, we never get to see each other anymore. I'll take any chance I could get. So what's going on?

RICHARD

Just a lot of horse shit with the campaign. There's always something.

CARMINE

You know, I told Eugene that we were having lunch, and I think he got a bit nervous. Maybe he's afraid you're building a case.

RICHARD

Yeah, Carmine, I know what you mean. I sort of find myself on the other side of that coin.

Carmine offers a wry smile.

CARMINE

I don't follow.

Richard produces the checks.

RICHARD

I can't accept these. I'm sorry.

CARMINE

You're serious?

RICHARD

Carmine, I appreciate the generosity. You know me, the last thing I want to do is insult you. But the press is going to have a field day with this. It's going to bring both of us bad publicity.

(MORE)

RICHARD (CONT'D)

And besides, if I lose, Silver's not going to like the fact the you supported me. He might light a fire underneath your ass.

CARMINE

Silver, fuck him. I can't give money to my friend?

RICHARD

Carmine, please, it's not like that.

Carmine appears as if he's going to react unfavorably. He takes a second, another sip from his wine.

CARMINE

You're right. You're right. I should have thought it out before hand. I don't want to cause you any trouble, you know that. Rip em up. Fuck, knowing the degenerates I work with, half of them would have probably bounced anyway.

They both chuckle.

CARMINE (CONT'D)

You know, it's because we're Italian. They wouldn't treat any other ethnicity like this. Clinton was selling pardons, Bush gave out military contracts to his friends, Obama was running around with that bigot, Wright...Everyone gets over that. That's okay. But with us, it sticks.

RICHARD

That surprises you? We've been taking shit in this country since we came here and built it. More veterans in WWII than any other ethnicity...

CARMINE

And there's a black president before there's an Italian one.

INT. SUBWAY TRAIN. DAY

Michael stands his ground among an overflow of straphangers. Down here, deep underground, he's with the city's undesirables: the fat, the ugly, the stupid, the homeless, the young mothers, the loud little girls.

EXT. ENTRANCE OF MICHAEL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Michael notices a large manila envelope propped against his mailbox.

INT. MICHAEL'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The envelope bears the return address of KNOFF PUBLISHING. Michael rips it open. Inside, just a rejection slip and a catalogue.

Michael shakes his head and bangs his fist on the counter.

INT. ANDREW'S APARTMENT - DAY

Andrew sits at the kitchen table, a cup of coffee set out in front of him.

Diane stands in the bathroom, combing through the medicine cabinet. She's studying the labels on prescription bottles.

DIANE

Dad, do you know if you're still on Namenda? Didn't Weinstein take you off that last time?

ANDREW

I can't remember.

DIANE

I think he might of said to stop taking it. I'm not certain though.

Diane exits the bathroom, enters the kitchen. Look at the time!

DIANE (CONT'D)

Shit. I haven't even gone grocery shopping yet, and I've got Adam coming home for dinner tonight.

(MORE)

DIANE (CONT'D)

I'm just going to fix you a sandwich and head out. I didn't even bother taking the car. I'll hop in a cab.

Diane rummages through the refrigerator - bread, mustard, cold cuts, cheese.

DIANE (CONT'D)

Dad, how about ham and cheese?

ANDREW

Diane?

DIANE

Richard's going to be home too. It's nice eating with one of the boys. I didn't realize how much I would miss that until they left.

ANDREW

Diane?

DIANE

Yeah, Dad, what?

ANDREW

Sit down.

DIANE

One minute, Dad. You want a pickle?

ANDREW

It's about the girl. Sit down.

Diane sits.

DIANE

What about her?

ANDREW

Did you?

DIANE

Did I what?

ANDREW

Did you hit her?

DIANE

What? What are you talking about?

ANDREW

The police have been around. Some of the neighbors have identified a black Mercedes. They're looking for a middle aged white woman.

DIANE

Oh my god. Oh god.

Andrew knows.

ANDREW

There are a lot of black Mercedes in Manhattan. A lot of middle aged women.

DIANE

No, you don't understand. I didn't hit her. I was there, I was pulling out of my spot. But it was another car, just like mine, it had to swerve to avoid me, and it crashed right into her.

She breaks down.

DIANE

I didn't know what had happened. The other car left right away. I got ...I got out....but she was dead. She was dead!

ANDREW

Diane.

DIANE

I should have stayed! I should have stayed! It was the campaign. This god damn campaign made me panic. It would have been over. I would have ruined it.

ANDREW

Diane they didn't get a license plate. It was dark. Most of the neighbors were in bed. No one got a clear look at the driver.

DIANE

But they know the car! They're looking for a woman.

ANDREW

The second car confuses the investigation.

DIANE

We have to tell Richard. I have to get a lawyer. I have to...

ANDREW

Please, Diane. It was an accident. You got unlucky. You weren't even the one that hit the girl.

DIANE

Yeah, but...

ANDREW

But nothing. This stays between you and I. Make your peace with God, keep this from your husband.

INT. SIPPILINI CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Richard sits with a JOURNALIST. Everett stands watch.

RICHARD

There was a failure of oversight with every facet of government - from the SEC, to the IRS, to Congress, and certainly the Manhattan D.A.'s office. Wall Street is right in our back yard. It's part of our terrain. These shady back rooms are in our jurisdiction. In years past, District Attorney Silver has completely deferred to other government bureaucracies to fight crime in the financial district. That's not acceptable. If I'm elected, I'll aggressively pursue justice in New York's big business world.

The front door opens. Steve Friedman enters. He waves at Richard.

JOURNALIST

What could we expect from the campaign before primary day?

RICHARD

More of the same. We'll be out there talking to voters and laying out my platform. Sure, we're going to continue to fight an uphill battle. But listen, I know I'm trailing in the polls. I'm know I'm the big underdog, but God's honest truth, I believe that if I could reach the voters of this borough, if I could get them to hear my plan, my vision for justice in the city, I think they'd realize that the District Attorney's office needs a new direction. We've been under the same leadership for forty years. It's time for a change.

Tape recorder off.

JOURNALIST

Great. That seems like a nice point to stop.

They shake hands.

RICHARD

Anything else I could help you with, please pick up the phone and call. I really appreciate your attention.

JOURNALIST

Absolutely.

Richard walks over to Friedman.

RICHARD

Steve, nice to see you. Thanks for stopping by.

STEVE

Of course. I make sure to keep my word.

RICHARD

Good policy. So what's going on?

STEVE

Some place more private? You got a back room or something?

INT. BACK OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The back office doubles as a storage room.

Friedman opens his attache case, pulls out a stack of checks.

STEVE

Here, I passed my hat around the  
the office.

That's a lot of money.

RICHARD

Wow. Must have been a top hat.

STEVE

We have a big office.

RICHARD

Steve, I'm really grateful, but  
when someone just drops money in  
your lap, you got to wonder.....

How to put it delicately?

RICHARD (CONT'D)

if there's any special motivation.

STEVE

I have something else.

Friedman hands him a manila envelope.

RICHARD

I'm looking at?

STEVE

Bank accounts.

RICHARD

Big bank accounts.

STEVE

That's right.

RICHARD

I'm guessing this is the same  
Stanley Silver who's my opponent in  
the primary.

STEVE

That's right.

RICHARD  
You're equipping me with blackmail?

STEVE  
I just don't like corrupt  
politicians.

RICHARD  
This is....this is... I don't  
know... big. I don't know if I want  
this. It might be more useful in  
the hands of a reporter.

STEVE  
I would like to avoid that.

RICHARD  
Because the big bank accounts came  
from you?

STEVE  
Listen, if you want to be Manhattan  
D.A. - there it is, in your hands.

RICHARD  
And what do you want?

STEVE  
I just want that piece of shit out  
of office.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Michael and Erica work in bed. He's riding a creative wave,  
she's bored. She tries to distract him.

ERICA  
Hey.

A dismissive smile.

ERICA (CONT'D)  
Hey, what are you writing?

You can't just ignore me.

ERICA (CONT'D)  
Could you read it to me?

She begins to crawl.

ERICA (CONT'D)  
Please?

Are you going to make me beg?

MICHAEL

I got another rejection today.

ERICA

Oh, I'm sorry baby.

MICHAEL

That was the last one. They've all come back.

ERICA

Baby.

MICHAEL

I spent three years in grad school working on a novel that four people will read, and no one thinks is any good.

ERICA

I think its good. I loved it. You're so talented, Michael, you really are. I hope you know that. It's going to happen for you. You're just getting your failure out of the way.

MICHAEL

Yeah.

ERICA

No, I'm serious. There's no difference between success and failure. It's all part of the same continuum. They shouldn't be viewed separately. They're stops along one path.

MICHAEL

Success seems further and further away. I just had this vision of how my life was going to be, and already I'm so far off course.

ERICA

Don't lose faith. It's there, mine within yourself, keep at it, there's beautiful art in your future.

Michael smiles.

ERICA (CONT'D)

And you know what else, what's great about writing - about art - every new page - it's a chance at redemption.

Michael's amused, lifted.

MICHAEL

What are you, some physiatrist or something?

Michael makes his move.

ERICA

No, not yet. I got to do my homework. My English teacher is a real dick.

MICHAEL

What was that? What did you say about your English teacher's dick?

There's a KNOCK at the door. Uh-oh!

ERICA

Who's that?

MICHAEL

I don't know.

The KNOCKING continues.

ADAM (O.S.)

Mike, open up. It's Adam.

MICHAEL

Fuck. (To Erica) Stay in the bedroom.

ADAM (O.S.)

Dude, let me in.

MICHAEL

All right, all right. Give me a minute. I was taking a shit.

Michael seals Erica in the bedroom.

He let's in Adam.

ADAM  
Taking a shit, ha? I hope you  
washed your hands.

Adam points to Erica's oversized hand bag stuffed with text books.

ADAM (CONT'D)  
What is that, your book bag? Fag.

MICHAEL  
Yeah, well, it's big.

ADAM  
It's big and gay.

Adam checks out the fridge. It's Miller Time.

MICHAEL  
Dude.

ADAM  
Want one?

MICHAEL  
Actually, man, now's not... I've  
got some company.

Adam looks at the bedroom. He gets it.

ADAM  
Keeping her locked behind closed  
doors, ha?

MICHAEL  
Well, we were kind of in the  
throes...

ADAM  
Please, the last thing I want to do  
is interfere with your sex life, as  
infrequently as it occurs for you.

He hands Michael a NYS driver's license.

ADAM (CONT'D)  
I was just returning your ID.

MICHAEL  
Why? This is the extra.

ADAM  
I don't want to be tempted. They've  
been raiding the Fordham Road bars.  
(MORE)

ADAM (CONT'D)

I've convinced myself that if I get caught with a fake ID I'm going to ruin Dad's campaign.

MICHAEL

I wouldn't worry about it.

ADAM

Just take it. Thanks for the beer.

Adam's halfway through the doors.

MICHAEL

You're a fucking idiot. You're worried about a fake ID, but you're going to stroll around with an open container. And you're underage.

ADAM

Hey, it's dark. Cheers.

EXT. FDR DRIVE, BRONX BOUND - DAY

Only two cars trail Amanda Rollins' hearse. Diane is last in line in the backseat of a cab.

INT. CAB - CONTINUOUS

The CABBIE is Indian.

CABBIE

Family member?

DIANE

Excuse me?

CABBIE

The funeral.

DIANE

Oh, no. A girl from my church.

CABBIE

A girl?

DIANE

Twelve.

CABBIE

Too young. How did it happen?

DIANE

It was a traffic accident. She was walking in the street.

CABBIE

In New Delhi, people don't drive so well. Very careless. The roads are always very busy, and the city is very crowded. Accidents are not uncommon. Child runs after a ball into the street, chases after a friend. Terrible.... I feel bad for the driver too. Just along with his day, minding his own business, and then boom! All of a sudden he's a murderer. Terrible....For everybody.

EXT. CEMETERY - AN HOUR LATER

The small crowd disperses. Virginia can't pull herself away from the grave. Father Dubini stands with her.

Diane stands off to the side. She's summons the courage to approach Virginia.

DIANE

Virginia, if there's anything I can do...in whatever capacity, help settling in, with figuring out the neighborhood, whatever it is...

Diane gets a good look at Virginia for the first time. Underneath her suffering, there is strength. A sort of down-country toughness is scrubbed into her skin.

VIRGINIA

Thank you. Thank you so much.

She needs Diane.

Diane leads her to the car, helps her in.

FATHER DUBINI

You're a saint, Diane.

INT. SIPPILINI BEDROOM - 5 AM

Diane can't sleep.

INT. BATHROOM - A MINUTE LATER

Diane can't confront herself in the mirror.

The PHONE RINGS.

INT. SIPPILINI BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Richard is shaken out of sleep.

RICHARD

Hello?

EVERETT (O.S.)

Front page article, above the fold,  
endorsing Richard Sippilini in the  
primary.

RICHARD

In the times?

EVERETT (O.S.)

The New York Times.

Diane walks into the bedroom.

RICHARD

Holy shit. I'll meet you at the  
headquarters in half an hour. We  
have to get on this right away.

That sounds like an emergency. Diane worries that she's been caught.

EVERETT (O.S.)

Absolutely, this is a direct mail  
piece. We need everyone to know  
about this article. Silver's had  
the Times for years. This is a big  
deal. Let's make sure everybody  
knows it's a big deal.

RICHARD

See you soon.

He hangs up.

DIANE

What is it? Is everything okay?

RICHARD

Diane, calm down, everything is fine. The New York Times endorsed me today. This is big. This is the momentum we were looking for.

DIANE

Oh, all right. For some reason..I had the impression that... nevermind....congratulations. That's great news.

Richard looks for a suit. What's the deal with Diane?

RICHARD

It's still early. Why don't you get back to sleep?

INT. SIPPILINI CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS. MORNING

SETH, a young campaign worker, reads aloud from The New York Times.

SETH

Mr. Sippilini, a well-respected, well-liked, and well-qualified Manhattan criminal defense lawyer, lays out a bold plan for reform, with special emphasis on recommitting the office of the Manhattan District Attorney to battle white collar crime on Wall Street.

The office cheers.

Everett's on the phone. He looks angry.

SETH (CONT'D)

Eloquent, clear-sighted, and communicable, the Fordham Law School graduate excels in the areas that characterize the very best public servants: leadership, organization, and fairness.

The office cheers once again. Richard affords himself a smile.

Everett slams the phone. He interrupts Seth.

EVERETT

Richard, back office.

INT. BACK OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

EVERETT

The Post, that sorry fucking rag, has decided to break it's coverage of drunk celebrities and adulterous athletes, and run a cover story on your link with the Gambino crime family.

RICHARD

God-damn it!

EVERETT

Silver's been stoking the fire. Apparently some anonymous sources in the Manhattan D.A.'s Office, "have serious reservations" about your friendship with Corsetti, among other things.

RICHARD

My next door neighbor, when I was twelve, is a criminal! Why is that the big issue all of a sudden?

EVERETT

Rich, this is all bullshit, but this is the shoe that everyone thinks fits, so they're gonna shove it on you and force you to wear it.

RICHARD

What else? What other bullshit?

EVERETT

Peter Sturiano?

RICHARD

Peter Sturiano? My cousin?

EVERETT

He's a convicted felon.

RICHARD

Christ! The guy's seventy-five years old. He did his time in the sixties!

EVERETT

And your client list has become an issue: Tricamo, Amatrucola, Barona.

RICHARD

Three acquittals! Three men who  
were found not guilty by a jury of  
their peers!

Richard slams his fist on the desk. He takes a moment to  
collect himself.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Carmine's right. This is bigotry  
toward Italian-Americans. There's  
no other way to spin it.

EVERETT

Listen, Rich, we're not going to  
convince anybody by playing the  
outraged innocent. This is a blood  
sport, and we're caught in the  
middle. We've been knocked down.  
Now we hit back. Hard.

INT. OFFICE OF THE MANHATTAN DISTRICT ATTORNEY - AFTERNOON

STANLEY SILVER, still an intimidating presence in old age,  
sits behind his massive desk, reading The New York Times and  
smoking a cigarette.

The INTERCOM interrupts.

INTERCOM (O.S.)

Mr. District Attorney?

SILVER

Yes, Sydney?

INTERCOM

Richard Sippilini is here to see  
you.

Silver slowly lowers the newspaper. Strange.

INT. OFFICE OF THE MANHATTAN DISTRICT ATTORNEY - A MINUTE  
LATER

Richard sits on the other side of Silver's desk.

SILVER

Big coup for you in the Times  
today. Congratulations.

RICHARD  
I'm told The Post isn't as big of a fan.

SILVER  
Yeah, well, lucky for me, more people read The Post.

Silver laughs.

RICHARD  
Listen, Stanley...

SILVER  
Mr. District Attorney.

Richard catches himself.

RICHARD  
I consider this a favor.

Richard removes a stack of paper from a manila envelope. He hands them to Silver. Silver looks them over.

SILVER  
Yeah, so?

RICHARD  
You've got too much money, Stanley. Public servants aren't supposed to have all this money.

SILVER  
Go fuck yourself. This is really beneath you.

RICHARD  
Should I have gone to the press?

Silver slams the stack onto the desk.

SILVER  
What's your plan, Sippilini? You think I'm going to drop out, and you're just going to stroll into my office? People will see right through this. They'll think your goumba friends intimidated me.

RICHARD  
I know this usually doesn't matter to you, Stanley, but as it turns out, you're on the wrong side of this issue. You committed a crime.

(MORE)

RICHARD (CONT'D)

You got caught. You don't dictate the terms.

SILVER

Richard, really.

RICHARD

Tomorrow you drop out of the race. It might be a good idea to say something about your health. You're old, people will believe you.

Silver's impressed with the new found edge.

SILVER

You're good at this, you know?

Richard shakes his head with amused anger.

RICHARD

Stanley, your political life is over. It's time to dust off the golf clubs.

Defeated, Stanley shakes his head.

SILVER

You can't have secrets anymore. They used to give you some privacy. Not now. Now everyone's out for the kill. You're learning that, ha?

RICHARD

Stanley, believe it or not, I don't have any secrets, despite what you might read in the papers.

He holds up the stack of papers

SILVER

You know, whoever gave this to you, they were obviously once my friend. They got tired of me. They had to go find the new guy.

Richard stands up.

SILVER (CONT'D)

They're always going to have this on you.

RICHARD

I didn't do anything wrong.

SILVER

Don't be naive. This just smells fishy.

RICHARD

And you're the big fish.

SILVER

Richard, it's easy to stand there from the outside, and make judgments and criticize the players, but look at you - not even in office, and you're already in somebody's back pocket.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYNASIUM - AFTERNOON

TWO GIRLS VOLLEYBALL TEAMS compete on the indoor court. A smattering of PARENTS spectate. Michael's low-key in the corner.

Erica is on the court, intense, focused, dripping with sweat. The ball is in play.

Wow, Erica, nice play!

LOUD CHEERING comes from one of the other spectators. Who's that? DANNY's clad in a 'wifebeater,' backwards hat. The tough guy. Twenty years old.

DANNY

Yeah, Erica! That's my girl! Yeah!

INT. ST. ANNE'S HALLWAY - AN HOUR LATER

Michael exits into the hallway. Danny's waiting by the locker room.

MICHAEL

Excuse me, visitors aren't allowed in the locker room area. You have to wait upstairs.

DANNY

Yeah? Who are you?

MICHAEL

I'm a teacher, but that really doesn't matter, you can't be here.

DANNY  
Wait, you must be Sippilini?

MICHAEL  
Yeah.

DANNY  
Oh shit, my sister's said a lot about you. She says she got a young, good looking English teacher. (*He smiles*) You ain't that good looking. (*He chuckles*) I'm sorry man, I'm just kidding. I'm Danny Curtis, Erica Curtis' sister.

Danny gives him a long, hard shake. That smiles is a threat.

MICHAEL  
Nice to meet you.

DANNY  
Shit, it must be hard to teach in this school. Real *hard*.

He laughs.

DANNY (CONT'D)  
All these young girls running around. All horny, looking to get.... I wouldn't be able to do it.

Erica exits the locker room. Hey big brother.

ERICA  
Hey, Danny. Thanks for coming. Mr. Sippilini - what's going on? You're not supposed to be down here.

DANNY  
Him neither?

He laughs.

MICHAEL  
I was just headed home. Good night guys. Act II, remember, for tomorrow. Again, nice meeting you.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Diane and Virginia share a small table. Virginia looks uncomfortable in a secretary's outfit.

Diane checks her watch.

DIANE

You still have fifteen minutes or so. I'll go up with you. Frank's a real easy going guy.... I think it's really great, you know, looking for work right away. It's good to keep your mind off it.

VIRGINIA

Nothing keeps my mind off it. I don't have a choice. I've got no money.

DIANE

Don't worry about that. If you need to, give yourself some time.

VIRGINIA

That's easy to say when you have money.

Virginia takes a sip of her coffee.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. Really, I'm grateful that you set up this interview..... But... I can't go through with it. I just can't.

She begins to cry.

DIANE

No-no, it's okay. Believe me, it will be fine. We can work something out. I can lend you some money. You should take all the time you need. It's okay.

VIRGINIA

She was all I had. Not just now. But my entire life. I thought she was reward, my prize for suffering through all the shit in my life - my father, that abusive drunk, and I marry a loser just like him. No money. No home. After a while, even the love ran out. There was nothing good about that relationship. But then I had her...and it was like...it was like God was sending me a gift, a tool to deal with ...

(MORE)

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)

I don't know...and I finally left Daryl. It's funny, all that fear, all that uncertainty. I was so afraid to leave him, but then, then it was just as simple as packing the car and driving away. Amanda and I had big city plans. New York! It was going to be a fresh start for us. A fresh start...

She breaks down.

Diane grabs her hand.

DIANE

It's all right. It's all right.

VIRGINIA

It's just been one ordeal after another. This isn't a life. This is a trip through hell.

INT. SIPPILINI CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

The headquarters is abuzz. VOLUNTEERS and SUPPORTERS await big news.

Michael enters and finds Adam.

MICHAEL

So what's the deal.

ADAM

I don't know, we're all waiting with baited breath.

Richard greets his sons.

RICHARD

I'm glad you guys are here.

ADAM

What's the big announcement?

RICHARD

Listen.

Everett stands on a chair, calls everyone's attention.

EVERETT

Ladies, gentlemen... please... I think you're all going to want to hear this....

ADAM

Out with it!

EVERETT

Yes young Mr. Sippilini. You'll be very happy. In tomorrow morning's newspapers you will find an official press release from current District Attorney, Stanley "The Super Senior" Silver, withdrawing his name from the race.

The crowd gasps.

EVERETT

Unluckily, or luckily, Mr. Silver is getting old and unhealthy, and prefers the warm climate of Florida to the hell storm of New York City politics.

Cheers from the crowd.

MICHAEL

(To Adam) That's the whole ball game.

EVERETT

Now, of course, there's still the little issue of the general election.

The crowd laughs.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

As you all know, for every one Republican in our blue borough, there are 67,946 Democrats.

The crowd laughs.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

I got to say, I like our chances.

The crowd cheers, celebrates, high-fives, and hugs.

Diane cries with relief. She embraces her husband.

RICHARD

You've been a rock this entire time. We've made it through the worst.

DIANE

Of course, Richard.

She hugs her boys.

DIANE (CONT'D)

Michael, will you do me a favor? Could you run down the street and grab some soda, beer, water, I don't know, whatever you think. I'm going to call MiMi's. I think we should have some pizzas or something if everyone is going to stick around.

MICHAEL

Mom, please, don't worry about it.

RICHARD

Michael.

MICHAEL

Yeah, okay.

They leave Adam and Richard.

In the midst of the crowd, Steve Friedman emerges.

RICHARD

Steve, how are you? I wasn't expecting you.

STEVE

I just wanted to stop by and congratulate you in person. I think you made the right decision.

Adam wonders, "right decision?"

RICHARD

Yeah, it's a happy night.

STEVE

Are you Sippilini junior?

ADAM

Yeah, I'm Adam. I'm the younger son.

STEVE

Nice to meet you. Giving Dad a hand on the campaign?

ADAM

When I can. I'm still in school.

STEVE

Where?

ADAM

Fordham.

STEVE

My law school.

RICHARD

I didn't know you had a law degree.

STEVE

That I do. So Adam, those Fordham Road bars catch your attention yet?

ADAM

Ah, I got a little more time yet. I'm not 21 until March.

STEVE

Please, that line might work on your father, but if those places are anything like they were when I was a student, they're probably still accepting library cards as proof.

Polite laughter all around.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Anyway, Richard, do you think I could steal you for a minute.

RICHARD

Sure.

INT. BACK OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

RICHARD

So what's up.

Friedman laughs.

STEVE

You should be more excited. You just became Manhattan D.A.

RICHARD

I'm not going to allow myself to count any chickens. But trust me, I'm feeling pretty good.

STEVE

Cruz? That's your guy?

RICHARD

Yeah.

STEVE

Is he much of a contender?

RICHARD

He's an idiot with a cathcy last name.

STEVE

Are you going to need more money?

RICHARD

You know, I'm just a lawyer. The whole political game is new to me, but I'm starting to learn there's never enough money in a campaign.

STEVE

I'll see what I can do. (Beat) I actually came here because I wanted to congratulate you, but I also need a favor.

RICHARD

A favor?

STEVE

Do you know who Lance Pearson is?

RICHARD

No, I don't think so.

STEVE

Quentin Smith? Eric Lazar?

RICHARD

They don't sound familiar.

STEVE

They're on your contributor's list.

RICHARD  
Some of your guys?

STEVE  
Yeah.

RICHARD  
I'm not following.

STEVE  
They're associates of mine. More  
than that, they're friends.

RICHARD  
All right.

STEVE  
And all three of them were served  
with subpoenas from the Manhattan  
District Attorney's office. It was  
Silver's lame duck move. He ordered  
it last night.

Richard looks like he just got punched.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
I'm just asking you to put on your  
kid gloves.

RICHARD  
Steve....

STEVE  
There testimony might cause a lot  
of trouble for me and some of my  
friends.

RICHARD  
Listen, I'm not selling any favors.  
I'm not even elected yet. I  
wouldn't have taken the money if I  
knew it came with this.

STEVE  
Too late. It's already your  
problem. You have three  
contributors under investigation by  
the office they're helping you get  
elected to. That doesn't read well  
in the press.

Clenched mouth. Deep breath. Restrain yourself.

RICHARD

This isn't right, Steve. You set a trap for me.

STEVE

Well, whatever.

He turns to leave.

RICHARD

The damage has already been done. What's the threat?

STEVE

I'm just making sure you're going to play ball.

RICHARD

Or?

STEVE

Or Mr. Cruz is going to experience the same type of windfall you did. Except that he doesn't have to answer any questions about Mafioso associates or corrupt contributors. We'll give him the money clean.

RICHARD

Fuck you, Friedman. You're not going to intimidate me.

STEVE

You have no leverage.

RICHARD

I have the truth. And I have fifty reporters who are going to be seeking comment from me tomorrow.

STEVE

Are you going to tell them that you blackmailed Silver?

RICHARD

You better hope not.

STEVE

You're right, you are new at this.

RICHARD

Get out of my office.

KNOCK at the door.

EVERETT (O.S.)  
Rich, are you in there.

He barges in, still smiling.

STEVE  
(*To Everett*) Tell your boy to smarten up. He's acting like a child.

Friedman leaves.

EVERETT  
What?

RICHARD  
It's alright, Everett, you'll read about it in tomorrow's newspaper.

EXT. ANDREW'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Diane exits a cab and walks to the apartment building. Two men are standing at the door, DETECTIVE VELLA, a sturdy blue collar man, and DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ, his street-hardened partner.

DETECTIVE VELLA  
Good afternoon, mam.

DIANE  
Hello.

DETECTIVE VELLA  
I'm Detective Vella and this is Detective Rodriguez.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ  
Hello.

DETECTIVE VELLA  
Do you live in this building?

DIANE  
No, I'm just visiting my father-in-law.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ  
Who's that?

DIANE

Andrew Sippilini. He's on the fourth floor.

DETECTIVE VELLA

Oh yeah, the retired detective? We spoke to Mr. Sippilini. Nice man. We're asking all the neighbors if they had seen anything related to that hit and run accident the other day.

DIANE

Right, of course.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

You're Diane, right? Diane Sippilini?

DIANE

Yeah, why?

DETECTIVE VELLA

It's just that the car in the accident, we think it was a black Mercedes.

DIANE

Okay.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Yeah, and we were asking if anybody around here drives a black Mercedes.

DETECTIVE VELLA

And a few said that you do. They said you double park in the front here a lot.

He laughs.

DIANE

Well, yeah, I drive a blue Mercedes. Sometimes I double park when I drop him off. I usually just run up with him and make sure he gets in all right. He's elderly... he's

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

We're not concerned about your double parking habit, mam.

Laughs.

DIANE

Well, what are you concerned with?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Were you here the night of the accident? That was the eighth. It was a Tuesday.

DIANE

No, I don't think so.

The mood is turning quickly.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Are you sure?

DIANE

Yeah.

DETECTIVE VELLA

You came here in a cab? Is your car in the shop?

DIANE

No, it's at home. Sometimes it's just easier to take a cab.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Could you show us?

DIANE

Show you what? What are you talking about?

DETECTIVE VELLA

Your car. Could you give us a look at it? So we could see that there's no damage and that it wasn't the car that killed Amanda Rollins.

DIANE

I don't know. This is coming out of nowhere. It's better that I talk to my husband first. He's a lawyer.

DETECTIVE VELLA

We know who your husband is, Mrs. Sippilini. I'm sure the last thing he needs right now is to be bothered with this.

(MORE)

DETECTIVE VELLA (CONT'D)  
Listen, just show us the thing so  
we could rule you out in good  
conscious and get on with the  
investigation.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ  
Come on, we'll even give you a ride  
back here. It'll take twenty-five  
minutes. And then you could forget  
about us.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Diane leads the detectives to her blue Mercedes.

DIANE  
Did anyone get a look at the  
driver?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ  
It was a woman.

DIANE  
This is it.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ  
Do you have the keys?

Diane produces them from her pocketbook.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)  
Open it.

She unlocks the doors.

Detective Vella and Rodriguez walk around the car, inspecting  
it for damage. Detective Rodriguez scrutinizes the front  
bumper.

DETECTIVE VELLA  
Hasn't been to the shop, recently,  
has it?

Detective Rodriguez takes out a notebook and jots down the  
license plate number.

DIANE  
No.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ  
Where were you the night of the  
accident? Can you remember? Around  
11:00.

DIANE

Well, I, ah, I was at my husband's fund-raiser. I didn't get home until past midnight.

Detective Rodriguez shuts his notebook. The detectives seem satisfied.

DETECTIVE VELLA

Well, Mrs. Sippilini, we were just being diligent. We have an obligation to follow all possible leads, unlikely as they may seem.

DIANE

I understand.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Come on, we'll drive you back to your father-in-law's.

They move toward the exit.

DIANE

No, it's all right. I'm running late now. I was just dropping in on him, nothing important.

DETECTIVE VELLA

We apologize for the inconvenience.

DIANE

Good luck with the investigation.

They reach the street. Diane leaves the two.

DETECTIVE VELLA

What do you think?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

She's nervous.

DETECTIVE VELLA

Yeah, we tend to have that effect on people.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

But especially on people with secrets.

Up the block, Diane enters her building.

DETECTIVE VELLA

So what do you think, is Diane Sippilini regular nervous or hiding something nervous?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

I don't know....the dark Benz, we're looking for a white woman her age and frame. Plus, she got reason to cover it up. I think there might be something here.

DETECTIVE VELLA

So do I.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

We're going to have to be pretty quiet about this. If she turns out to be our girl, that's front page news.

DETECTIVE VELLA

Fuck. I wish the driver would have stayed at the scene and called it in. We would have avoided this whole mess.

INT. BAR. NIGHT

Michael nurses a drink at the bar.

STEPHANIE KIEDIS, twenty-five, the office siren, trots into the bar. She and Michael embrace.

INT. BAR. NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Michael and Stephanie sit in a booth, catching-up, all smiles.

STEPHANIE

When we were in college, you always had this air about you - that you were better than everyone else because you were the smartest. Now - now it's my time to have the air of superiority because I'm richer than you.

She's being playful.

MICHAEL

You're not richer than me. Not even close.

STEPHANIE

Well, I make more money than you do. A lot more money. Trust funds don't count.

MICHAEL

That may be true, Steph, but I get to shape young minds.

STEPHANIE

Yeah, right. There's definitely something deeply perverse about you teaching at an all girls Catholic school.

MICHAEL

That's not fair.

STEPHANIE

Please, You were shameless. You fucked anything!

MICHAEL

You know, I always felt that my sexual endeavors were greatly overestimated.

STEPHANIE

Please, "No Standards" Sippilini?

MICHAEL

Ah, I was just hedging my bets.

They have a moment.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I wonder why you and I....never...

STEPHANIE

Fucked?

MICHAEL

I wasn't going to put it so crudely.

STEPHANIE

Somehow, just somehow, I was able to resist that Sippilini charm.

INT. MICHAEL'S KITCHEN. NEXT MORNING

Michael sips a mug of coffee.

INT. MICHAEL'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Stephanie touches up her make up.

STEPHANIE

Do you have a roommate?

MICHAEL (O.S.)

No.

STEPHANIE

I thought I heard someone open the door last night.

INT. MICHAEL'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

What?

MICHAEL

Nope, I'm here all by myself.

Stephanie enters the kitchen.

STEPHANIE

I had fun.

She kisses Michael.

MICHAEL

Remember to vote.

She leaves.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM. DAY

Michael's English class. Erica looks upset. She can't even look up.

MICHAEL

And for today's bonus question,  
What does the word 'utopia'  
translate to in Greek? I'm looking  
for one or two words.

The girls jot down their answers, hand in their quizzes.  
Erica gives hers to Michael without making eye contact.

He checks the bonus question: "Go Fuck Yourself, You Piece of Shit."

INT. SIPPILINI KITCHEN - MORNING

The eggs sizzle. The coffee drips. Diane stands watch.

It must be serious, Everett's making a house visit.

RICHARD

I think that people will admire the honesty.

EVERETT

How are you so sure that Friedman won't reveal the blackmail?

RICHARD

There was no blackmailing.

EVERETT

You know what I mean. If you're going to out him, he's got nothing to lose. He'll find a way to spin it.

RICHARD

Well what's the alternative? I'm not getting involved in this quid-pro-quo bullshit. I'm a lawyer. Justice is supposed to be blind, remember?

EVERETT

I don't know, Rich, this whole situation just reeks. I think you're giving the voters too much credit. They're not going to pay attention long enough to find out the details. We're in a headline culture.

RICHARD

What if I come clean about Silver?

EVERETT

About the blackmail?

RICHARD

God damn-it Everett!

DIANE

Honey.

EVERETT

It's suicide. Come on. Use that head on your shoulders. It was blackmail. If you wanted to do the legal thing, you would have turned over the evidence to the police or to the U.S. Attorney, or to the FBI. You can't work outside the law, especially not if you're trying to convince voters that you should be their man for justice.

RICHARD

Everett!

EVERETT

You fucked up! We fucked up. I gave you bad advice. We should have sniffed the shit before we stepped right into it.

Richard faces the facts.

RICHARD

You're right. I played their game. I got caught up.

EVERETT

It's not that you played the game, it's that you played it poorly.

RICHARD

No. No. That's not the man I want to be. We're coming clean with this. About Silver, about Friedman. If it cost me the election, then at least I keep my integrity. There's nothing more important than that.

Those words sting Diane.

The PHONE RINGS.

DIANE

Hello?

DETECTIVE VELLA (O.S.)

Mrs. Sippilini.

DIANE

Yes?

DETECTIVE VELLA (O.S.)  
This is Detective Vella. We met  
each other yesterday.

Diane retreats into the living room.

INT. SIPPILINI LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

DIANE  
Oh, yes. How can I help you?

INT. SIPPILINI KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

RICHARD  
One shit storm after the other.

EVERETT  
You're too good to be a politician,  
Richard. You're too pure.

INT. SIPPILINI APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

DETECTIVE VELLA (O.S.)  
After we left yesterday, Detective  
Rodriguez and I thought of a few  
questions. We were wondering if you  
might be able to stop by the  
precinct sometime today?

DIANE  
Questions?

DETECTIVE VELLA  
All routine, mam. If you were in  
any trouble we wouldn't be calling  
you ahead of time.

DIANE  
Could we just talk over the phone?

DETECTIVE VELLA  
We'd prefer if it was face-to-face.  
We can stop by your apartment if  
you want.

DIANE  
No, no. That won't be necessary.  
When should I come in?

DETECTIVE VELLA  
How about before lunch? 11:30.

DIANE  
All right, I'll see you then.

Click.

INT. SIPPILINI KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Diane reenters.

RICHARD  
Who was that?

DIANE  
A telemarketer.

The eggs are burnt.

DIANE (CONT'D)  
Shit. I ruined breakfast.

EVERETT  
Diane, honey, I've got no appetite  
anyway.

RICHARD  
Me neither.

Still, she's hard on herself.

RICHARD (CONT'D)  
Diane!

She brings it together.

DIANE  
Richard, if it's all right, I was  
thinking I might skip that luncheon  
today. I've got to run a few  
errands.

RICHARD  
Whatever you need to do.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL BATHROOM. AFTERNOON

Erica's vomiting. Tony approaches her.

TONY  
Are you okay?

ERICA  
I got to go home.

INT. CHURCH RECTORY. MID MORNING

Diane has just come clean to Father Dubini.

FATHER DUBINI  
Virginia needs to know the truth.

DIANE  
I can't. I can't face her!

FATHER DUBINI  
In God's eyes, you have no choice.

DIANE  
How could I ever? What would I say?

FATHER DUBINI  
Allow her to forgive you. The power to forgive is healing. It's a tremendous gift, both for the forgiver and the forgiven.

DIANE  
Father, I can't breathe. Sometime when I think about it, it's like my lungs are empty. It feels like I'm dying.

Dubini regards Diane with a strange mix of sympathy and judgment.

FATHER DUBINI  
You should never be spared the pain and suffering you deserve, then you'll never come to understand life's simple economy, everything is it's own punishment, it's own reward.

DIANE  
This guilt is too much to bear.

Dubini considers.

FATHER DUBINI  
Diane, do you want this to be a confession?

DIANE  
Yes.

They bow their heads.

DIANE (CONT'D)

Dear Lord, it has been three months since my last confession, and these are my sins....

EXT. ST. ANNE'S HS. AFTERNOON.

Michael's out the door. Who's that on the corner? Danny, Erica's brother?

DANNY

Yo, Mr. Sippilini!

Shit. He was going to cross the street.

MICHAEL

Hey.

DANNY

You remember me, right?

MICHAEL

Yeah, you're Erica's brother, Danny.

DANNY

Yeah. Do you know where she is? I've been waiting for her.

MICHAEL

I don't know. She was in class today. Maybe she's got volleyball practice or something.

DANNY

Maybe. I forgot to ask her. I leave for work before she even gets up. Sometimes I'll meet her here on my break and walk her home.

MICHAEL

Being a good big brother.

DANNY

Yeah, gotta watcha out for baby sis.

MICHAEL

Definitely. I've got a younger brother.

DANNY

The you kind of know what I mean,  
but not really. It's different with  
a sister. Every time I look at her,  
I see that little girl, you know?  
Like when she was seven or eight. I  
can't help but feel protective.  
Especially because I know what guys  
might do to a pretty girl like  
Erica.

MICHAEL

Yeah, I see what you mean.

DANNY

Nah, probably not.

Danny's sizing up Michael.

DANNY (CONT'D)

How old's your brother?

MICHAEL

He's a junior at Fordham.

DANNY

Fordham? I work around there.  
Sometimes even on campus. I'm a Con-  
Ed guy.

MICHAEL

Oh nice, anyway, I got to get  
going.

Danny grabs his arm, pulls him close.

DANNY

Listen, you're fucking her, right?

MICHAEL

What?

DANNY

Come on, I didn't pick your name  
out of a hat.

MICHAEL

Danny -

DANNY

I know she's fucking an older guy.  
That's what she told her friend.

MICHAEL  
Let go of my arm.

DANNY  
And I've heard your name too much.  
Too fucking much.

MICHAEL  
Let go of my arm!

Now it's a scene. Students are watching.

DANNY  
Heads up, all right?

INT. BALLROOM LUNCHEON. DAY

Italian-American organization honors role-models. Richard's on the dais. Andrew sits next to him.

There's an elderly speaker, JERRY, at the podium.

JERRY  
You know, it's a real pleasure to introduce our key note speaker. I've known Richard Sippilini since his father and I were detectives together some thirty years ago. I remember when Rich got into law school. Your father was so proud of you, he was so happy that you followed him into law enforcement. Of course, you wound up playing for the other side, but he didn't hold it against you.

The crowd laughs.

JERRY (CONT'D)  
But you've come back. And I can't think of a man who I would rather have leading the District Attorney's office than Richard Sippilini.

Applause. Richard steps up to the mic.

RICHARD  
Thank you, Jerry, for your kind words. I'm not sure if you realize how much you and my father influenced my decision to become a lawyer.

(MORE)

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Your unwavering commitment to justice, your *spiritual* dedication to the law... You were my heroes. I applaud you both.

Applause.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Of course, my father and Jerry are only two people in a room full of Italian-American role models: captains of industry, pioneers in medicine and science, judges, political leaders, acclaimed authors, award winning filmmakers, and so much more. In almost every imaginable field of endeavor, Italian-Americans have excelled. And let's not forget. We know how to cook.

The crowd laughs.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

And there's just one secret to our success: the family.

The crowd is paying attention.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Our foundation, our support, the safe haven we retreat to every night, the family is at the heart of our identity as Italian-Americans. Italian-American men and women know that no matter how successful they are in business, or the arts, or whatever, the most important role they'll ever play is mother or father. From one generation to the next, we pass along our culture with a sense of pride, tradition, and perseverance.

INT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT HALLWAY. DAY

The door is already open. He walks in.

INT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Erica's inside. She's crying. Get ready for a fight!

MICHAEL

It's not okay for you to do this. How did you get a key? You have no right to slip into my apartment whenever you want.

ERICA

You've poisoned me. It's pulling at my throat. It's tearing at my stomach. I feel physically ill.

MICHAEL

Erica, this isn't acceptable any more. This can't go on.

The remote misses Michael, smashes against the wall.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Erica, calm down. Does your brother know about us? Did you tell him?

ERICA

My brother? What does my brother have to do with this? You were fucking someone else last night!

MICHAEL

You snuck into my apartment! You have no right.

ERICA

And you were fucking someone else! In the same bed, in the same bed we fuck in! The same bed! Do you know how ridiculously cruel that is? Do you know how much that hurts me? That image? I'll never get that out of my head. Never.

MICHAEL

God, Erica, what do you want me to say? Yes, I had sex with someone last night. It's not like you and I were in a relationship. I never made a commitment to you.

ERICA

No commitment? Are you kidding me?

MICHAEL

What did you think? Did you think we were in a relationship?

ERICA

Yes! I did!

MICHAEL

I never said anything to lead you to that.

ERICA

It doesn't matter what you say. It's what you do! All the time we spent together, all those feelings, all that passion - that spoke to me. That told me all I needed to know.

MICHAEL

Erica, this isn't puppy love. I'm an adult.

ERICA

I'm young! You should have known!

MICHAEL

I don't know. You're smart. You're grown up. Fuck, I don't know. This isn't working. I'm sorry. This can't continue, bottom line.

ERICA

You're sorry? You're sorry? And that's it? You think that's how it ends, simple and easy like that? Real fucking convenient!

MICHAEL

I'm sorry. I don't know what to say.

ERICA

Stop saying sorry.

He goes to comfort her.

ERICA (CONT'D)

Fight for this! Pretend you care! Get me back.

MICHAEL

It's too complicated. You broke into my apartment. Your brother threatened me!

ERICA

What are you talking about?

MICHAEL  
Outside of school today. He point  
blank confronted me.

ERICA  
What!

MICHAEL  
Did you tell him?

ERICA  
No - Not you. He found out that I  
was dating an older guy, but -  
dating! Dating! I'm such a fucking  
idiot...I'm so humiliated.

MICHAEL  
But what, Erica? Did he know about  
me?

ERICA  
No, no. I never said anything.

MICHAEL  
Does anyone else know?

ERICA  
No, I didn't tell anybody.

MICHAEL  
Are you sure?

ERICA  
God-damn it, Mike! I said no!

MICHAEL  
This is my career we're talking  
about. This could be my father's  
career too.

ERICA  
I don't give a fuck about you or  
your father's career!

MICHAEL  
Erica, don't do anything stupid.  
Don't you dare tell anybody!

ERICA  
Are you threatening me? Are you  
seriously threatening me?

MICHAEL

Listen, let's think about this rationally. We just walk away from this. We go on with our lives.

ERICA

Just walkaway? Who talks like that? Who fucks you for six months, then talks about walking away?

MICHAEL

You've got senior year, then college, and besides this is....this is....it's just not even remotely possible anymore.

ERICA

And what? I'm supposed to go back to being your student? I'm supposed sit there in class and take notes on your dumb fucking lectures and take your stupid fucking quizzes? Talk about unrealistic. That's unrealistic to me. I'd rather drop-out then go through the humiliation of being your student, of having you correct my grammar and mark up my test papers. Go fuck yourself. Walk away! Fuck you.

MICHAEL

So then what? What!?

ERICA

I don't know! I don't know! Show some emotion! Show me that you care!

Erica breaks down. Michael's indifference borders on impatience.

MICHAEL

Listen, I'm sorry. I really am. This was my fault.

She loathes his cool demeanor.

ERICA

How do I make you cry?

EXT. BALLROOM. DAY

Richard and company exit the building. A Lincoln waits outside. Friedman rolls down the tinted window.

STEVE  
Sippilini.

RICHARD  
I'd rather just end our  
association, Steve.

STEVE  
Come on, I'm not going to whack you  
or anything.

Richard turns to Everett.

RICHARD  
Head back to headquarters. I'll be  
there in half an hour.

EVERETT  
Are you sure?

RICHARD  
Yeah.

INT. BACK SEAT OF TOWN CAR - A MINUTE LATER

STEVE  
Listen, Richard, we've really gone  
off course here. Let's just think  
about our interests. We can both  
get what we want.

RICHARD  
I'm not interested in anything,  
Steve. And there's not really much  
to talk about anymore. I gave my  
phone interview with the *Wall  
Street Journal* this morning. It's  
going to be front page news.

STEVE  
God damn-it, you're creating a  
whole fucking mess here! Shit!

RICHARD  
Stop the car. I'm getting out.

Friedman collects himself. He gives Richard a look as if to say, "You fucking idiot. You don't know what you just did."

STEVE

This could have been so easy. Stop  
the car!

The car stops. Richard opens the door.

STEVE (CONT'D)

You won't get away with this.

RICHARD

I'm not getting away with anything.

Friedman vows:

STEVE

I'm going to get out of this, and  
I'm going to find a way to hurt  
you.

EXT. ANDREW'S APARTMENT BUILDING. DAY

Diane anxiously walks up to the buzzer. She sees Sippilini,  
skips it. She buzzes Rollins.

VIRGINIA (O.S.)

Hello?

DIANE

Virginia, it's Diane. Sippilini.

VIRGINIA

Diane, could you hold on a minute?  
I'm coming down.

It's the longest minute of Diane's life. She looks out at the  
street where the accident occurred. Life goes on as usual.

Virginia exits.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)

Hey, Diane. I was just headed  
downtown. Father Dubini recommended  
a support group. For bereaved  
parents.

She's digging through her purse for a metrocard.

DIANE

Oh, I was just hoping to talk to  
you for a minute. Do you want me to  
come?

VIRGINIA

You must be busy. Fuck, where is that metrocard?

DIANE

No, really, I've got nothing to do.

VIRGINIA

You sure?

DIANE

Yeah, please.

They get going.

VIRGINIA

I think I'm going to move. This block is too painful. Besides, I can't afford the rent and I don't need the extra room.

DIANE

I could help you find another place.

VIRGINIA

No, I mean move from the city. Maybe back home. The New York experiment just didn't work out.

DIANE

Are your parents still there?

VIRGINIA

My mother is. My sister's in South Carolina.

DIANE

Why don't you head down there?

VIRGINIA

I haven't spoken to her since I left my house. That was before Amanda was even born. She might not know that Amanda ever existed.

She's on the verge of tears. Diane gives her a tissue.

DIANE

Listen, Virginia, I have to tell you something.

VIRGINIA

All right.

DIANE

I was there the night Amanda was killed. I saw it happen.

Stopped.

VIRGINIA

What? What do you mean?

DIANE

I was dropping my father-in-law off. I was double parked in front of the building. Right where your daughter was hit.

VIRGINIA

What?

DIANE

I saw her get hit.

VIRGINIA

You're her! You're the middle aged woman!

DIANE

No. No. I swear. I didn't hit her. It was someone else.

VIRGINIA

You're her. It was you!

DIANE

I was pulling out, and I wasn't looking, and ...

VIRGINIA

You killed my daughter!

DIANE

No, listen. It was another car. Another car swerved to avoid me.

VIRGINIA

You're a liar! You're a murderer.

DIANE

I swear, it wasn't me. I contributed to it, but I wasn't the one.

VIRGINIA

You're lying! You're covering for yourself!

Virginia runs to the station.

DIANE

No, please, listen.

Virginia descends.

INT. ANDREW'S APARTMENT. A FEW MINUTES LATER

Andrew could barely sit through Diane's explanation.

ANDREW

It was weakness, Diane. It was your inability to deal with this internally, the guilt, and now you've put everything in jeopardy - the campaign, your husband's career -not to mention yourself.

DIANE

I had to tell her. There wasn't a choice. It the right thing to do.

ANDREW

We're way past "the right thing to do." You made your decision when you left the scene. As soon as you left, that first act, in that split second, that was your commitment to this secret the rest of your life.

DIANE

This one bad decision! This one mistake!

ANDREW

She's going to tell the police. She's probably with them right now.

DIANE

I have to tell Richard. My god, how am I going to explain this to him?

ANDREW

No! Absolutely not! Not now. Not until it's totally necessary.

DIANE

I can't keep these secrets anymore,  
Dad. I feel like I'm carrying  
around boulders.

ANDREW

That's your burden. Do this for  
Richard. Do it for him.

INT. SIPPILINI HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

Richard's absorbed in his writing. His desk is littered with  
open books.

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - SIMULTANEOUS

Diane's consumed in prayer. A FOREIGN PRIEST says mass.

INT. BAR - SIMULTANEOUS

Michael finds an open stool. He settles in.

INT. SIPPILINI HOME OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Richard earnestly flips through the pages of some book.

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - SIMULTANEOUS

Diane marches toward the priest for communion.

INT. BAR - SIMULTANEOUS

Michael signals for a round.

INT. SIPPILINI HOME OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Richard writes in a fury.

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - SIMULTANEOUS

FOREIGN PRIEST

The body of Christ!

DIANE

Amen.

INT. BAR. - SIMULTANEOUS

The bartender sets a glass in front of him and fills it. Michael indulges.

MICHAEL

Cheers.

INT. SIPPILINI HOME OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Richard paces. He's with his books.

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - SIMULTANEOUS

Diane returns to her seat after Communion. She watches the other parishioners knelt in prayer, communing with God. The interior of the Church inspires divinity.

INT. BAR - SIMULTANEOUS

Michael scans the bar: the neon lights, the spiked airheads, the loud losers.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM - MORNING

The PHONE RINGS. Michael shakes off sleep.

MICHAEL

Hello?

EVERETT (O.S.)

Michael, it's Everett Koch. There's an emergency. You need to get to headquarters.

EXT. SIPPILINI CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Michael hops out of a cab, barely dressed.

INT. SIPPILINI CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

The headquarters are filled with FAMILY MEMBERS and CAMPAIGN VOLUNTEERS. The mood is somber. Diane sobs in the corner. A group of women console her.

Michael spots his father.

MICHAEL

Dad, what's up? Did something happen with the campaign.

Richard is crying too. Michael knows it has to be something else.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

What? What is it? Is it grandpa?

Richard can't get the words together.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

What is it? Where's Adam?

Richard finally gets it together.

RICHARD

Adam's gone, Michael. He's gone.

MICHAEL

Gone? What are you talking about?

RICHARD

He was shot. Last night. Near Fordham, in the Bronx.

MICHAEL

What the fuck are talking about?

Richard goes to embrace his son. Michael resists. His face flickers with a thousand racing thoughts.

RICHARD

I'm sorry, Michael. I'm so sorry.

Richard embraces his son. Michael slips away.

MICHAEL

I got to go. I got to go.

He steams toward the front door. As he exits, Carmine and CARMINE'S WIFE enter.

CARMINE

Hey, Michael.

Michael brushes past him. Carmine turns to Richard.

CARMINE (CONT'D)

Should I get him?

RICHARD  
No, let him go.

Carmine hugs Richard.

CARMINE  
I'm so sorry, Richie, I came as soon as I heard. Whatever you need, I'm here. I'll get it done.

RICHARD  
I don't know how to deal with this, Carmine, this is...just the bottom of human emotion.

Carmine's wife hugs Richard.

CARMINE'S WIFE  
I'm so sorry.

She heads toward Diane in the corner of the room. Richard and Carmine are alone.

CARMINE  
Have you spoken to the police yet? Have they said anything?

RICHARD  
Yeah, but nothing in depth. They're coming back later.

CARMINE  
Do you know who did this?

RICHARD  
I think so.

CARMINE  
Good.

INT. POLICE STATION. MORNING

Virginia waits next to Detective Vella's desk. He brings her a cup of coffee.

VIRGINIA  
The reason I called last night....

DETECTIVE VELLA  
I'm sorry I wasn't able to get back to you, but I've got some pretty good news.

(MORE)

DETECTIVE VELLA (CONT'D)  
The lab report came back, and from the paint sample we took off of Amanda, we now know that the car was green.

VIRGINIA  
Green?

DETECTIVE VELLA  
Yes. And, chance of all chances, we learned that the bodega store on your corner has a surveillance camera. We reviewed the tape from the night of the accident, and we've got footage of what we think is the car, speeding away. Now, we haven't been able to pull a license plate number yet, but we know it's a 2006 dark green Mercedes, and we think the driver, despite what we've been told, is a man.

VIRGINIA  
You're sure?

DETECTIVE VELLA  
Yeah.

VIRGINIA  
So what does this mean?

DETECTIVE VELLA  
Well, I'm pretty confident that we're going to be able to track down this car. The lab is working on cleaning up the video right now, it's matter of time before we get at the very least a partial read on the license plate.

VIRGINIA  
A man?

DETECTIVE VELLA  
It seems that way.

VIRGINIA  
What about all the eye witnesses? They said it was a woman, and that it was a black car.

DETECTIVE VELLA  
It was dark. Green could look like  
black. And eye witnesses are  
sometimes unreliable.

Detective Rodriguez walks over.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ  
Good morning, Ms. Rollins.

DETECTIVE VELLA  
I was just telling Ms. Rollins  
about the developments.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ  
Good. You must be happy.

VIRGINIA  
Yes, yes I am.

Detective Rodriguez turns toward Detective Vella.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ  
Remember Mrs. Sippilini?

VIRGINIA  
Diane Sippilini?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ  
You know her?

VIRGINIA  
Well, yeah, she's a member of my  
parish.

The detectives exchange inquisitive looks.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ  
Well, her son was killed last  
night.

EXT. POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

Virginia looks plagued by guilt. As soon as she's exited the  
police station, she digs for her cell phone.

She dials. No answer.

VIRGINIA  
Shit. Pick up.

She tries again. Nothing.

INT. ST. ANNE'S LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Michael bursts into the library. Before the first bell, the students rush to complete homework, sitting around tables and pecking at keyboards.

The students take in Michael. What's up with Mr. Sippilini?

Erica has her headphones on. Michael grabs her by the arm.

MICHAEL

We need to talk.

INT. ST. ANNE'S HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Michael thrusts Erica against a wall.

ERICA

What the fuck are you doing?

MICHAEL

Did you have anything to do with my brother's death?

ERICA

What?

MICHAEL

My brother, he was killed last night, do you know anything about that?

ERICA

Oh my god! No.

MICHAEL

What about your brother? Ha, where the fuck is he? Did you tell him about us? Did he know?

ERICA

No, no. He didn't know.

MICHAEL

You're a fucking liar!

ERICA

No, he's not even in town. He went upstate.

MICHAEL

Upstate?

ERICA

Yeah, on a hunting trip. Michael, I swear, it wouldn't have been him.

MICHAEL

Of course it was him. I told him about my brother! It's some sick twisted message. Your his younger sister, Adam's my younger brother.

A SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR enters the hallway.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. Sippilini, what the hell is going on out here?

Michael ignores him. His focus is still on Erica.

MICHAEL

Where upstate? Where upstate!

Erica struggles through tears.

ERICA

In the Catskills. Melody Lake.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. Sippilini!

MICHAEL

What's the address!

Erica has broken down.

ERICA

I don't know. I don't know.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. Sippilini -

Michael turns toward him.

MICHAEL

Listen, I'm having a pretty bad day. My brother died, all right. You're going to have to give me a little fucking leeway.

INT. SIPPILINI CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

Richard and Diane sit amongst the other mourners.

Seth approaches.

SETH

The press has found out. Reporters  
are starting to call.

RICHARD

I have to tell my father.

DIANE

Let me go with you.

RICHARD

No, stay here. Everett, could you  
handle things for a while.

EVERETT

Of course.

INT. ANDREW'S APARTMENT - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Richard has already broken the news. Andrew sniffs away  
tears, gears himself for the important stuff.

ANDREW

Does Diane know?

RICHARD

Yeah, everyone's at headquarters.

ANDREW

What did she say?

RICHARD

What do you mean?

ANDREW

Richard....

He can't explain.

RICHARD

What Dad?

ANDREW

Do you have anyone in mind?

RICHARD

Yes.

ANDREW

Who?

RICHARD

I don't know. I made enemies with this Wall Street guy, but he's just the tip of the iceberg. He's got friends too.

ANDREW

Do the police know about him?

RICHARD

No, not yet. But it's pretty much common knowledge. My beef with him - it's front page news in today's *Wall Street Journal*.

ANDREW

But you haven't talked about it with the police?

RICHARD

No.

ANDREW

Good. Keep it that way. We can handle this within the family.

RICHARD

Dad, I'm about to be District Attorney. We're the first family of justice in this city, we can't just become vigilantes. We have the law.

ANDREW

I don't want the law, I want justice!

RICHARD

Dad!

ANDREW

Whoever did this, he's alive, out there - and there's still the arrest, and the trial, then what? Jail, good behavior, probation? The law isn't enough. You know that better than I do.

RICHARD

God damn-it, my son just died!

ANDREW

And my grandson! My son's son. That's a double tragedy, watching my son suffer!

Richard gets up and embraces Andrew. Andrew breaks down.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Get away! Get away.

RICHARD

What do you want, Dad, to compare broken hearts? You want justice? What, are you going to stalk the streets with pitchfork, torch, and god-damn walker!

ANDREW

I'm a detective. This is my business.

Richard calms down. What's the point of this arguing?

RICHARD

We're a family. We'll get through this together. We'll survive.

ANDREW

I'm done surviving, Richard. My whole life - the bare minimum - survival. First through the Depression, than the Second World War, than nine to five blue collar work, your mother's cancer - not just her death, but the whole cancer ordeal - the bitterness, the way it sucked the life out of her, watching her shrink away, watching her curl into a corpse. Now this. I'm done. I'm done surviving.

RICHARD

What are you saying Dad?

ANDREW

I was a detective for 15 years in this city. That was our neighborhood!

RICHARD

Dad, you can barely walk.

ANDREW

I can barely stand your cowardice! This is Adam we're talking about. Our Adam!

Richard gets up and turns to leave.

RICHARD  
We're better than this, Dad.

He's halfway out the door.

ANDREW  
Richard!

RICHARD  
Yes.

ANDREW  
Stay with me for awhile.

RICHARD  
Okay.

He retakes his seat, grabs hold of his father's hand.

INT. CHURCH RECTORY - CONTINUOUS

Virginia, a nervous wreck, is greeted by a RECEPTIONIST.

VIRGINIA  
Is Father Sippilini here?

RECEPTIONIST  
I could call his room, Ms. Rollins,  
hold on.

INT. CHURCH OFFICE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Dubini and Virginia sit across from each other.

VIRGINIA  
Father, did you know that Adam  
Sippilini was killed last night?

FATHER DUBINI  
Oh my god! When? What happened?

VIRGINIA  
I don't know. I guess it was late  
last night.

Father Dubini stands up as if he's a superhero summoned to action.

FATHER DUBINI  
Let's go to her, Virginia. Let's be  
with her.

VIRGINIA  
No, father, you don't understand.

FATHER DUBINI  
What? What is it?

VIRGINIA  
I think I know who killed him.

Dubini retakes his seat. He's figuring it out.

FATHER DUBINI  
What are you talking about?

VIRGINIA  
Yesterday, Diane told me about being at the scene of Amanda's accident. She said that a second car hit her, but that she was there and that she fled the scene. I didn't believe her. I thought she was the one. I thought she killed Amanda.

FATHER DUBINI  
Oh, Virginia.

VIRGINIA  
I was gonna go to the police last night, but, I don't know, I was so overwhelmed. I was so confused. I called my ex-husband, Daryl, in Indiana. And I told him that I knew who the killer was....

FATHER DUBINI  
Virginia, did he kill Adam? Did Daryl do it?

VIRGINIA  
I don't know. He would have had to have flown here right away, and he didn't know anything about Adam. I just told him about Diane and Richard.

FATHER DUBINI  
Have you spoken to him since?

VIRGINIA  
No, I can't get in touch with him.

FATHER DUBINI  
My god.

VIRIGINIA

You can't tell anyone! You're a priest! You have to hold on to my sins. You can't tell anyone!

INT. SIPPILINI CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

The consoling center of the room circles Diane. There's family members, friends, people associated with the campaign.

Richard and Andrew enter. Andrew immediately heads toward Diane, hugs her. She whispers into his ear.

DIANE

Do you think it was Virginia?

ANDREW

We'll find out.

Father Dubini enters the headquarters. Usually a rock of moral guidance, he's lost. He has no idea what to say, what to do. He meekly approaches Richard.

FATHER DUBINI

Richard, I've got... I don't know, I'm so very sorry about this catastrophe.

He stares at Diane talking to Andrew. What could he possibly say to her.

Among the crowd, Detectives Vella and Rodriguez awkwardly linger. Detective Vella approaches Richard.

DETECTIVE VELLA

We read the paper this morning, Mr. Sippilini.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

We're gonna drop in on Steve Friedman right after we leave here.

RICHARD

I don't know, don't you think it's a bit too obvious? He seems smarter than that.

DETECTIVE VELLA

It's certainly worth looking into it, although I think you're right. Your public battle with Friedman could have given someone else the cover they were looking for.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ  
 We know that you're still very  
 much... accepting this situation,  
 but...Can you think of anyone else  
 that we should look into? Any  
 rivals or enemies or somebody with  
 a grudge?

INT. STEVE FRIEDMAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Steve Friedman has the *Wall Street Journal* spread out on his  
 desk. He reads with anger.

STEVE  
 Cocksucker!

There's a KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
 Go away!

Detectives Vella and Rodriguez enter.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ  
 I'm sorry Mr. Friedman, I'm  
 Detective Rodriguez. This is  
 Detective Vella.

They draw shields.

DETECTIVE VELLA  
 We wanted to ask you a few  
 questions about Adam Sippilini's  
 murder.

STEVE  
 Adam Sippilini? He was murdered?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ  
 Yes, and....

STEVE  
 I'll tell you what, officers, how  
 about we just cut all this  
 bullshit... I'm a suspect, right?  
 Especially with this nonsense.

He lifts up the newspaper.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
 Let's all save some time. Strap me  
 up to a polygraph test. I've got  
 nothing to hide.

The detectives exchange surprised looks.

INT. SIPPILINI APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Diane and Andrew are on the couch in hushed conversation.

DIANE

We have to tell the police. She thinks I killed her daughter. Now my son's dead. That doesn't seem strange to you?

ANDREW

Of course it does, but the police can only complicate this. We can figure it out on our own.

DIANE

How? How could we find out?

ANDREW

I've spent my entire career doing this, Diane. Virginia is a country-bumpkin. If she plotted this out, I'm sure it wasn't a very sophisticated job.

The BUZZER sounds.

FATHER DUBINI (O.S.)

Diane, it's Father Dubini.

INT. SIPPILINI APARTMENT KITCHEN - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Carmine and Richard are dropping dishes in the sink.

CARMINE

You know, Rich, that's my neighborhood. Not much crime goes on there without me knowing about it.

RICHARD

The police are investigating. There's a lot of pressure on them.

CARMINE

Listen, a lot has changed about that neighborhood since you left, we swapped spics and niggers for most of the Italians, but one thing hasn't changed, if you're carrying around a badge, not many people are gonna wanna speak to you.

RICHARD

You sound like my father.

CARMINE

Because he knows. He knows how it is. I'm gonna have some guys look around, ask a few questions.

RICHARD

Please, Carmine, don't interfere with the police.

CARMINE

Trust me, this is way out of their league. The police can deal with the suits and the ties, I'll handle the guys on the street.

They hear the door OPEN AND CLOSE. They enter the living room.

INT. SIPPILINI APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Michael has arrived.

RICHARD

Where have you been?

Michael's already on the defensive.

MICHAEL

I don't know. Trying to deal with this.

DIANE

We've been worried about you. You should have stayed with us.

Father Dubini gets off the couch. He approaches Michael.

FATHER DUBINI

Come Michael, let's pray together.

MICHAEL

Pray?

DIANE

Yes, this is a time for God.

Michael steps away from Dubini.

MICHAEL

You know what, you guys pray, I'm just not in the mood.

RICHARD

Michael.

MICHAEL

Really, Dad? Pray? Get the fuck out of here.

RICHARD

Michael.

DIANE

What does the mean, Michael?

The BUZZER sounds.

DETECTIVE VELLA (O.S.)

It's Detectives Vella and Rodriguez.

Michael walks over to the door, buzzes them in.

DIANE

Michael, sit down and pray with us.

FATHER DUBINI

Diane, if he rather not, you can't force it on him. Whenever you're ready, Michael, we can have a talk.

MICHAEL

Whenever I'm ready? Who the fuck do you think you are!

RICHARD

Michael!

MICHAEL

Listen, I'll grieve however I want to grieve.

(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Right now, I don't feel like indulging some elaborate fantasy, I rather just be honest with myself and face the brutal truth: my brother's dead. There's no thought system that's going to change that, no fairy tale that's going to make me feel better.

There's a KNOCK at the door.

Carmine lets in the detectives.

DETECTIVE VELLA

Good evening.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Hello, everyone.

The room settles down.

RICHARD

What's up officers? Anything new?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Well, yes. We've been talking to Steve Friedman today. He volunteered for a polygraph. He passed.

DETECTIVE VELLA

That doesn't rule him out, but...I don't know, we're certainly pursuing other leads. The chief of D's wants you to know we've got our best guys on this. That we're not gonna stop until we find the murderer.

MICHAEL

Is there any evidence, any leads?

DETECTIVE VELLA

Not really. Ballistics didn't give us much. No murder weapon. No signs of struggle.

Father Dubini struggles to hide his inner torment.

MICHAEL

Where was he found?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

In an alleyway, a couple of blocks from the bar he and his friends were at. His roommate said he left with a girl - someone he had met at the bar - and then that's it - no one knows what happened?

ANDREW

The girl. She could have been in on it.

DETECTIVE VELLA

It's certainly possible.

ANDREW

Did you get a description.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

Nothing very helpful - dark hair, dark eyes. Short. Italian looking.

CARMINE

That describes every girl in the Bronx. What bar?

DETECTIVE VELLA

Searchlight. Why?

CARMINE

I own a bar down there. Richard and I grew up in that neighborhood. I still have an office there.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

An office?

Was that an insult?

CARMINE

What's that mean?

RICHARD

Detectives, what's next.

The detectives look awkwardly at each other.

DETECTIVE VELLA

Well, Mr. Sippilini, this is obviously a terrible time for your family, but you know procedure, we like to rule out the family as soon as possible.

MICHAEL

What do you mean?

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

We'd like it if you would all submit to a polygraph.

DIANE

A lie-detector test?

DETECTIVE VELLA

Yes, it's routine.

DIANE

Well, I'm not taking a lie detector test.

MICHAEL

Neither am I. No way.

DETECTIVE RODRIGUEZ

We completely understand that attitude, but we're not accusing you of anything. This is just by-the-book police work.

DIANE

I'm not doing it. I'm not gonna have anyone ask me if I killed my son. It's insulting.

RICHARD

Listen, Detectives, why don't you give us some time. We'll speak about in the morning. We're still sorting through all this. It's still very raw.

DETECTIVE VELLA

Of course. Good night.

He and Rodriguez leave.

CARMINE

No fucking respect.

ANDREW

It's their job.

CARMINE

There's just a way to go about things...

ANDREW

I'm tired. Diane, why don't you take me home?

RICHARD

Diane is in no condition to drive. Carmine, could you give my father a ride home?

CARMINE

Of course.

FATHER DUBINI

Or we could split a cab. I'll make sure he gets in all right.

Andrew gives Diane a look. They need to talk.

DIANE

No, I want to get out of this house. I need some fresh air.

CARMINE

Are you sure?

DIANE

Yeah.

INT. DIANE'S LUXURY CAR - A FEW MINUTES LATER

ANDREW

There's a spot. Park there.

Diane parks.

DIANE

I can't even mourn for my son, I'm too busy dealing with this guilt.

Andrew looks at an apartment window. The lights are on.

ANDREW

That's her apartment. She's home.

DIANE

What are you going to do? Talk to her?

ANDREW

If her ex-husband killed Adam, he might still be in New York. They might try and see each other.

The light in Virginia's apartment goes off.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Tomorrow morning, we're going to sit out here, and we're going to follow her every move.

DIANE

What about this Friedman guy?

ANDREW

Diane, who do you think killed Adam?

Diane knows Andrew is right.

INT. ERICA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Erica's room is a shrine to alternative pop culture. She's sitting on her bed, her cell phone in hand. She's summoning the courage to make the phone call. She dials.

DANNY (O.S.)

Erica, what's up?

ERICA

Hey. Nothing too special.

DANNY (O.S.)

What's the matter? You sound upset.

ERICA

Danny, did you know my teacher, Mr. Sippilini, his younger brother was killed.

DANNY (O.S.)

Really?

ERICA

Yeah, last night. He was shot.

DANNY (O.S.)

Fucking crazy.

ERICA

Do you know anything about it?

DANNY (O.S.)

What you mean?

ERICA

Danny, did you kill him?

DANNY (O.S.)

Go fuck yourself, Erica, I don't  
have time for this shit.

Click.

Erica is now even more uncertain.

INT. FUNERAL PARLOR OFFICE - MORNING

Richard and Michael look through a catalogue of caskets. The  
UNDERTAKER patiently sits behind a desk across from them.

MICHAEL

I don't know. I have no opinion on  
this. I'm not sure what matters.

Richard agrees with his son.

RICHARD

This is one of the most absurd  
things I have ever had to do. Pick  
out at coffin - for my son.

The undertaker gets up.

UNDERTAKER

Let me give you some privacy. I'll  
be right outside.

He leaves the office.

Father and son flip through the book.

RICHARD

There's a Yankee coffin.

MICHAEL

That's pretty die-hard.

They almost chuckle.

RICHARD

You're mother wouldn't allow it.  
(Beat) It distresses her...that  
you've lost your faith. You might  
want to be a bit more...tolerant  
through this whole process.

MICHAEL

You're right. Whatever helps heal  
for her.

RICHARD

Keep an open mind, it might be  
healing for you too.

Michael accepts the fatherly advice.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

What about this one?

MICHAEL

That's a semester in college.

They continue to search.

RICHARD

I can't help but feel that I'm  
somehow responsible for this. When  
I found out he died - right away,  
it felt like a punishment.

The words sting Michael.

MICHAEL

You think it could be this Friedman  
guy?

RICHARD

Sure. Or someone else. I'm a  
criminal defense lawyer - there's a  
lot of violent people who are upset  
with me.

MICHAEL

If it's someone sending a message,  
don't you think they'd want you to  
know who is was from? Revenge is  
rarely anonymous - that's the whole  
point - that personal vindication.

RICHARD

Maybe we'll find out.

EXT. ANDREW'S/VIRGINIA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Diane and Andrew sit in their car, staking out the apartment.

ANDREW

Has Richard said anything about the  
campaign?

DIANE

No. For now, everything else is just completely irrelevant.

Virginia exits her apartment building.

DIANE (CONT'D)

What if she's headed to the subway?

Nevermind. She hails a cab.

ANDREW

Follow her.

INT. DIANE'S LUXURY CAR - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Diane and Andrew watch as Virginia's cab pulls up in front of the Sippilinis' apartment building.

DIANE

She's coming to see me. What should we do?

ANDREW

Circle the block. Let's wait for her to come out.

There's a KNOCK ON THE WINDOW. It's Richard and Michael. Diane rolls down the window.

RICHARD

What are you guys doing out here?

DIANE

We just came back from Church.

RICHARD

Well, pull into the lot. Everett is coming over. I want you to be there when I speak to him.

DIANE

Okay.

Andrew gives a disapproving frown.

INT. SIPPILINI APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Diane and Andrew enter. Richard and Everett sit in the living room. On the table, there's a stack of mail. On top an envelope - no stamp, no return address. Just "Diane." Diane retrieves it.

RICHARD

Diane, Dad, please, sit down.

They find seats.

EVERETT

Obviously our hearts and minds are dealing with Adam's death, but, I'm afraid I'm going to have to be the first one to ask about the campaign.

DIANE

What about the campaign?

EVERETT

Does it go on?

He looks toward Richard. Diane and Andrew also turn their attention to Richard. He works his hands over his face.

DIANE

Richard.

EVERETT

We don't need to make this decision right now. We just have to think about it, or at least consider thinking about it.

RICHARD

No, no. The campaign goes on.

Diane winces.

DIANE

Richard, maybe we should spend sometime thinking about this - maybe

RICHARD

Diane, please. The next week at least, no campaigning. But we stay in the election. My names going to be on the ballot. If it feels wrong, if I don't want to do it, then I could always withdraw after the election. But there's no reason to take the option off the table. We're already gone this far.

Diane storms out.

INT. SIPPILINI APARTMENT KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

She brings her breathing back to normal. She tears open the letter.

Andrew walks into the kitchen.

ANDREW

What does it say?

DIANE

"Diane - I'm so sorry. I now believe you about Amanda. The police are looking for another car. You're in my thoughts and prayers. Sorry that I can't be there with you. Virginia."

ANDREW

"I'm so sorry?" About what?

DIANE

Dad, I don't know.

ANDREW

That's the whole point. I don't know either, and I want to.

INT. POLICE STATION INTERROGATION ROOM - AFTERNOON

Michael is strapped to a polygraph. A POLICE EMPLOYEE reads questions.

QUESTIONER

Did you kill your brother?

MICHAEL

No.

QUESTIONER

Did you participate in a conspiracy to kill your brother?

MICHAEL

No.

QUESTIONER

Do you know who killed your brother?

MICHAEL

No.

INT. POLICE STATION - DETECTIVE'S DESKS - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Michael sits next to Detective Vella's desk. Vella is not really paying attention to Michael. He's looking on his desk for something.

MICHAEL

How'd I do on the test.

DETECTIVE VELLA

Ah, I can't tell you, yet.

MICHAEL

Why not?

DETECTIVE VELLA

It's just procedure. But, don't you know whether or not you passed the test?

MICHAEL

I get nervous.

Detective Vella has found what he's looking for. It's a sheet of paper.

DETECTIVE VELLA

Here, this is a list of all the people who opened tabs at the bar your brother was at before he was killed. Do you recognize any names?

Michael scans the list. He stops on DANIEL CURTIS. Erica's brother!

MICHAEL

Danny Curtis.

DETECTIVE VELLA

You know him?

MICHAEL

No, I was just saying it out loud to see if I recognized it.

DETECTIVE VELLA

Yeah, I looked into him already. He's a Con-Ed guy. He was with a group of coworkers.

He was there. That's all the proof Michael needs now.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY. DAY

Diane knocks on the door. It opens. It's Virginia's apartment.

VIRGINIA

Diane -

DIANE

Virginia, I got your note. I was just dropping in on my father-in-law, I figure I'd stop by. Do you mind if I come in?

VIRGINIA

Oh no, of course.

Virginia leads her inside. The house is being packed away.

DIANE

You've decided to move?

VIRGINIA

Yeah, I'm headed back home.

DIANE

To your parents?

VIRGINIA

To Indiana.

Maybe back with Daryl?

They settle around the kitchen table.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)

Do you want some coffee?

DIANE

No, really I just wanted to say hello. To thank you for your note.

VIRGINIA

Yeah, Diane, I don't really know what to say...

DIANE

I made a mistake when I didn't stay at the scene.

VIRGINIA

The police sound optimistic about finding the guy.

The PHONE RINGS. Virginia gets up and answers it.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)  
Yes, hello. Yes, this is her.

Diane scans the apartment. Up on the wall there's a cork board. Pinned to it is an address: 550 Pelham Parkway South. PELHAM PARKWAY INN. Room 16.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)  
No, I can't talk now. Good-bye.

She hangs up. Suspicious.

INT. ANDREW'S APARTMENT - MINUTES LATER

Andrew is in his bedroom. He reaches for a box underneath his bed. Inside, his old police revolver and another gun.

There's a KNOCK at the door.

DIANE (O.S.)  
Dad, open up. It's me.

Andrew puts away the box.

DIANE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Dad, come on.

Andrew struggles to the door.

ANDREW  
Diane, what is it?

DIANE  
Her ex-husband, Daryl. I think he's in the city. There was an address written down in her apartment. 550 Pelham Parway South. Pelhamway Parkway Inn. Room 16.

ANDREW  
That's a mile or two from the crime scene.

DIANE  
And she was packing. She was headed out of town.

ANDREW  
This leaves no doubt.

INT. FUNERAL PARLOR - NIGHT

Adam's wake. Big flowers. Bright pictures. Mourners in black.

Michael and Richard stand near the coffin. Diane is seated. People line up to console them. Between shaking hands, Richard and Michael speak.

MICHAEL

I don't think I could be here tomorrow. This is an exhausting role.

RICHARD

It's not a problem. Do what comforts you.

It's Carmine's turn in line.

CARMINE

Hey, Richie. Michael.

He hugs them both.

CARMINE (CONT'D)

Listen, when you get a chance, I need a word with you.

He steps away.

TODD, a high school teacher, approaches the Sippilini men.

MICHAEL

Dad, this is my friend from St. Anne's.

TODD

I'm so sorry for your loss, Mr. Sippilini.

RICHARD

Thank you.

TODD

Mike, if there's anything I can do. Please, let me know.

MICHAEL

Actually, do you think I can borrow your car.

EXT. FUNERAL PARLOR - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Carmine and Richard walk to the corner.

CARMINE

What have the police said?

RICHARD

Nothing specific. They're exploring all leads.

CARMINE

Well, they're wasting their time.

RICHARD

What do you mean?

CARMINE

We found the guy.

RICHARD

What?

CARMINE

It's some nigger junkie. Fred Banister.

RICHARD

How do you know?

CARMINE

Word got around. He sold an iPod to a pawn broker. He spends his time at this piece of shit apartment. A crack den. My guys went down there, looked around a bit - Adam's wallet was there.

RICHARD

His wallet?

Carmine reaches into his breast pocket and produces Adam's wallet.

CARMINE

Here.

It's all the proof Richard needs.

RICHARD

Where is this guy?

CARMINE

You want an address? Or do you want me to take care of it?

RICHARD

No, I don't know. Fred Banister.

CARMINE

The guys a zip. He's the easiest person in the world to whack off. No one will even know he's gone, certainly not the police.

RICHARD

So it was just a mugging? It was random.

CARMINE

Wrong place, wrong time.

RICHARD

Fuck! Fuck!

Carmine grabs hold of him.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

What's the address?

INT. ANDREW'S BEDROOM - DAWN

Andrew gets dressed. He puts on a suit and tie, checks himself in the mirror - that looks like Detective Sippilini, two decades on the job.

He retrieves the gun from underneath his bed. He opens his end table. There's his badge.

INT. SIPPILINI APARTMENT BATHROOM - MORNING

Richard's in the shower. Steam floats off the hot water.

INT. SIPPILINI APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Diane's wrapped up in a blanket. The TV's on. It's the morning news. TV REPORTER.

TV REPORTER

Two days after the murderer of his twenty year-old son, Richard Sippilini, democratic nominee for Manhattan District Attorney, has announced he will stay in the race. Mr. Sippilini is leading his Republican opponent by a significant margin ....

Diane snaps off the TV.

EXT. SIPPILINI CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - MORNING

Everett deals with the press.

EVERETT

First and foremost, the Sippilini family would like to thank the outpouring of support and sympathy in the wake of Adam's death, and requests that they been given a few days of privacy during the difficult grieving process.

A REPORTER 1 shouts out his question.

REPORTER 1

Mr. Koch, are the police looking into Steve Friedman as a possible suspect?

EVERETT

I'm in no position to comment on the investigation. You'll have to ask the police.

REPORTER 2's turn.

REPORTER 2

What about Carmine Corsetti? Are the police looking into a possible mob connection.

EVERETT

Again, I'm in no position to comment on police matters, except to say if you asked Richard Sippilini that question he'd be deeply offended. There's no mob connection. That's a complete media concoction with no basis or substance.

INT. DINER - MORNING

Reviving his old routine, Andrew dunks a donut in his coffee.

INT. SUBWAY - MORNING

Richard Sippilini is dressed to blend in. He doesn't feel comfortable. All these anonymous faces could be his son's killer.

EXT. ANDREW'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Michael BUZZES his grandfather's apartment. No answer. He's got a key.

INT. ANDREW'S APARTMENT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Michael let's himself in.

MICHAEL

Grandpa?

Nothing.

Michael makes his way to the bedroom. He knows about the box too. He removes it from under the bed, opens it. Wasn't there two guns? Whatever, one is enough. He takes it.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

A PARKING LOT ATTENDANT sips coffee. He smiles with recognition when Andrew enters the lot.

ATTENDANT

Mr. Sippilini. It's been a long time.

ANDREW

Well, I want to go for a ride today.

INT. BORROWED CAR - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Michael is headed upstate.

EXT. BRONX SUBWAY ENTRANCE - DAY

Richard climbs onto the dirty pavement. He looks around. There it is - "Spotlight," Carmine's bar.

INT. SPOTLIGHT - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Richard uneasily walks in.

Carmine is seated at the bar. TWO GOONS are behind the counter. Carmine motions for them to leave. They do.

CARMINE

Sit down.

Richard sits next to Carmine.

CARMINE (CONT'D)

We could do this for you. It's not a problem. This is what I do for living. And you know I consider Adam family.

RICHARD

I think this is something I should do.

CARMINE

Whatever you want.

He reaches for a sack on the table. Hands it to Richard. Richard looks inside - it's a gun.

CARMINE (CONT'D)

That's a throwaway. Leave it at the scene. Can't get fingerprints, totally untraceable. And there's a silencer too, just for the precaution if you want it.

RICHARD

Is there anyway....I should go about this?

Carmine chuckles.

CARMINE

Make sure no one is looking, but otherwise, it's pretty simple. It's not that hard to kill a man. It's just a finger movement.

Carmine reaches into his sport jacket's pocket. It's a picture of FRED BANISTER, a mug shot. Here's a stoned out junkie with wild, homeless hair. This man can barely be called a man.

RICHARD

This was the piece of shit who  
killed my son.

INT. SIPPILINI APARTMENT KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Diane is looking at list of Biblical citations that Father Dubini provided. She references her bible, trying to find the right reading for the funeral. She cries.

EXT. BRUCKNER EXPRESSWAY - AFTERNOON

Andrew is headed to the Bronx. Leather gloves on the passenger seat.

EXT. NYS THRUWAY - AFTERNOON

Michael's getting off the Monticello exit.

EXT. BRONX BACK ALLEY - AFTERNOON

Richard looks at the address written on the back of a business card. He glances at the picture, and puts them both in his pocket.

EXT. PELHAM PARKWAY MOTEL - AFTERNOON

Andrew's reached the motel. He pulls into the lot. He glances in the office. A TEEN ATTENDANT isn't paying attention, watching TV. He glances at room 16.

EXT. ROAD IN THE WOODS - AFTERNOON

Michael turns off the main road and onto an unpaved path. There's a cabin in the distance.

EXT. BRONX BACK ALLEY - AFTERNOON

Richard's arrived at the building. The front door is open. Graffiti everywhere. He walks in, heads up the steps.

EXT. ROAD IN THE WOODS - AFTERNOON

Michael parks his car. He puts the gun in his jacket pocket, and proceeds cautiously out of the car. He creeps toward the lone house, twenty yards in the distance, taking cover in the thick brush. Danny must have heard the car. He comes outside with a shotgun, but more as an ornament than a threat.

DANNY

Hello? Who is that?

Michael heads for the back of the house.

EXT. PELHAM PARKWAY MOTEL - AFTERNOON

Andrew knocks on room 16.

DARYL (O.S.)

Who is it?

Andrew takes out his badge.

ANDREW

The police. Open up.

Daryl cracks open the door. His face looks beaten and his skin leathery and worn, like an old catcher's mitt. He's a full-out nobody.

DARYL

What is it?

ANDREW

It's about the investigation of your daughter's death.

Daryl opens the door fully. He's wearing only briefs.

DARYL

How's you know about my daughter?  
Who told you I was here?

ANDREW

Your ex-wife did. I just want to ask you a few questions.

DARYL

Stupid bitch. I told her not to say anything about me.

He turns around and walks into the room. Andrew follows.

EXT. DANNY'S HUNTING CABIN - AFTERNOON

Michael is creeping around the house. Danny walks toward the car, his back to Michael. Michael runs up to him from behind, puts a gun to his head.

MICHAEL

Drop the gun.

INT. RUNDOWN APARTMENT BUILDING HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

Richard has reached Fred's apartment. The door is ajar. He pushes it open, gun drawn, and walks in.

INT. DARYL'S MOTEL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Daryl sits on the bed. Empty bottles of liquor litter the room. Daryl lights a cigarette.

DARYL

So what do you want to know?

ANDREW

Do you know Diane Sippilini?

DARYL

You mean that cunt that killed my daughter? Virginia told me about it. That bitch got what was coming to her.

ANDREW

What do you mean?

DARYL

Her fucking son. Adam, died right up the road.

Daryl smiles wickedly.

Andrew takes out the gun with silencer from his trench coat pocket and shoots Daryl twice in the head. Andrew throws the gun on the bed.

EXT. DANNY'S HUNTING CABIN - AFTERNOON

With a gun at the back of his head, Danny turns around slowly.

MICHAEL

Drop the gun. Drop the fucking gun!

DANNY  
Michael Sippilini.

MICHAEL  
Cocksucker, shut the fuck up and  
put down the weapon

DANNY  
Is this about your brother?

Michael strikes Danny with the gun. Danny falls to the floor, loses hold of his weapon. Michael kicks it away, and mounts Danny. He shoves his gun in his face. Wait - Danny has a knife! He pulls it from his belt and stabs Michael in the side.

MICHAEL  
Fuck!

Danny stabs him again. Michael falls off him. Danny reaches for the shotgun. BOOM!

Michael pulls the trigger. He shoots again and again. Danny is dead. Michael struggles to his feet and makes off toward the car.

INT. BANISTER'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Banister's apartment is overflowing with garbage, but everything seems still. Richard proceeds with caution. All of a sudden, movement. Richard points his gun. It's a LITTLE GIRL. Fred Banister follows behind her. He shrinks away when he sees the gun.

FRED  
Yo, fuck.

Richard charges after him, pulls him away from his daughter, and hits him in the face with the gun. Fred falls to the ground. The girl screams. Richard gets on top, rage in his face.

RICHARD  
You killed my son! You killed my  
son!

FRED  
What the fuck?

RICHARD  
Adam Sippilini! You killed my son!

FRED

What! Stop it man! Put down the gun. Take it easy.

Richard produces his son's wallet from his jacket. He shoves Adam's ID in Fred's face.

RICHARD

My son! Adam. Look!

FRED

I'm sorry. I'm fucking high. I'm sorry. I don't know anything.

Richard's fury comes to a boil. He punches Fred. Blood is on both of them. He spins Fred around, and pulls a pair of handcuffs from his pocket. He handcuffs him.

RICHARD

You're going to jail, you piece of shit.

He pulls Fred up, and leads him out of the apartment with gun to his head.

FRED

Okay, okay. Don't shoot me. I'm sorry man, I'm sorry.

EXT. PELHAM PARKWAY MOTEL - AFTERNOON

Andrew turns to leave the motel room. Just as he does, A HOUSEKEEPER steers her wagon into the room. She sees the dead body. She screams.

HOUSEKEEPER

Oh my god! Oh my god.

Andrew grabs hold of her and leads her to the bathroom. He shoves her in the bathroom and shuts the door.

ANDREW

Stay in there for half an hour. If you try to come out, I'm going to shoot you.

INT. BORROWED CAR - AFTERNOON

Michael rips into his car and throws the gun on the passenger seat. In a panic, he puts the car in reverse and speeds away from the scene. He pulls onto the main road and BOOM! a car hits his.

EXT. MAIN COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Michael's car is crushed.

INT. BORROWED CAR - CONTINUOUS

Michael is barely conscious. He realizes he's been caught.

EXT. SHADY STREET - AFTERNOON

Richard pushes Fred onto the main street. PEDESTRIANS don't know how to react to the scene.

RICHARD

I'm arresting this man! This man is under arrest.

A POLICE CRUISER pulls up. TWO UNIFORMED OFFICERS jump out, gun drawn.

UNIFORMED OFFICER

Sir, put down the gun.

Richard puts his hands up and lets the gun fall. The police move in quickly to handcuff him. Richard resists.

RICHARD

Don't handcuff me. This man killed my son. I'm putting him under arrest.

They succeed in handcuffing him.

UNIFORMED OFFICER

We'll sort it out at the police station, sir.

INT. ANDREW'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Andrew is out the door. Responding to the housekeeper's scream, several MOTEL GUESTS are standing in their doorways, staring at Andrew. The ATTENDANT walks toward him.

ATTENDANT

Excuse me, is everything ok?

Andrew gets in his car.

ATTENDANT (CONT'D)

Hey, wait!

Andrew turns on the car.

MOTEL GUEST  
We heard screaming.

ATTENDANT  
I'm going to call the police.

MOTEL GUEST  
Get his license plate.

EXT. MICHAEL'S CRASH SCENE - DAY

Paramedics arrive at the scene. Michael is covered in blood.  
He looks toward Danny's house.

INT. POLICE STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM

DETECTIVES 3 and 4 bare down on Richard.

DETECTIVE 3  
Mr. Sippilini, why don't you start  
us off at the beginning. What  
happened?

RICHARD  
My son was killed...

INT. CHURCH RECTORY - AFTERNOON

Diane is talking about the funeral arrangements with Father  
Dubini.

FATHER DUBINI  
Will there be a eulogist?

Diane is fighting away tears.

DIANE  
Maybe Michael. He's the writer in  
the family. Maybe he'll want to say  
something about his brother.

FATHER DUBINI  
That would be nice.

DIANE  
Or maybe Richard, he's such a good  
public speaker.

Diane is crying.

DIANE (CONT'D)  
Father -

FATHER DUBINI  
Yes Diane?

DIANE  
I have a confession to make.

FADE OUT

"STILLWATER"

CREDITS