

THE AMERICAN WAY

by
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INT. OAKLEY HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY (1918)

YOUNG BILL OAKLEY, 12 stands in a kitchen corner. Completely motionless, eyes down. Only sound a DRIPPING FAUCET.

YOUNG BILL'S POV: His MOTHER'S manicured hand twitches by his feet. Nails soaked in a puddle of blood.

A MAN'S HAND enters FRAME, pats Young Bill's cheek. He flinches. Keeps staring at the floor. The owner of the hand walks away. We hear a back door OPEN and footsteps RETREAT.

Young Bill releases his held-in breath. Gasps. Shakes like a leaf. Starts to cry, still terrified. Looks up, sees

The back door at the rear of the kitchen, wide open. Footprints are visible in the dirt outside, extending towards woods in the distance.

ANOTHER DOOR OPENS O.S. Young Bill looks over and sees

The FRONT DOOR of the house. YOUNG JOHN OAKLEY, 10, enters with his bike. The tire catches on an overturned coat rack. Young John looks down. Sees the body of his half-sister, BETSY, 4, buried beneath the coat rack. Her dress singed from a muzzle blast.

The bike CLATTERS to the floor. Young John, stunned, looks up to see what is only now revealed to us:

The HALLWAY leading from the front door to the kitchen. Betsy at John's feet. Their FATHER, sprawled halfway down the hall, back-of-head bullet wound. His blood spattered on a framed family photo on the wall -- Young John, Young Bill, Mother, Father, Betsy, all smiling. On the kitchen floor: Mother's body, her hand twitching at Young Bill's feet.

Young John finally makes eye contact with Young Bill. Stares at him. An odd, accusatory expression. Not frightened like Young Bill. Angry. As if Young Bill's at fault for this. Young Bill doesn't respond.

Young John turns. Walks out the door like a kid who's been sent to stand in the corner for punishment.

Young Bill pauses a moment, then follows.

EXT. OAKLEY HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - MOMENTS LATER

Young Bill steps onto the front porch of what is now revealed to be a large, two-story turn-of-the-century upstate New York home. Peaceful, green, circled by forest. He sees

Young John sitting on a swing, the lone piece of decoration on the vast lawn. Arms wrapped around himself in a bear hug, rocking back and forth. SINGING A SONG to himself.

Young Bill watches. His eyes unreadable. SUPER IN: "1918".

CLOSE ON YOUNG JOHN'S FACE. Rocking back and forth, SINGING - and we abruptly

MATCH CUT TO:

ELLIOT OAKLEY, 7. SINGING in a CHURCH CHOIR.

BACK TO BILL. Still watching. Eyes still unreadable. Face twenty years older. Young no longer. SUPER IN: "1938".

Elliott looks into the crowded church pews. Spots Bill and his mother, MARIE, early 30s. Bill nods -- good job. Elliott smiles.

A man in a rumpled suit, CARROLL, 30s, squeezes his way into the pew behind Bill. Nudges Bill's shoulder, whispers. They start talking intently. Marie watches them, disapproving.

The choir finishes. Bill doesn't notice. Marie elbows him. He APPLAUDS along with the other PARISHIONERS.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY (1938)

A healthy crowd files out of the church, somewhere in 1930s Manhattan. Bill, Marie and Elliott make their way to the sidewalk, where Carroll waits by a radio-patrol car. Bill turns to Marie, leans in for a kiss. She turns her head, offering her cheek.

Bill sighs, ruffles Elliott's hair, then hurries into the back seat of the car with Carroll.

INT. RADIO-PATROL CAR - CONTINUOUS

CARROLL

Marie didn't look happy.

BILL

Kidding? You had your back turned, she was naked, doing cartwheels.

He taps the driver's seat -- the car takes off. Bill looks out the window at STRIKING FACTORY WORKERS along the street. Waving UNITED FACTORY WORKER signs decorated with Socialist and Communist slogans.

PEARCY (V.O.)
 The FBI does not consider the mob a
 true menace, we are told.

INT. FEDERAL OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

CU -- A B&W murder photo, its victim with a bullet in the
 head. The photo is flipped to another one -- this victim
 with an axe to the back. Another -- acid-washed to a crisp.

PEARCY (O.S.)
 Good old J. Edgar Hoover is more
 concerned with real threats.

The FEDERAL AGENT glancing through the photos YAWNS. A
 mirror image of the ten or fifteen other AGENTS in the room,
 all perusing similar photos. Including Bill and Carroll.

PEARCY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Subversives...bunny rabbits...

Snickers. Up front, PEARCY, 50s, short, wire-rim glasses,
 taps a chalkboard with a sawed-off pool cue (more "manly"
 than a ruler.) In a rat-a-tat voice bigger than his body:

PEARCY (CONT'D)
 But we know better, gents. We damn
 well know better.

INT. PRISON - ADMITTANCE DESK - DAY

Bill and Carroll sign their names in a ledger, then empty
 their pockets, handing badges and guns to a DESK GUARD.

PEARCY (V.O.)
 And personally, I'd say...
 (in a fey lisp)
 ...Mith-tah Hoov-ah needs to change
 out of his fucking skirt.
 (more chuckles)
 Every death you see is "officially"
 unsolved, and every one, we know,
 is the work of the same group.

INT. FEDERAL OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Pearcy draws his cue along a line-up of photographs taped to
 the chalkboard. Mug shots and photos of GANGSTERS. All
 fairly dapper. All hard as nails.

PEARCY
 The Combination. Spawn of Lepke
 Buchalter. Murder, Incorporated.

INT. PRISON - CELLBLOCK HALLWAY - DAY

Bill and Carroll walk down a long, dank hallway lined with cells. Bill scans the faces of the PRISONERS pressed against their bars. His eyes betray no sympathy.

PEARCY (V.O.)
 Every reason Lady Liberty shoulda
 kept her legs crossed. Herbie
 Eckstein, Dead-Eye Tannenbaum,
 Pittsburgh Phil Strauss, so on and
 such. Killers in our own backyard,
 on call for any hit, nationwide.
 They have better health benefits
 than us. Because make no mistake,
 gentlemen, this is a union.
 (grumbling round the room)
 Gossip spilled back to our Nyall
 bank job informant. It seems Bad
 Guy Central is raising its sights.

INT. FEDERAL OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Pearcy moves his cue to another, larger photo.

PEARCY
 Gordon Gance, I believe you know.

CARROLL
 Why do they want to kill a senator?

PEARCY
 Why is irrelevant. What is
 relevant is the who, the where, the
 when, none of which we know.

RANDOM AGENT
 Can't our informant find out the
 particulars?

PEARCY
 He ran into a setback. See the
 snap with the creative use of hedge
 trimmers.

The Random Agent finds the photo in question, WHISTLES.

PEARCY (CONT'D)

No one knows their inner workings.
It's clandestine like the Girl
Scouts and almost as mean.

Laughter all around.

INT. PRISON - VISITOR'S ROOM - DAY

Cleared of everybody but Bill, sitting at a bare metal table, matchbox and cigarette in hand. He looks at Carroll, standing in the hallway outside, smoking. Looks down. Sees the matchsticks he keeps nervously removing from the matchbox. All snapped in two and sprinkled on the table.

PEARCY (V.O.)

If a senator dies, Hoover's career may die with him. So to prevent our glorious leader from looking like his priorities are up his ass, along with anything else we'll refrain from speculating on...

INT. FEDERAL OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Laughter from the agents. Not from Bill.

PEARCY

...we need to keep these fuckers from pulling off any front-page exploits. Questions?

RANDOM AGENT

...We need a guy on the inside?

PEARCY

Fred! Glad you made it! Question: whose retard cousin you fuck to get your G-man badge?

(Random Agent shrinks)

These are hard-ass Jews, kiddies. They don't break bread with law-abiding citizens of any stripe.

ANOTHER AGENT

Can't we warn Gance?

PEARCY

His rep is based on not fearing the mob. He won't hide or accept protection, meaning we have to save the day alone. Boo-hoo.

CARROLL

So how do we get in? Considering
we can't get in?

PEARCY

We've found a weak link. Which is,
irony of ironies, the toughest link
in the fucking chain.

Pearcy pulls down the photo of Gance, revealing a new photo.
A chisel-cheeked, fiery-eyed man, 50s.

Bill slowly rises in his seat as he stares at the image.

PEARCY (CONT'D)

Charlie Cohen. The tippy-top,
erupting fucking peak of Vesuvius.

INT. PRISON - VISITOR'S ROOM - DAY

Bill straightens his back as a door is opened behind him. A
PRISONER in cuffs is led to the chair opposite him and seated
by a GUARD. His head down. We don't see his face.

PEARCY (V.O.)

Suspect in thirty-seven murders,
probably involved in sixty more,
arrested for none. No biographical
data on record, but he's the only
member with no family. Solitude
equals vulnerability.

INT. FEDERAL OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

PEARCY

We need someone to get close, find
out what he knows...

As Pearcy continues talking, Bill stares at Cohen's photo
with an unblinking focus. CLOSE ON HIS FACE...SOUND FADES TO
A LOW MUFFLE, REPLACED BY YOUNG JOHN'S SINGING...and we

MATCH CUT TO:

YOUNG BILL'S FACE. Staring at his mother's body. Glancing
at the EYES of the man standing above him. Trying not to
tremble as the man PATS HIS CHEEK...which suddenly shifts

BACK TO:

Carroll FLICKING Bill's cheek. Bill snaps to as Pearcy raps
his pool cue on the floor with a CRACK.

PEARCY (CONT'D)

This op is as deep as deep gets. Hoover won't approve anti-mob action for reasons known only to him. I say again: We Know Better. Thus, he will not know this op exists, unless we succeed. But rest assured, if we preempt him from public embarrassment, it should scare him into letting us pursue gangsters for a change instead of wasting our time on Commies. And I, for one, would like to see that happen. I want a shot at the real enemy.

(nods, murmurs of assent)

Nail them to the wall, gents. Hoover will be grateful, as will I.

RANDOM AGENT

How grateful?

PEARCY

An immediate promotion, for one. And a corner office.

ANOTHER AGENT

A private office?

PEARCY

You want a miracle, call Santa Claus or his brother the Pope. C'mon, I know there's a few recovering do-gooders in this department. Who wants it?

A long pause. No takers. Then...

BILL

Sir.

Everyone looks to Bill. Dismissive glances.

PEARCY

No family men, Oakley. Grieving widows creep me out.

BILL

I wasn't volunteering myself, sir.

PEARCY

So why are you talking?

BILL
 ...I know of an ideal candidate.

PEARCY
 Oh. Well, then. Who's the lucky
 fucker?

INT. PRISON - VISITOR'S ROOM - DAY

Bill clears his throat. To the Guard:

BILL
 You can go now.

The Guard exits. Only now does the prisoner look up -- IT'S
 JOHN. Cheek scarred. Battered by life. BEAT.

BILL (CONT'D)
 You look thin. I hear they starve
 the men in solitary. Is that true?
 (no response)
 I have a proposition for you.

JOHN
 Go fuck yourself.

INT. PRISON - HALLWAY OUTSIDE VISITING ROOM - THAT MOMENT

Carroll and the Guard smoke cigarettes as they watch John and
 Bill interact. John becoming more heated; Bill keeping cool.

GUARD
 Your friend's aggravating Johnny
 there, looks like.

CARROLL
 Big brothers usually do.

INT. PRISON - VISITOR'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

BILL
 Can I speak?

JOHN
 Fuck you.

BILL
 Fine. May I speak?

JOHN

May I respond, fuck you. And when you're done, make a note to remind you to continue fucking yourself.

(yells to Guard)

Throw me back in the hole, please.

BILL

I came here to make a simple --

JOHN

Proposition, yeah, I heard. Bill? Fuck your proposition. Truly.

BILL

How'd you like your sentence commuted and a clean record?

(without pause, to entering Guard)

Get out.

The Guard backs out, intimidated. John doesn't say a word.

BILL (CONT'D)

Remember Black Diamond? That buffalo they had at the Bronx Zoo when we were kids? They have Son of the Black Diamond now. I was taking my boy to see it today. But I let him down so I could talk shop with you. And the shop we're talking is not buffalo, Yanks crushing Cubs, or our family tragedies. Those are discussions for free men. So fuck yourself...

(mildly)

...brother.

A long pause. John taking stock.

JOHN

The Yanks are crushing the Cubs?

BILL

Sure. Don't you get radio in here?

(pause)

I need you to do something. Do it, you're free. No debate, no discussion. Interested?

INT. PRISON - HALLWAY OUTSIDE VISITING ROOM - THAT MOMENT

Carroll watches intently as Bill talks.

CARROLL (V.O.)
Are you out of your mind?

EXT. STEPS OUTSIDE FEDERAL BUILDING - DAY

Carroll nearly stumbles down the steps. Bill watching him.

BILL
Lunacy and genius are close
cousins, pal. We pull this off?

INT. PEARCY'S OFFICE - DAY

Bill pitches Percy on his plan. Percy seems receptive. Carroll hangs at the edge of the room, dubious.

BILL (V.O.)
Hoover'll worship the ground below
us. This is bigger than our own
office. Maybe "our own squad" big.

CARROLL (V.O.)
Yeah, but...Jesus, Bill...

EXT. SIDEWALK OUTSIDE FEDERAL BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

CARROLL
...What you just told me --

BILL
That does not get repeated, ever.

CARROLL
...Look, they never had a suspect,
right? Are you sure this --

BILL
It's him. It's him. That face...

FLASH ON:

The PHOTO of Cohen...Bill staring at it long and hard...

The EYES of his family's killer, identical to Cohen's,
unblinking...the hand patting Young Bill's cheek...

BILL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I've dreamed about that face for
years, Don.

BACK TO:

EXT. SIDEWALK OUTSIDE FEDERAL BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

BILL
I know that face. I know it.

CARROLL
(considers, accepts, nods)
All right, then, Ahab. You got
your whale.

INT. PRISON - VISITOR'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bill is finishing his spiel. John sits, stone-faced.

BILL
Your prison records will be
doctored to match your cover. They
know what we want them to know.

JOHN
And that's it? I keep your senator
alive, and I can walk?
(Bill nods, barely)
This guy I get in bed with, this
Cohen. What's his story?

BILL
...Like I said. No debate, no
discussion.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET - DAY

Bill and Carroll walk along a crowded Manhattan street. Bill
taking pains to dodge trash and BUMS strewn on the sidewalk.

CARROLL
You don't think maybe he has a
right to know? Cohen did a number
on his life, too.

INT. PRISON - VISITOR'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bill waits. John sits. Considering.

BILL (V.O.)
Our job's to keep Gance breathing.
Payback for me and mine is gravy,
not first priority.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

BILL

I doubt John would act rationally
if he were up to speed, and I
doubly doubt he hands us our case
if he gets himself or Cohen killed.
Saving Gance, that's our mandate.

CARROLL

So he doesn't need to know...

BILL

Until he needs to know.
(Carroll nods)
Besides, he doesn't blame Cohen for
ruining his life. He blames me.

INT. BILL'S HOUSE - ELLIOTT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Marie strokes Elliott's hair as he sleeps.

BILL (V.O.)

And as long as he blames me...

From the door, Bill watches Marie stroke Elliott's cheek...

QUICK FLASH of the hand patting Young Bill's cheek...

INT. PRISON - VISITOR'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

John notices Bill snapping matches. Bill stops.

BILL (V.O.)

...I know exactly where we stand.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Bill keeps moving. Conviction in his eyes.

BILL

So let's keep it that way.

INT. PRISON - VISITOR'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

John and Bill. Watching each other across the table.

John reaches over, hands cuffed, and takes the last, unbroken
match. He strikes it on the table. Looks at Bill.

BILL (V.O.)
Just like always.

John blows out the match.

OVER BLACK, WE HEAR A SORTA-NEW-YORK, SORTA-IRISH RUMBLE:

COHEN (V.O.)
...The funny thing is, Frankie
insists on pork. It's meat sauce,
he's Italian. To him, meat's pork.

CU - A barber's razor carefully shaves a man's face.

COHEN (CONT'D)
But Eckstein, he comes in, drunk
off his nut -- sees Frankie shoving
it in, he goes, like a fucking bear-
(in exaggerated accent)
-- "POOORK?"

The other BARBERS in

INT. BARBERSHOP - DAY

Laugh heartily. So does the man being shaved: CHARLIE COHEN.
Not nearly as fearsome-looking as in his mug shot. Tougher
than men half his age, but friendly, well-fed. A raconteur
in his element.

COHEN
He grabs the fucking steel carving
fork with his one hand, and
Frankie's suspender strap with the
other, and says, "You want meat in
your sauce? How about we Jew you
and toss that meat in there?"

The Barbers and Cohen laugh even harder.

COHEN (CONT'D)
Frankie says, "Eck, what's cock-
skin taste like, anyway?" What's
the man's retort? "Guilt!"

More laughter.

EXT. BARBERSHOP - ACROSS STREET - THAT MOMENT

A half-populated Bronx street. Cohen can't be seen inside
the shop, blocked by the doorside barber's pole.

A figure enters FRAME, walking, angling for a better view...

It's John. Two-day scrub. Casual, inexpensive, slightly dirty clothes. Flat cap. Looking like a street punk.

COHEN (V.O.)

All in all, he's a good chap.

INT. BARBERSHOP - CONTINUOUS

COHEN

He's Polish, his family's royally fucked. He's got a right to drink -

The door JINGLES. A bookie, SHOWALTER, enters, approaches.

COHEN (CONT'D)

Oh, for fuck's sake!

SHOWALTER

I'm sorry to intrude, Mr. Cohen, apologies, I just need a moment --

Cohen stands, wiping his face with SAM THE BARBER's towel.

COHEN

I can't relax a muscle in the haircutter's now? No peace! None!

EXT. BARBERSHOP - ACROSS STREET - THAT MOMENT

John focuses as Cohen moves into view. Showalter is also in sight, visibly aggravating Cohen. John straightens his posture. Thinking. Calculating.

INT. BARBERSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Cohen pulls on his overcoat, dodges Showalter's handshake, and slaps a twenty-dollar bill on the counter in one motion.

COHEN

There's nothing to fucking discuss.

SAM THE BARBER

Thank ya, Charlie.

SHOWALTER

Please, wait, Mr. Cohen --

EXT. BARBERSHOP - ACROSS STREET - CONTINUOUS

John sees Cohen exit, Showalter in pursuit. He starts walking parallel on his side, one eye on their argument, as Showalter paces Cohen, talking fast:

SHOWALTER

I was just wondering if maybe you could put in a word, intervene --

Cohen turns, holds up a finger. Showalter nearly jumps back.

John notes this. Sees the irritation on Cohen's face. Thinks. Starts to cross the street in their direction.

COHEN

Listen, chum. There's gonna be no intervention. I look like the Wop?

SHOWALTER

No. You do not.

COHEN

'Cause the Wop handles bets in this neighborhood. You owe the Wop? You pay the Wop. You can't pay, you cry to the Wop. 'Cause one tear gets on my shoes, I'll kick your cunt teeth in.

SHOWALTER

I understand. I'm sorry...

Cohen waves him off, keeps walking. Showalter, defeated, turns to leave and bumps right into John.

JOHN

Fuckin' hell!

SHOWALTER

Watch where you're going.

JOHN

What?

Loud enough for Cohen to hear. He turns back.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Say you're sorry and I might walk away.

SHOWALTER

...But you bumped into me --

Wrong answer -- John decks Showalter. Knocks him down. Starts to kick and stomp him viciously.

COHEN

HEY.

John stops. Makes eye contact with Cohen. Cohen shakes his head -- "stop right now." John considers. BEAT.

JOHN

Or what?

COHEN

Or I make up the distance between us on this pavement.

JOHN

And what in fuck says you're not gonna join him on the pavement?

COHEN

Boy, you do not want me to answer that. Step off.

John thinks for a moment. Then gives Showalter a rib-cracking kick, never breaking eye contact with Cohen.

Cohen smiles grimly. Loosens his coat, starts to approach -- only to be interrupted by two BEAT COPS emerging from a grocery store, who rush over and slam John against a car.

BEAT COP

Look who's a tough guy...

Cohen watches as John is billy-clubbed in the gut, cuffed and shoved into a police car. His eyes never leave John's.

BILL (V.O.)

Wait, so I get you outta the can...

INT. BILL'S OFFICE - DAY

Cramped and cluttered. Shared with Carroll and two other lower-ranked agents, KELLER and MALFOY. Bill on the phone:

BILL

...and you wanna go right back in?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. BRONX HOUSE OF DETENTION - RECEPTION AREA - CONTINUOUS

Equally cramped. John making his one phone call:

JOHN

I had to get his attention. Hard types respect a little force.

BILL

Well, I respect common sense. Are you booked under your cover?

JOHN

Damn it, yes. Just get me out.

BILL

Discretionary funds take time. How much patience you got?

John hangs up. Bill looks at the phone, shakes his head.

INT. BRONX HOUSE OF DETENTION - HOLDING TANK - EVENING

A light flickers overhead. A PRISONER jumps up, punches the light. It stops flickering.

John sits on the floor with several other PRISONERS, all black. The bars CLANG. John stands to see a COP:

COP

Klein!

JOHN

That's me.

COP

No kidding, I thought it was the Negro Klein over there. Cheer up, you made bail.

EXT. BRONX HOUSE OF DETENTION - EVENING

John walks outside. Sun nearly set. He sees no sign of Bill. Pulls his coat tight, starts to walk away.

Suddenly a taxi pulls up in front of him. FOOTSTEPS can be heard running up. Before he can react, hands wrench his arms behind his back. Tape is smacked over his mouth before he can cry out. The taxi door opens, he is thrown in.

INT. TAXI - CONTINUOUS

The interior is dark. As the taxi peels out, a Zippo lighter illuminates the car interior: John between two THUGS. Up front, Cohen, passenger-side, turns to face him.

COHEN

Mr. Klein. I'd tell you to shut up and listen, but it's not like you have a choice in the matter.

(pause)

You broke Showalter's jaw, among other fracturables. A bookie can't talk is a bookie can't earn. Hmm?

(John nods)

Though I doubt you can heal broken bones, you can say you're sorry. Or you can not say anything.

(Thug puts gun to John's temple)

Do you seek forgiveness?

(John nods)

Good.

John tries to speak. Cohen nods. A Thug rips the tape off.

JOHN

...What's his name?

COHEN

What?

JOHN

...The bookie. His first name.

COHEN

Walter.

JOHN

...Walter Showalter?

COHEN

So his mother wasn't adventuresome. Whaddya want from me?

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - EVENING

Cohen leads John to a door. Holds up his hand. Ducks into

SOME POOR DYING LADY'S HOSPITAL ROOM

Swipes a bouquet of carnations from the tableside of SOME POOR DYING LADY -- who's wide awake, sees him doing it, and can't do shit about it -- and heads back into

THE HOSPITAL HALLWAY

Where he hands the flowers to John. His voice rather droll:

COHEN
It shows you care.

INT. SHOWALTER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - EVENING

Showalter, face bandaged, is asleep in bed.

COHEN (O.S.)
Wake up, Walter.

Showalter rouses, opens his eyes, sees Cohen. Sitting next to him, smiling. Past him, John stands, flowers in hand, looking appropriately apologetic.

Showalter's eyes bug. He tries to sit up. Cohen pushes him back down, jabbing his busted ribs in the process.

COHEN (CONT'D)
Easy. The boy's come to say his regrets. Isn't that right?

JOHN
...Uh, yes. Say regrets.
(Cohen waits)
...I, ah...overreacted...and I shouldn't have...taken it out on you...sorry...?

COHEN
There. Have you ever heard more sincere words of dismay?

Showalter, terrified of Cohen's gaze, shakes his head.

COHEN (CONT'D)
And look. He's brought flowers.

On cue, John drops the flowers in Showalter's lap.

COHEN (CONT'D)
Now, are you as moved to thoughts of reconciliation as I am?
(MORE)

COHEN (CONT'D)
 (Showalter nods)
 Wonderful. Let's shake on it.

Showalter seems doubtful. Cohen stares at him. Showalter nods, shakes John's hand. Cohen claps his hand on theirs.

COHEN (CONT'D)
 Aye! Fucking heartwarming!

INT. HOSPITAL ELEVATOR - EVENING

Cohen and John ride down, side by side.

COHEN
 I appreciate that. It takes a grown man to humble himself.

JOHN
 I didn't have a choice.

COHEN
 No. I suppose not.
 (a short silence)
 How's your appetite?

John looks over, startled. He didn't expect to hear that.

INT. STEAK JOINT - NIGHT

A dark, near-empty steak joint. John and Cohen at a rear table. John tears into a ribeye at top speed. Cohen takes his time with his own filet in between sips of bourbon.

COHEN
 Slow down, lad. Savor it.

INT. BILL'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - THAT MOMENT

Small but comfortable, lived-in. Bill, Marie and Elliott at the table. Marie saying grace.

MARIE
 Bless us, O Lord, and these...
 (sees Elliott eating)
 Elliott, wait for grace.

BILL
 Let him eat. Champ, you hungry?
 (Elliott nods)
 Go ahead. Champs need a full stomach to stay strong.

ELLIOTT
 (mouth full)
 Strong!

MARIE
 Great example to set. Thank you.

BILL
 The boy's hungry.

MARIE
 That doesn't give him a license to
 ignore grace...

INT. STEAK JOINT - CONTINUOUS

John eats slower. Cohen watches with some approval.

COHEN
 Do you know who I am?

JOHN
 (mouth full)
 Some old Jew.

COHEN
 Some old Jew. That's part of it.
 Another part is what I do. I might
 even say that defines me.

JOHN
 So what do you do?

COHEN
 Number of things. For instance,
 one thing I'd normally do to a cunt
 bastard, tests me like you did,
 would be to make your insides
 familiar with your outsides. Then
 I'd find your family and do
 likewise. Do you have family?

JOHN
 (scared yet calm)
 ...They're dead.

COHEN
 So they would have the better end
 of the deal.
 (chews steak slowly)
 Then again, maybe I'd do as I did,
 let you calm your anger.

JOHN

What do you know about being angry?

COHEN

What do you know about being a Jew?
I came here twenty years ago.
About your age. I remember how
that felt. It's why you're eating
a steak with me instead of bleeding
like one. Seeing some angry young
Jew...inspires something in me.

JOHN

Sympathy?

COHEN

Nostalgia.

INT. BILL'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

MARIE

All I'm saying is, he sees you
doing it, he thinks it's okay --

BILL

I don't ignore grace.

MARIE

You always ignore it.

BILL

No, I just wait till five o'clock.
(off her look)
Marie, the Bureau pays for our
meals, not the church. They preach
"love thy neighbor" for donations
while men starve in the street --

MARIE

Bill, lower your voice --

BILL

-- so at the end of my day, I say
the grace we're provided -- by the
Bureau -- and I come home. And if
my boy wants to eat without
saluting a god that's forgotten
this country, you know what I say?
(off Marie's stunned face)
Let him feast.

INT. STEAK JOINT - CONTINUOUS

COHEN

What's your job? You have a job?

JOHN

(shakes his head)

In the stir till recently.

COHEN

Lucky you. They say this greatest fucking depression's over, I still see fellas in line at the soup kitchen. Job can give you purpose.

JOHN

Are you offerin' me one?

COHEN

Maybe. You're young and stupid. Young and stupid can be shaped. Like clay with a mouth.

JOHN

...What would the job be?

COHEN

When an opportunity arises, don't fuck it up with discussion.

John grins at the echo of his brother's words.

COHEN (CONT'D)

This century don't favor mystery. Everything is documented. There'll be no more legends. Understand?

(John nods)

You'll find out what the job is. Enjoy the mystery while it's there.

INT. OPIUM DEN - DAY

A Mott Street opium den. WORKING-CLASS MEN strewn about on mattresses, sampling the wares supplied by CHINAMEN in robes. John stands to the side, watches them with a mixture of fascination and disgust. Glances toward a closed back door.

INT. OPIUM DEN - BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A makeshift hangout, one of several. A BOOKIE who isn't Showalter makes and takes bets on two phones simultaneously. A couple GANGSTERS play cards.

Another one, ECKSTEIN, has his ear to a news broadcast on the radio and his hand on a bottle of rum. Yet another, TANNENBAUM, sits at a table reviewing horse races. Cohen across from him, reading the paper. The headline refers to labor strikes. He tosses it aside.

COHEN

Have these chinks tell Katzenberg to ship us better smack. Junkies are moaning all over.

TANNENBAUM

Fuck their moans. They don't appreciate our goods, they can live in reality with the rest of us.

Uh, about that other thing...

(Cohen waits)

I don't get it. You want to hire the kid that beat on Showalter?

COHEN

He's got spirit.

TANNENBAUM

My rabbi has spirit. That doesn't mean put him on the payroll.

(off his race sheet)

Charleston Rose. What a florid name for a horse.

COHEN

Let me test the kid. He can drive me on the Cosgrave thing.

ECKSTEIN

(listening to radio)

Fucking krauts. Fucking krauts.

COHEN

What's he on about?

TANNENBAUM

Ah, this shit over there, this Kristallnacht --

ECKSTEIN

They want us dead! And we take it!

TANNENBAUM

Siegel shoulda taken Goebbels when he had the chance. Fucking hindsight when you need it, right?

ECKSTEIN

We were there now, we'd burn the
ghettos to the ground. Where's the
Jews that fight back, tell me that?

TANNENBAUM

We all came here. Yankee Doodle.
Fresh cunt and a land of dreams.

INT. OPIUM DEN - CONTINUOUS

John kneels by one of the Working-Class Men. Doped out of
his mind. He gazes through John, smiling. John watches him.
Smiles back, though he doesn't know why.

COHEN (V.O.)

Yup. Land of fucking dreams.

INT. OPIUM DEN - BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

TANNENBAUM

You can't just find a girl, you
need someone to talk to that bad?

COHEN

I have a girl. We don't got
nothing to talk about.

(no response)

His prison record matches his
story. Everything checks out.

(no response)

Hey, he don't do a good job, he
won't come back. Tanny, c'mon.

TANNENBAUM

What are you asking me, anyway? I
say err to caution, but you're
Charles Cohen. I'm gonna deny you?

COHEN

No. But I believe in asking nice
regardless.

INT. OPIUM DEN - MOMENTS LATER

Cohen walks out of the back room, motions to John to follow.

COHEN

Welcome aboard. Don't fuck up.

INT. FEDERAL OFFICE - HALLWAY - DAY

Bill bounds down the hallway, man on a mission. Bursts into

PEARCY'S OFFICE

Where Percy and PAUL, the agent in charge of another FBI office, are comparing field reports.

PEARCY

You didn't keep your informant in one city where you could track him, which is why his cover has more ragged holes than your wife. How is Delores, anyway?

PAUL

Fuck you, Percy.

PEARCY

But that wouldn't be professional.
(to Bill, without looking)
Knocking, Oakley. It separates us from the apes. Like Paul here.

PAUL

I know I shoulda kept Banks in Chicago, okay? I get it.

PEARCY

Obviously you don't know you should have kept him there, or he'd still be there. Oakley, don't you agree?

BILL

...Yes. Yes, sir.

Paul glares daggers at Bill. Percy reclines.

PEARCY

Well, then. What sweet nothings did you want to whisper in my ear?

BILL

...John's in.

PEARCY

Already?

Bill nods. Percy sits up, looks to Paul. Grins wide.

PEARCY (CONT'D)

Now this, Paul, is how a Bureau op is supposed to run.

(MORE)

PEARCY (CONT'D)
 (Bill smiles)
 Where is he?

BILL
 ...Cincinnati.

Paul stifles a laugh. Percy doesn't laugh at all.

PEARCY
 I beg your fucking pardon?

EXT. CINCINNATI STREET - DAY

A crowded downtown area, scored to HONKING CAR HORNS.
 Passerby move to and fro in front of a new hotel.

COHEN (O.S.)
 Where were you raised?

INT. MERCURY COUPE - DAY

John and Cohen sit in a (stolen) Mercury Coupe parked across
 the street. Cohen staking out the building.

JOHN
 Here and there. You?

COHEN
 Ireland. They're nicer to us
 there, even if they are all
 churchies. Micks here? 'Nother
 story entirely.

JOHN
 Huh. My mother was Irish. She
 emigrated 'fore I was born.

COHEN
 And her accent skipped you?
 Lucky...there he is...

Across the street, COSGRAVE, dull, strolls into the hotel.

COHEN (CONT'D)
 Pull up to that corner.

John eases into traffic, crosses to the corner of the hotel.

COHEN (CONT'D)
 Wait here.

Cohen exits the car, hurries down the alley between the hotel and the next building. A few moments pass; he hurries back. Tosses a watch in John's lap.

COHEN (CONT'D)

It's 1:10 now. 1:15, you speed down that alley fast as you can. Do not brake. Then you dump the car and we catch a train.

JOHN

We grabbin' the dull-lookin' fella?

COHEN

Something like that. 1:15.

Cohen walks off, enters the hotel. John checks the watch. Waits as it rotates to "1:15."

He pulls the car around the edge of the building. No one is in the alley. It's wide enough for the car.

He exhales. Guns the engine. Takes off SPEEDING down the alley, unsure of what he's looking for...he crosses the midpoint of the building...keeps going...then:

Near the rear of the building, a fire exit door opens, revealing Cohen's face, along with Cosgrave's...before John can register this:

Cohen kicks Cosgrave's feet out from under him, forcing his upper body into the path of the car. Cosgrave SCREAMS. John SLAMS on the brakes -- too late -- the car PLOWS into Cosgrave's head at top speed --

INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT - DAY

Bill CRACKS a walnut, sprinkles the shell in an ashtray. Eats lunch with Carroll in a crowded hotel restaurant/bar, a lunch hangout for FBI agents -- and gangsters.

Carroll has one ear to a Yankees game cranked on a radio mounted over the bar. Bill ticks off HOODS as they dine.

BILL

Bad guy...bad guy...asshole...bad guy...heyyy, Corso's out already. That is one fast three years.

CARROLL

That ever seem odd to you, us and the guys we're after frequenting the same dining establishments?

BILL
Enemy's gotta eat, too.

CARROLL
I guess. I don't know. Work every hour to put some threat to the national whatever away, and end up splitting a waiter with them.

BILL
Don't be so cynical. We're fighting the good fight.

CARROLL
You really believe that?

BILL
I have to. I've given half my life to this outfit. I have to believe.

CARROLL
Noble. And I thought it was just you working out your daddy issues with Hoover --

BILL
Fuck you. We're doing good here.

CARROLL
...What about your brother? We doing good by him?

Bill, bothered, starts to respond -- Carroll is distracted by the game. He stands, along with other DINERS, some of whom are gangsters, in unison:

CARROLL, DINERS, GANGSTERS
Go, go, GO, GO, GO --

Bill listens to the radio -- Joe DiMaggio rounding the bases -- he hits base. Game over. Some CHEER; others BOO.

SOME ASSHOLE
Of course the guinea can run,
that's what they do!

YELLING breaks out, which quickly turns into PUNCHING. Bill and Carroll, grinning, duck out without paying the check as the room collapses into a NEW YORK-STYLE MELEE.

EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS - DAY

A train ROARS along its tracks past some nowhere town.

INT. RAILROAD CAR - CONTINUOUS

Cohen sits across from John, watching the scenery. John stares at his hands, shell-shocked. Cohen, not so much.

COHEN

What a country. All these empty spaces'll be gone soon.

JOHN

What did you make me do?

COHEN

Make? I didn't make you do anything. You helped me do a job.

JOHN

You killed him.

COHEN

No, you killed him. Now, if you were to feel guilty, confess your sins to the law, I might have to point out your hit-and-run tactics.

Cohen's right. John shuts up.

JOHN

...Who was he?

COHEN

Cosgrave? An overly tall fella who should be thanking you. Now he won't have to duck under doors.

(pause)

What if I was to tell you that he was heavy into pro-Nazi propoganda, which he was? You still feel bad?

(no response; he smiles)

This one time, my younger days, I'm in a diner out in the country, eating lunch with a girl with long red hair. She wanted a picnic, but fuck if I'll eat in the dirt with ants crawling up my ass. So we're eating, and this waiter boy, he's talking to my girl in what I consider an oncoming way, and he keeps doing it and doing it. Comes time for dessert, we order a fine peach cobbler, really marvelous, and the boy takes a toilet break, the shithouse being separate from the diner.

(MORE)

COHEN (CONT'D)

So I excuse myself, go outside through the back door, round front, grab a tire twirler from my car, sneak in the toilet, cave in boy's skull to mush, away with the twirler, back inside. I finished my cobbler and took redhead for a leisurely drive.

John just stares at him.

COHEN (CONT'D)

See, I used to believe, you kill a man, the sky would blacken 'cause you'd committed wrong against God's creation. But I'm a Jew. This world is committed to wronging me and mine. Whether it's some fucking Hitler or a cunt getting sweet with my girl.

JOHN

...That was your first kill?

COHEN

First, no. It's when I decided to stop feeling guilty about it.
(leans in)
This is America. We make divine law here, with our bare hands.
Both your folks Jews?

JOHN

Just my mother.

COHEN

So you're a halfer. But growing up, taking beatings, anyone ever let you forget you're a Jew?

JOHN

Never.

COHEN

Well, now it's you giving the beating? Never let them forget it.

He pauses to see if his words have affected John. They have.

COHEN (CONT'D)

I caved his head in, yeah. But the sky didn't blacken, it was still spring, the peach cobbler was fresh, and it was a lovely day.

Cohen reclines. The CONDUCTOR walks past.

CONDUCTOR
Ticket, please.

COHEN
Of course, my good sir. Would you
happen to have the sports pages?

INT. BILL'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bill lies next to Marie in bed. After a moment:

BILL
I don't mind cold dinners.

MARIE
I'm used to you being late.
(pause)
When you have a tough case, you
get...overly...closed-down.

BILL
You should be a psychiatrist.

MARIE
I'm serious.
(pause)
Never talk about the church like
that in front of Elliott again.
There has to be good...just because
you know better doesn't mean he has
to.

BILL
...Understood.

MARIE
...The FBI isn't your family. Do
you understand that?
(no response)
We're here for you. Don't forget
where to look.

Marie turns away. HOLD on Bill.

INT. COHEN'S BROOKLYN TOWNHOUSE - DAY

Large yet sparsely decorated living room, save for a large
number of potted ferns. Cohen trims the leaf off one plant
as John watches, fascinated.

COHEN

Take a life, take a leaf. Cut away
your sins, yeah?

John looks around, notes the vast number of plants.

INT. BILL'S OFFICE - DAY

Bill flips through a file while Carroll sips a Coke and reads the paper. The headline refers to "nationwide union riots".

CARROLL

See this? Six dead strikers just
on Friday. Immigrants looking for
a future, what do they get? Unions
looking to socialize or gangsters
looking to get a taste. That's it,
great choice. Fascism or the mob,
one big circle of fuckery.

Bill's expression changes. He goes back through the files.

CARROLL (CONT'D)

Not to mention, most of 'em die
fresh off the boat. No one knows
their names. Just unidentified
bodies in the morgue --

BILL

That guy John helped kill in
Cincinnati was a union head.

CARROLL

Who? Cosgrave?

BILL

Yeah. He was in charge of United
Factory Workers' Cincinnati branch.
(considers)
That union's gang-run, right?

CARROLL

Show me one that isn't.

BILL

What family's in charge?

CARROLL

Grogans, I think. Black Irish...
(thinks)
Isn't Gance planning some big
Senate investigation into the mob
and labor racketeering?

(MORE)

CARROLL (CONT'D)
 (Bill shrugs)
 Possible connection?

Bill underlines the word "union" in the file. Carroll flips to the funny pages.

CARROLL (CONT'D)
 Mutt and Jeff to the rescue...

EXT. YORKVILLE SOCIAL HALL - EVENING

John, Cohen, and two dozen NEIGHBORHOOD BRUISERS, all Jewish, stand across the street from a busy social hall at sunset. NOISE can be HEARD inside.

JOHN
 Who are these guys again?

COHEN
 American Nazi Bund. German,
 Austrian, few Irish. Fella we
 want's O'Shea. He's speaking.

John looks around at the Bruisers. All of them armed with pipes, hammers, and other blunt instruments.

JOHN
 And them?

COHEN
 Kids out for a fun Saturday night.

JOHN
 You call this fun?

COHEN
 Kid, Nazi-bashing's the most
 righteous pleasure we can have
 without feeling bad in the morning.
 (whistles)
 Let's give 'em Brooklyn, boys!

INT. YORKVILLE SOCIAL HALL - EVENING

An AMERICAN NAZI BUND rally, with everything that implies. Swastikas, Nazi insignias, jackboots. Nearly a hundred DEMONSTRATORS saluting the stage, where O'SHEA, 40s, rants anti-Semitic slogans into a microphone...

Suddenly the hall doors BURST OPEN. Cohen, John and the Bruisers CHARGE in from every entrance and proceed to BEAT THE SHIT out of the Demonstrators, who are no match, despite their numbers. A sea of metal SMASHING limbs. Those fleeing are driven back by more Bruisers blocking the exits.

O'Shea hurries offstage, heads to the entrance -- only to run into Cohen, holding a LONG BLADE. He wrenches O'Shea's arm behind his back, walks him back onstage.

Cohen WHISTLES into the mic. On cue, the Bruisers stop fighting. Those Nazis who are still standing cower.

One man continues to fight, however: John. Tearing into a Nazi with unrestrained fury. The other Bruisers watch him with some concern.

COHEN

John.

John looks up. Sees everyone staring at him.

COHEN (CONT'D)

Don't get carried away or nothing.

The Bruisers laugh. John grins. Steps back.

Cohen looks out at the crowd. Leans into the microphone:

COHEN (CONT'D)

I see this Nazi shit, and as a nice Jewish boy, it hurts my feelings. And I think I'm not gonna feel better till you apologize. What do you think, boys?

The Bruisers YELL in affirmation. O'Shea shakes his head frantically. Cohen SLASHES his arm wide open. He SCREAMS. Cohen whispers to him. O'Shea leans into the microphone:

O'SHEA

...We...we are sorry...

Cohen nods sympathetically. Draws a pistol.

COHEN

I'm sure you are.

Cohen SHOOTS O'Shea in the head. The Bruisers ROAR, STOMP the floor. As Cohen continues to talk, they empty the pockets of the Demonstrators, swiping wallets:

COHEN (CONT'D)

This isn't Europe. Hitler holds no purchase here. We know who you are, we know where you live. As long as our families overseas are fair game, so shall be yours here in America.

(a little bow)

Shalom.

The Bruisers CHEER as Cohen exits. John watches, awestruck.

INT. PEARCY'S OFFICE - DAY

A newspaper is slammed onto Percy's desk. Open to a Page Six article on the Nazi attack. The headline makes clear that there were "no witnesses."

PEARCY

Saps are all too scared to talk. They'll probably flee to Germany. Jersey at least.

BILL

But that's good...isn't it?

PEARCY

Good for who? You? Or our star witness in the Saw Hill trial, who is one of those saps, who is now refusing to testify after seeing how the mob handles its enemies?

(Bill bites his lip)

They iced our case so they could do in some factory union boss. Not quite whacking Roosevelt, is it?

Bill looks to Carroll as he hears "union".

BILL

How was John supposed to know?

PEARCY

He wasn't. You were. Keep better tabs on your informants, boys.

(Bill nods, exhales)

How are you doing? You look exhausted. You're married. She giving you enough? Keep her happy. An agent gorged on cunt at home is an agent with no energy left at work but the energy to work.

BILL
I'm doing fine. Carroll covers
enough ground for both of us.

Carroll nods, beaming with pride.

PEARCY
Good. So you don't have an excuse.

Carroll stops beaming.

BILL
Are you married, sir?

PEARCY
Me? God, no. Whores, twice a
week. That's why I don't screw up.
I used to be married.

BILL
Didn't work out?

PEARCY
You know what any woman with a
thought balloon and a kindergarden
degree does when she realizes she's
involved with men like us?
(grabs paper, swats a fly)
She runs.

EXT. LOCH SHELDRAKE COUNTRY CLUB - DAY

Cohen's car, driven by John, pulls into a clearing.

INT. COHEN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

John stares out the windshield at a huge upstate RESORT
coming into view. A long row of cars out front.

INT. LOCH SHELDRAKE COUNTRY CLUB - MESS HALL - DAY

A bar mitzvah celebration. Cohen laughs and chats as he
greet's various other GANGSTERS and their WIVES and CHILDREN,
all well-dressed. These include both the men from the opium
den and several subjects of Percy's photographs from the
briefing: MENDY WEISS, HARRY "PITTSBURGH PHIL" STRAUSS,
Tannenbaum, Eckstein, etc. The foot soldiers of Murder Inc.

John keeps a few feet away, observing. Tannenbaum, his
YOUNGEST SON on his shoulders, clasps Cohen's hand.

COHEN
Beautiful mitzvah, Tanny, really.

TANNENBAUM
It is, it is. This one'll be next.

COHEN
Oh yeah? You next, tough guy?

Cohen mock-spars with Tannenbaum's Youngest Son, groaning when he takes a pretend hit on the chin.

COHEN (CONT'D)
Sailor's knuckles! Hey, I want you
to meet this kid John.

Cohen motions; John steps forward. Tannenbaum scans him before shaking his hand. John tries to hide his nervousness.

TANNENBAUM
Charles likes you. But hey,
nobody's perfect.

He laughs, moves away to greet several WOMEN entering. Cohen nods to John -- good job. John smiles. Cohen sees someone enter, goes to greet her. John looks over, pauses as he sees

MAUREEN. Cohen's mistress. About John's age. Irish, stunning. Cohen kisses her full on the lips.

MAUREEN
Sorry we're late, there was a wreck
on the Willis bridge...

COHEN
Hush. You could never be late...
(to ECKSTEIN'S WIFE)
She didn't take too much time with
her makeup, now?

John and Maureen make eye contact. Sparks.

ECKSTEIN'S WIFE (O.S.)
Oh, no. Maureen's a doll.

LATER

Tannenbaum's OLDER SON recites from the Torah before all the gathered onlookers. He finishes. Everyone APPLAUDS.

INT. LOCH SHELDRAKE COUNTRY CLUB - KITCHEN - DAY

Through the swinging doors, the women can be seen preparing food in the mess hall. John watches them, focusing mainly on Maureen -- then his view is blocked by Tannenbaum, drink in hand. As they talk, they are occasionally interrupted by women entering to grab food, and shut up at these points:

TANNENBAUM

You done good with these factory guys. Meyer wanted to convey that.

PITTSBURGH PHIL

Enough small talk. Where's Lansky?

ECKSTEIN

Lansky's having a group hug with Albert A. and Lepke, wherever the fuck he's hiding nowadays. Word is it's to settle Tom Groghan.

Everyone looks around, nods.

TANNENBAUM

Lepke don't want a battlefield like the Ambergs. We do a clean strike, take out their leadership, they won't give us no more resistance. That's how Lepke figures it.

WEISS

About time. We gonna take an inch on that Gance fucker next?

John perks up, tries to act casual. Eckstein clicks his tongue in a "shut up" gesture. Weiss shuts up.

PITTSBURGH PHIL

Well, we're not doing it on the Sabbath, just so we're clear.

COHEN

The fuck we're not. We're supposed to lose the element of surprise 'cause of your convictions?

PITTSBURGH PHIL

They're ethics, and we won't be shedding blood on a day of rest!

COHEN

Please. Ethics, he calls it. Laziness is my fucking word for it -

PITTSBURGH PHIL
 Lazy! Mick claiming he's one of
 us, he's probably shaving potatoes
 with those Irish bastards --

ECKSTEIN
 Now wait a minute --

COHEN
 Watch your tongue, Strauss, or I'll
 shove those icepicks of yours right
 up your cunt --

PITTSBURGH PHIL
 Try it, lad. Just try --

TANNENBAUM
 Boys. Boys.
 (they shut up and listen)
 Let's be civilized about this, yes?
 We're not rubbing him out on
 Sabbath. There, settled. Now
 shake hands. Shake.

They glare at each other. Reluctantly shake hands.

TANNENBAUM (CONT'D)
 Good. Now: who's famished?

INT. LOCH SHELDRAKE COUNTRY CLUB - MESS HALL - DAY

Everyone is seated at long tables, digging into plates of
 food amid raucous conversation. Kids running from mothers,
 drinks, laughter. A dozen conversations at once:

TANNENBAUM
 Brisket? Anybody? Who do I have
 to kill to get brisket?

COHEN
 (another conversation)
 Why would anybody want to move to
 Nassau? You can't forget Brooklyn.
 It's your roots.

WEISS
 We don't have roots, dummy.

COHEN
 (lifts his glass)
 Aye. To the wanderers. *L'chaim*.

VARIOUS DINERS

L'chaim.

ECKSTEIN

(another conversation)
 ...There has to be concentrated
 resistance. We should be involved.

ECKSTEIN'S WIFE

Do you ever stop with it?

ECKSTEIN

How can I stop? How can I? This
 is going on now, in the world, you
 tell me, how can I stop?
 (gestures to Maureen)
 Maybe we should call in Ireland.
 Don't tell me the paddys wouldn't
 enjoy smacking around Germany.

An odd silence around the room, as if etiquette has been
 breached. Maureen shrugs:

MAUREEN

Luck of Ireland these days, you're
 better off on your own.

Cohen laughs. On his cue (it's safe), so do others.

COHEN

Never argue a mick lass, fellas.
 That way lies madness.

As conversation continues, Maureen looks to John. Sees the
 grin on his face. Smiles, looks away.

A GANGSTER approaches Tannenbaum, mumbles into his ear.
 Tannenbaum excuses himself, heads to the lodge lobby
 connected to the mess hall.

JOHN

Pardon me. Where's the facilities?

TANNENBAUM'S WIFE

There's one upstairs.

John quickly exits the table and heads for the lobby.

ECKSTEIN (O.S.)

Right, we don't need Irish. Maybe
 we'll recruit some Indians. Stock
 up on war paint, feather our
 schlongs, how 'bout that?

INT. LODGE LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

John passes Tannenbaum, talking on the FRONT DESK PHONE, and heads upstairs.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

John quietly moves down the hallway, checking in each open door -- offices, a communal restroom at the end. He spots a door marked "MANAGER'S OFFICE". Peeks in, sees a telephone on the desk. Pauses. Checks over his shoulder, walks into

THE MANAGER'S OFFICE

Verrry sloowly lifts the phone receiver, puts it to his ear.

TANNENBAUM (V.O.)
(over phone)
...is a go?

ALBERT A. (V.O.)
(over phone)
Yeah, suit up. Don't take nobody
can't shoot. He got Zig-Zag
underneath him. Even Legs won't
fuck with Zig-Zag...
(a pause)
Did you hear that?

John realizes he's breathing into the receiver. He halts.

TANNENBAUM (V.O.)
What?

ALBERT A. (V.O.)
You got static on your end.

TANNENBAUM (V.O.)
It's just your ears.

ALBERT A. (V.O.)
Anyway. Then we move forward on
the Gance thing.

TANNENBAUM (V.O.)
Good. Tell you, though, Albert, I
prefer bakeries, honestly.

ALBERT A. (V.O.)
This is true. Bakers never fight
like fucking unions --

O.S., FOOTSTEPS can be heard THUMPING up the stairs, along with VOICES. John carefully puts down the phone -- it CLICKS, even with his gentle touch. He hurries back to

THE UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

and runs into Pittsburgh Phil, dragging along his crying SON, trousers stained. Phil looks at John askew. BEAT.

PITTSBURGH PHIL

Don't say you pissed yourself, too.

(pushes past; to Son)

How hard is it to hold it in? Huh?

John watches him pull his son into the bathroom. Realizes he's still holding his breath. Exhales. Heads downstairs.

INT. BILL'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

CU - Toothpicks nervously being snapped in half.

Bill sits by a running fan, snapping away. Carroll stands by, looking out the window. Marie hands him ice water.

CARROLL

Thank you, Marie.

(Marie exits, he dabs
water on his face)

Leary says the Bellevue morgue's flooded. Three more strikers, no ID's. They might as well never have existed. Depressing, really.

BILL

Don, do I look like I care about Leary's stockpile of dead strikers?

CARROLL

Yeah. You look fascinated.

Suddenly, from the back of the house:

MARIE (O.S.)

Bill!

EXT. BILL'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

A small yard, cluttered with toys. John drops from the fence as Bill emerges from the back door, walks up, grabs him:

BILL

What is this? Coming to my house?

JOHN
Nice to see you too...

John spots Marie watching them. He nods. A stranger.

BILL
Marie...meet my brother.

INT. BILL'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

John looks at wall photos. As many FBI-related as of family. Several of Bill, younger, shaking hands with J. EDGAR HOOVER at his FBI induction, looking thrilled.

Bill and Carroll sit on a couch across from him.

BILL
What have you heard about unions?
Is Murder Incorporated specifically
targeting the United Factory
Workers of America?

No response -- John's still studying the walls.

JOHN
No pictures of Mom. You have Dad
over here, but not Mom.

BILL
...I've got her in the other room.

JOHN
Too Jewish for houseguests?
(to Carroll)
Oakley's our stepfather's name. We
held onto it. Didn't fool anybody.
Mom converted when she married him,
but we still got the looks --

BILL
Shut up.

CARROLL
...How you holding up, John?

JOHN
Not bad. You'd think hanging
around murderers would eat you up
more. But it doesn't.

INT. JOHN'S NEW APARTMENT - DAY

John hauls in a fern, just like the ones filling Cohen's place, and sets it next to the window, swamped by sunlight.

JOHN (V.O.)
It isn't all that different from
what you do, in the end.

INT. BILL'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

BILL
It's not the same thing.

JOHN
We kill our enemies because it
benefits our goals. You don't stop
us because it benefits yours.

BILL
Quit saying "we". You're not a
killer. You're an ex-con who's
only an "ex" if you help us with
Gance. So. Help us.

John gives him a cold stare.

JOHN
You really think you can save him?

EXT. CANDY STORE - NIGHT

A store at the intersection of Saratoga and Livonia, under the elevated train. Kids shooting craps out front.

INT. CANDY STORE - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

A poker game. HOODS around a table, lubricated with liquor and candy from up front. Cohen among them, sucking on lemon drops. John hangs by the door.

JOHN (V.O.)
You think if you stop one plot
against him, there won't be more?

One DRUNK HOOD, losing hand after hand, stares at the HOOD WHO KEEPS WINNING across the table. Eyes burning.

JOHN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
These are not men who rethink their
plans. They're stubborn like that.

Suddenly, the Drunk Hood lunges, STABS the Winning Hood in the neck repeatedly. Cohen and Pittsburgh Phil pull him back -- too late. Winning Hood drops, blood soaking the table.

COHEN

Oh, fucking great, Bernie!

PITTSBURGH PHIL

Sore loser's one thing -- aw, there's blood on the money. Look.

DRUNK HOOD

He stole ferm me, he's thief, he --

COHEN

Shut up, just shut up. Ahhh. There's a car in back. John, watch this idiot. What a fucking mess...

Cohen and Pittsburgh Phil exit. HOLD on John, stunned.

INT. BILL'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CARROLL

You sound like you admire them.

JOHN

Not what they do. They do bad things.

INT. CANDY STORE - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

John watches the Drunk Hood sleep in his chair, passed-out. Blood on the floor. Peaceful.

JOHN (V.O.)

But they determine those things. No one else determines their fate.

INT. BILL'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

John looks at Bill. As if realizing some ugly truth.

JOHN

They own their fate. It's, ah...heroic, kinda.

Bill shakes his head, incredulous.

BILL

Heroic. Don, you hear this? He's found enlightenment with a group of contract killers. Marvelous.

(John's face darkens)

Okay, John, here's my version of fate: do your job or lose your freedom. Again: have you heard any talk about the UFW?

JOHN

...Lose, huh? Something you wouldn't know about. Never fight back so you never lose, isn't that how you handle things?

That's it -- Bill PUNCHES John. They collide, a flurry of fists, YELLING. Carroll tries to wedge himself between them.

MARIE (O.S.)

STOP.

They stop. Look to Marie, standing in the doorway. To John:

MARIE (CONT'D)

You're in his house. Tell him what he wants to know or jump the fence.

She walks away. John looks to Bill wryly.

JOHN

Temperamental?

BILL

...Catholic.

EXT. BENCH BY EAST RIVER - DAY

Cohen sits by John on a bench. Lost in thought.

COHEN

What was your father's livelihood?

JOHN

I don't remember anymore.

COHEN

Mine worked in an abattoir. Bleeding animals out, cutting 'em up for butchers to make use of.

JOHN

He enjoy that work?

COHEN

No. He liked to paint. Would have loved to do that. The need to feed us decreed otherwise. Till one day he up and left. Thought it would make us stronger, I suppose.

JOHN

Did it?

(Cohen shrugs)

You never thought about getting married yourself? Children?

COHEN

I was married once, back home.

JOHN

Did you leave her behind?

COHEN

She left me first. Came to America with my boy, remarried to some fool with an American name, I forget what. Something...assimilated. So I came here, and I killed her. Don't know about the boy.

(off John's shocked look)

Looking back, I shoulda let her go. Don't ever hold a lady who wants free of ya...anyways...

John watches him closely. HOLD.

INT. FEDERAL OFFICE - HALLWAY - DAY

Bill and Carroll pacing Percy to the elevator.

PEARCY

Unions?

BILL

Cosgrave -- head of United Factory Workers in Cincinnati. O'Shea in the Nazi rally -- visiting from out of town, also, coincidentally, the UFW head in Philadelphia. Plus...

He waves several files in Percy's face.

FLASH ON:

SEVERAL OTHER MURDERS AS COHEN COMMITS THEM, JOHN ASSISTING. BECOMING MORE COMFORTABLE AND CONFIDENT WITH EACH KILLING.

BILL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 ...six other "unsolved" in the
 last five months. All UFW, which
 is headquartered in New York and
 run by Tom Groghan and his gang.
 Now John says Groghan's next.

BACK TO:

INT. FEDERAL OFFICE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

PEARCY

So the mob wants to fight over who
 swings the biggest wrenches. So
 what? What's the Gance connection?

CARROLL

He's ramping up a probe into labor
 rackets. Mob wants to avoid
 scrutiny. Now we've got motive.

Pearcy reaches the elevator, hits the button.

PEARCY

But we don't have them doing
 anything. Gentlemen, you're
 tailing me like puppies. Say what
 you want or hump my leg already.

Bill looks to Carroll. Pitch time.

BILL

Murder Incorporated's never gone
 after a high-ranking government
 official before. Now they want to
 kill a senator, maybe start a mob
 war, for what? A union? Uh-uh.
 This is something bigger.

PEARCY

And your point is...?

BILL

We can't ever nail them because we
 don't know who their targets are
 going to be. Now we do. We stake
 out Groghan. Wait for them to --

PEARCY

Not a chance. This is a deep op.

BILL

Listen to me, sir --

The elevator opens, Pearcy climbs on.

PEARCY

No, you listen to me. Your job is to save Gance, not expose our doings to the fucking mob.

BILL

Sir --

PEARCY

Do you need it traced in braille on my cock so you can read it better? No. John hears how they plan to hit Gance, John tells us, we intervene -- that's the game plan.
(doors closing)
And Bill? Your tie hurts.

The elevator doors shut. Bill smacks them in frustration.

EXT. BENCH BY EAST RIVER - DAY

John watches the water. So does Cohen.

COHEN

That bothers you, what I did?
Because of your family?

JOHN

...I don't...not the weak. Women can't fight back.

Cohen nods. Changing the subject:

COHEN

I have to leave town for a couple days. Do me a favor.

JOHN

Of course. Anything.

EXT. BEAUTY SALON IN MANHATTAN - DAY

John approaches the glass window of a beauty salon.

COHEN (V.O.)

I was hoping you'd take Maureen to this, this World's Fair. She's amused by such things.

John looks in the window, sees Maureen sitting, chatting with several other WOMEN as a MANICURIST trims her nails. She looks startlingly beautiful. He watches, transfixed.

MAUREEN (V.O.)
He's having you look after me?

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET - DAY

John and Maureen walk along at a slow pace.

JOHN
Yes, ma'am.

MAUREEN
Maureen. I love Charlie, but he does act overprotective.

JOHN
...Ma'am, I have a car.

MAUREEN
I feel like walking.

She wipes sweat from her brow. He watches, considers. Breaks away, stops by an ice wagon. Blocks an ICEMAN as he emerges from an apartment building.

JOHN
How much for a small piece?

ICEMAN
Beat it, buddy, huh?

JOHN
I'm asking nice.

As in, "don't make me ask NOT nice." The Iceman reconsiders, snaps off a small chunk. John takes the ice to Maureen. Splits it in two, hands her half. She eyes him, impressed:

MAUREEN
You take after Charlie. He's persuasive, too.

John shrugs. Maureen runs the ice over her brow and neck.

MAUREEN (CONT'D)
So what does a girl have to do to get herself escorted to a fair?

EXT. WORLD'S FAIR - DAY

The 1939 World's Fair. Thousands in attendance.

John and Maureen, Italian ice in hand, move through the IBM PAVILION. Filled with artwork and business exhibits. John marvels at a displayed calculator, operated with punch cards:

JOHN
Showalter'll have a field day with
that thing.

MAUREEN
Who?

JOHN
Nobody. You want more ice?

LATER

"The Scholar, The Laborer and the Toiler of the Soil." A copper sculpture emblazoned across the front of the JEWISH PALESTINE PAVILION.

John stares up at it. Maureen with less interest.

MAUREEN
They're crazy. Nobody'll stand for
it. Not in our lifetime.

JOHN
They stand for the Irish.

MAUREEN
Yeah, unless they're Britain. I
admire the spirit. At least you
want your own land.

JOHN
It doesn't matter if we get it.
These days we all got America to
fight over and call it sharing.

Maureen watches him, fascinated.

MAUREEN
You feel like a drink?

INT. BILL'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Bill sits at the table, flipping through files. Stressed. Marie enters, a freshly purchased pint of ice cream in her hands. Holds it up. Arches an eyebrow.

INT. MAUREEN'S APARTMENT BUILDING HALLWAY - NIGHT

John and Maureen, both drunk, stagger down the hall, laughing. At her door, she pauses. Looks at him.

MAUREEN

Care for a strong cup...to help
ward the dark off?

John embraces her, kisses her hard. She reciprocates. They disappear inside the apartment, close the door.

INT. BILL'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Bill and Marie sit, scooping ice cream from the same bowl.

MARIE

Why does your brother hate you?

BILL

Does it matter?

MARIE

It always matters.

Bill gives her a look. She doesn't blink. He bites his lip.

BILL

It was a Saturday, he was at a friend's house, I was home. Knock at the door, I answered. A man came in, he saw my sister, he, uh...my father came running, then my mother...I stood in the kitchen and watched, and I shook like a wet dog. Just after he left, Johnny came home. He saw I was alive, and I had done nothing...after that, we split up. I was adopted, nice Catholic family. He went through orphanages, foster homes...they liked to beat on him...again, they were not stopped by me.

MARIE

...But that isn't your fault.

BILL

Not literally, I couldn't have stopped it...it's...

(pause)

My mother gave up being Jewish when she remarried.

(MORE)

BILL (CONT'D)

She said it was so we wouldn't be victims in this country...but I acted like a victim in front of John. And people have been making him one ever since. He can't let go of that anger at me. It keeps him stable...he's, uh, not the forgiving type.

MARIE

And now he's involved with bad men.

BILL

Yeah. Men who don't stand in kitchens, and don't shake when wet.

Off his face, we hear a woman SINGING...

INT. MAUREEN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

John wakes. Sees Maureen curled up in a chair by the window. Quietly singing an IRISH FOLK SONG to herself.

JOHN

What is that?

She stops singing, suddenly self-conscious.

MAUREEN

Something my father used to sing to me. It calms me down.

He lights a cigarette. She watches him, then joins him on the bed. Takes the cigarette from him, smokes.

MAUREEN (CONT'D)

Why do you work with Charlie?

JOHN

It's a job.

MAUREEN

Charlie calls it the American way.

JOHN

What does he say he does?

MAUREEN

Garments.

(she laughs, so does he)

It's okay. We had the gangs in Dublin. I used to needle him.

(MORE)

MAUREEN (CONT'D)

"Charlie, you lived with shamrocks,
now you play with yids. Can't you
pick a winning team, already?"

(they laugh)

He said, Irish then, Yankee now,
but a Jew first, always. It's not
faith with him. More of a tribal
commitment. Side with your kind.

JOHN

And why do you...consort with us?

MAUREEN

You have a purpose. It's good to
be with people who know they're
meant for something better.

(smokes)

What about you? Why do you do it?

JOHN

What? "Garments"?

(laughs, trails off)

My family were killed when I was
young...this thing, it lets me
remember what a family feels like.

MAUREEN

People tend to die a lot in this
family, too.

JOHN

Maybe. But they put up a hell of a
fight first.

Maureen studies his face. Buries into his chest.

MAUREEN

Charlie can never know about this.
He wouldn't take it well.

John doesn't respond.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL STATION - DAY

Cohen steps off a train and walks over to John, waiting on
the platform. Sees the troubled look on his face:

COHEN

Fuck off with the guilty looks!
You run over a kid getting here?

He laughs, walks off. John, not laughing, follows.

INT. FEDERAL OFFICE - MEN'S ROOM - DAY

Bill faces Keller and Malfoy. Carroll leans against the door, barricading it from anyone entering.

KELLER

You want surveillance on Groghan without Percy knowing? That's...rather unauthorized.

CARROLL

Last I checked, this op isn't authorized in the first place. Our branch protocol's pick-and-choose.

BILL

If I'm going to keep my informant safe, I need to know what the big picture is. Grab us a gangster, we can have him draw it for us.

Malfoy considers whether to play along. BEAT. He shrugs.

MALFOY

Fuck it. Percy's a prick, making us share that "office" --

BANGING on the restroom door. Carroll unlocks it; they exit in file past other AGENTS, who eye them with suspicion.

CARROLL

What? Think you'd catch us smoking in the boys' room?

INT. JOHN'S NEW APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

The bedroom door is KICKED IN. John jolts awake to see Cohen and Pittsburgh Phil. Staring. Faces inscrutable.

COHEN

Get up.

EXT. HIGHWAY LEADING UPSTATE - NIGHT

A car drives out of New York City in the dead of night.

INT. CAR HEADING UPSTATE - NIGHT

John in the back seat. Terrified. He watches as

Upfront, Pittsburgh Phil, driving, checks him out in the rearview. John averts his gaze, looks to

Cohen, gazing ahead. He reaches into his pocket, removes one of Maureen's handkerchiefs. Inhales her scent. Then leans forward and wipes a stain from the windshield.

John closes his eyes. Quietly prays under his breath.

EXT. FARM - NIGHT

The car pulls into a clearing and halts in front of a farmhouse, somewhere in the woods upstate. An OLD MAN sits on the porch, flexing a piece of tree bark.

Phil and Cohen exit. John follows. The Old Man nods to them as they pass, heading to

A FIRING RANGE OUT BACK

John is led to the center of an open field. Several guns are dropped in front of him. He looks to Cohen and Phil. BEAT.

PITTSBURGH PHIL

The guy Bernie stabbed in the game
was gonna run point when we took
Groghan. You're taking his spot.

John looks back and forth. Realizes he's not a dead man.

COHEN

You want to be a tough guy. So.

John notices a scarecrow in the distance, papered with crude metal tins. Target practice.

COHEN (CONT'D)

Make a scarecrow fucking cry.

John's face steels, fills with resolve. He picks up a pistol, aims at the scarecrow, FIRES --

EXT. UNION HEADQUARTERS - DAY

A group of HITMEN cross the street towards an office building. John, Cohen, Pittsburgh Phil, two others. All wearing fedoras. Pistols shoulder-holstered under overcoats.

Further down the street, a parked car...

INT. PARKED CAR - CONTINUOUS

Keller and Malfoy, eating sunflower seeds.

KELLER

DiMaggio's talented, no doubt, but
he's not Babe reborn neither --

MALFOY

Hey...

Malfoy spots the Hitmen entering the building.

MALFOY (CONT'D)

...do we know those guys?

INT. UNION HEADQUARTERS - LOBBY - DAY

The Hitmen sweep past the UNION GUARD stationed at the front desk. Pittsburgh Phil flashes an FBI badge:

PITTSBURGH PHIL

FBI! Where's Tom Groghan's office?

UNION GUARD

Third floor, back of --

The Hitmen are already rushing into the stairwell --

INT. BILL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Bill on the phone.

BILL

What?

INT. UNION HEADQUARTERS - STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

The Hitmen stampede up the stairwell.

INT. FEDERAL OFFICE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Bill rushes down the hallway, grabbing his jacket with one hand and Carroll, returning with a donut, with another:

BILL

Time to go.

INT. UNION HEADQUARTERS - THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The Hitmen emerge into a hallway. They move past a closing elevator...John spots a man inside (ZIG-ZAG MACAULEY), who sees him, frowns...then the doors shut. They walk into

THE MAIN OFFICE

Numerous desks manned by UNION SECRETARIES, all cute girls and mob mistresses kept on the union payroll. Groghan's office in back. Several BODYGUARDS block the door, one hitting on a Secretary. The Hitmen hustle towards them:

PITTSBURGH PHIL
FBI! UP AGAINST THE WALL!

The Hitmen grab the Bodyguards, SLAM them against the wall. Pittsburgh Phil, Cohen and John burst into

INT. GROGHAN'S INNER OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

GROGHAN, 40s, is receiving a blowjob from a TEMP GIRL. He struggles to zip up as the Temp flees. John shuts the door.

GROGHAN
What are you doing?!
(Phil flashes FBI badge)
FBI, my ass. What is this?

COHEN
Thomas Groghan, I presume.

GROGHAN
And who the fuck might you be?

Cohen draws his blade. Groghan stands, opens his mouth -- with surprising speed, Cohen CLEANLY SLICES HIS THROAT --

INT. UNION HEADQUARTERS - MAIN OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Blood spray hits Groghan's blinds. One of the Secretaries, eyeing the Hitmen with curiosity, sees the blood, SCREAMS --

The Bodyguards notice, so do the Hitmen. They all draw their pistols, the Hitmen just a bit faster, BANG BANG BANG, down the Bodyguards go in a hailstorm of shells. SCREAMING AND CHAOS ensue, Secretaries scramble in every direction --

INT. GROGHAN'S INNER OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

John stares at Groghan's body on the floor. Cohen and Pittsburgh Phil hear the SHOTS and SCREAMS outside:

COHEN
Time to go.

He grabs John's arm, drags him out --

INT. UNION HEADQUARTERS - MAIN OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Cohen, John, Phil, etc. rush through the office, pushing their way through panicked Secretaries...then:

Before them, the elevator doors open... revealing ZIG-ZAG, along with two other GROGHAN GUNMEN. All with TOMMY GUNS. They OPEN FIRE, taking down the two anonymous Hitmen right away. Everyone scatters, RETURNS FIRE with pistols.

John ducks behind a desk, aims for Zig-Zag, FIRES -- but Zig-Zag, true to his name, darts and dodges out of the bullet's path with Olympic speed. John runs after him, out into

THE THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY

Private offices ringing the circumference of the building. John runs after Zig-Zag, but can't keep up. GUNMAN ONE pops out of an adjoining office, FIRES at him, just missing his head -- wood SPLINTERS -- John swerves into

THE LADIES' ROOM

Secretaries hiding within SCREAM -- he ducks behind the entrance, which swings open a moment later -- Gunman One OPENS FIRE, perforating one unlucky Secretary --

John slams the door into the Gunman, trapping and SNAPPING his arm -- Gunman YELLS -- John leaps back, FIRES, blowing Gunman's head off. Then he blinks. He's never killed someone himself before this moment. BEAT.

INT. CARROLL'S CAR - THAT MOMENT

Carroll's car, running into traffic. Bill passenger-side, about to leap out as the union building comes into view --

INT. UNION HEADQUARTERS - LADIES' ROOM - CONTINUOUS

John sucks in breath, grabs the Gunman's weapon, back into

THE THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY

Into a firefight between Zig-Zag and Pittsburgh Phil. John dives to the ground; Pittsburgh Phil is hit in the arm, falls back into the main office. John FIRES in Zig-Zag's direction -- Zig-Zag maneuvers out of the bullets' path, runs --

John races after him, moving faster and faster -- but he's vanished. And then we see, racing right up behind John: Zig-Zag. Having run entirely around the floor as if he was Jesse Owens. Tommy gun pointed at John's back...

EXT. UNION HEADQUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

Carroll's car pulls halfway onto the curb across the street. Bill and Carroll jump out, run through traffic, meeting Keller and Malfoy as they hurry over, drawing their guns...

INT. UNION HEADQUARTERS - THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

John realizes someone's behind him. He turns to see Zig-Zag, tommy gun aimed at him. Sees Zig-Zag smile --

Then, behind Zig-Zag, Cohen emerges from the main office. FIRES a sawed-off, shaves Zig-Zag's scalp...Zig-Zag spins, lets off a BULLET BURST...John dives into the nearest office -

INT. UNION HEADQUARTERS - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Bill, Carroll, Keller, Malfoy rush through the front doors, past Secretaries fleeing the building. The Union Guard, trying to coordinate the mass exodus, sees the agents' guns, draws his gun on them. Both sides assume standoff position:

BILL

FBI! Lower your weapon!

UNION GUARD

Bullshit! FBI's already upstairs!

Bill looks to Carroll -- uh-oh. Flashes his badge. The Union Guard reluctantly lowers:

BILL

What floor? FLOOR.

UNION GUARD

Three.

Keller and Malfoy hit the elevator; Bill and Carroll, stairs -

INT. UNION HEADQUARTERS - THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Cat-and-mouse GUNFIRE from office doorways. Zig-Zag and Groghan Gunman Two holding off Cohen and John with superior firepower.

Cohen SHOOTS Gunman Two. Rushes into the room he's occupying -- then reappears, holding the Gunman's body as a SHIELD. Zig-Zag blasts into the body; Cohen trudges forward, returning fire, bearing down on Zig-Zag...then:

Cohen's gun CLICKS empty. Zig-Zag CHARGES him. Knocks Cohen on his back, pinning him beneath the corpse. Stands over him. Grins. Aims the tommy gun at his head...

Only to feel John's gun barrel press against the back of his own head.

Cohen sees John, smiles. Zig-Zag hears something, looks up. His expression changes. Cohen sees this, looks up. John sees this, follows their gaze to see:

BILL AND CARROLL. At the end of the hallway, guns drawn. Staring at them in shock. A brief moment of eye contact between John and Bill. What to do?

John looks to Cohen. Silent communication. A nod.

Cohen draws his blade, JABS it through Zig-Zag's chin into his brain -- simultaneously, John whips up his gun, FIRES at Bill and Carroll, careful to aim wide -- Bill and Carroll scatter into offices --

John yanks Cohen from beneath the corpse. They run, signaling Pittsburgh Phil as they pass. He joins them as they flee, Bill and Carroll racing after them. They race for the elevator, only to see: Keller and Malfoy, cornering them. They look around, desperate...then:

Cohen sees a WINDOW in the nearest office. He grabs John's gun, SHOOTS IT OUT, plows through the crumbling glass at full speed. Phil and John follow him, leaping out into

THE CROWDED STREET BELOW

Landing, one after another, on top of CARS stuck in traffic, denting roofs and CRACKING windshields. The men jump from roof to roof, scored to honking HORNS and shouting DRIVERS...

Finally, they drop and duck into the packed sidewalk, decelerating to walking speed, slipping their pistols into the coat pockets of unsuspecting BYSTANDERS. Vanishing.

Up above, Bill reaches the window, gun drawn. Tries to spot them. No dice. They're gone.

Off his anguished face, we hear a WHOOSH, a CRASH --

INT. FEDERAL OFFICE - OUTSIDE PEARCY'S OFFICE - DAY

Agents watch through the blinds and CHUCKLE as Pearcy SMASHES his cane into anything he can reach.

INT. PEARCY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Bill and Carroll try to stay out of the line of fire.

CARROLL
Sir, could we --

PEARCY
No, whatever it is, you CANNOT.
(calming slightly)
Don't reveal yourselves. I was
somewhat clear on that point.

INT. UNION HEADQUARTERS - MAIN OFFICE - DAY

Bill moves among a squad of COPS roping off the area, interviewing traumatized Secretaries, etc.

PEARCY (V.O.)
If those maniacs weren't careful
before, they sure as a mick's
compulsive fucking drinking habit
will NOT be sloppy now.

He kneels by the body of one of the dead Hitmen. Sees his gun nearby. Frowns -- it looks familiar. Then sees the FBI BADGE hanging from his coat.

Bill goes pale. He looks over his shoulder, grabs the gun and badge, pockets them. Moves to the other hitman, grabs his gun and badge as well.

INT. PEARCY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

BILL
We eye-witnessed the mob killing
the leader of a national union --

PEARCY

No, you didn't.

(off Bill's confused look)

If Hoover realizes you were there,
he shuts us down. Your brother
goes back to prison, you're fired --
at best -- and Gance still dies.
So as of this minute, you never
left the office that day. At all.

Bill realizes what this means. He grits his teeth.

BILL

We're not going to do anything?

PEARCY

If John can convert the mob to
Communism, maybe they'll be evil
enough for us to pursue. Till
then, we look the other way.

Bill fingers the guns and badges in his pocket, infuriated.

BILL

What now?

PEARCY

Police are cooperative. They'll
record it as Groghan had a gambling
debt that was foreclosed on.

BILL

I mean, what now with me?

PEARCY

Oh, you. Uh...no more corner
office. For starters.

Bill considers a moment. Time to make a stand.

BILL

I'm staying on assignment.

PEARCY

And my cock's the size of a
redwood. We can all dream.

BILL

John's still in play. I'm staying.

PEARCY

Confident, that's cute.

BILL
 ...I stay or I go to Hoover.

BEAT. Carroll, hovering to the side, stares at Bill.

BILL (CONT'D)
 I'll do it. I'll run this whole
 unit into the ground.

Pearcy stampedes right up to Bill. Pissed...and admiring.

PEARCY
 ...Well. Looks like there's more
 than one redwood in this room.

BILL
 National fucking forest. Sir.

INT. FEDERAL OFFICE - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Bill and Carroll exit Percy's office, hurry down the hall.

CARROLL
 What did you just do?

BILL
 I bought us a reprieve. Call
 Schepisi. We've got a question
 mark that needs a dot.

INT. BAR IN BENSONHURST - NIGHT

A mob-owned bar and grill. John, Cohen, Pittsburgh Phil, Tannenbaum, Eckstein, and every other Murder Inc. member we've met are all present. A party at full capacity. Drinks and revelry. John looks right at home. Cohen toasts:

COHEN
 This one's to John Klein. He was a
 soldier today.

PITTSBURGH PHIL
 Hear, hear. A fucking mensch.

JOHN
 Who was that? Twitchin' --

John does a slosed parody of Zig-Zag's contortions.
 Everyone LAUGHS.

TANNENBAUM

Zig-Zag Macauley. He's dodged more bullets than the Babe's hit homers.

COHEN

Well, fellas, as of today...
 (makes a motion of a blade
 jabbing his neck)
 ...dodger tasted a straight line.

LAUGHTER, drinks raised. Cohen clasps his hand on John's shoulder. His version of a warm embrace.

COHEN (CONT'D)

You did good, boy.

John nods and smiles. Full of pride.

Maureen approaches with a couple other MOB WIVES, trying to retrieve their drunken husbands. As she greets John and he politely kisses her cheek, she whispers into his ear. He watches as she leaves with Cohen.

BILL (V.O.)

He's late.

INT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING - OBSERVATION DECK - NIGHT

Bill and Carroll walk in a circle around the observation deck, the skyline visible around them.

CARROLL

He's Schepisi. Late's relative.

SCHEPISI, 30s, walks up beside them, moves two steps ahead. They follow his lead, boarding the freight elevator.

SCHEPISI

Bill. Give Marie my regards.

BILL

Sure, Al. How's Jane?

SCHEPISI

She left me.

BILL

Sorry to hear it.

SCHEPISI

Ehh. What are you gonna do?

The elevator doors close.

INT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING - FREIGHT ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

SCHEPISI

So I ran the guns. They're Bureau issue. So are the badges.

BILL

Shit. When were they stolen?

SCHEPISI

That's the thing. They weren't.

CARROLL

What do you mean?

SCHEPISI

Say there's guns one through ten. If gun number two is lost or stolen, its serial number is listed as missing. With these guns, the list jumps. Five guns, call 'em five through nine -- there's no numbers on file. The list jumps. One, two, three, four...ten.

BILL

That's not possible.

SCHEPISI

Well, apparently it is, 'cause it happened. This is my stop.

Schepisi stops the elevator. Gets off on an empty floor. The doors close. Bill and Carroll continue down:

BILL

Nonexistent guns?

CARROLL

Whoever took them must have erased their numbers from Bureau records. If they didn't exist, they wouldn't be reported when they vanished.

BILL

Altering records...altering...

Bill realizes the implication. Doesn't show it.

INT. CHURCH - MORNING

Nearly empty. John hanging by the confessional booth. Bill approaches fast, not happy at all:

BILL
You got someone in the FBI?

JOHN
What?

Bill swats John across the head. John shoves him away.

BILL
Someone wanted Groghan dead so bad
they gave you FBI tools so even
police wouldn't interfere. Who?

JOHN
I don't know.

BILL
The hell you don't.

JOHN
I don't know --

Bill steps to John, ready to swat him again. John doesn't flinch. His eyes a warning to Bill to back off.

Stray PARISHIONERS notice. John and Bill glare at each other. They duck into the same confessional booth.

INT. CONFESSIONAL BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Face to face. Bill agitated, John calm.

BILL
We need to pull you out.

JOHN
...What? No. You're not pulling
me anywhere --

BILL
There are other informants in your
outfit we don't know about, or else
we're compromised. We are fucked.

JOHN
I'm not getting out.

PRIEST IN ADJOINING BOOTH
Excuse me, only one to a booth --

John draws a pistol, presses it against the confessional screen. The PRIEST splits, sputtering. Bill stares at John.

BILL

John, listen to me. It is not safe for you any more. Understand?

JOHN

...And who's going to keep me safe? You? You couldn't protect our family, you couldn't keep me from twenty years of fists and cells, but now you're going to shelter me?

A direct blow. Bill restrains himself.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Well, now, where I am? I don't need shelter, ever again. And definitely not from you.

(off Bill's expression)

And next time you pull a drop-in, and I have to point a gun at you? Don't be so sure I'll miss. Have a nice day.

John tries to exit. Bill blocks him. In a sudden movement, John HEAD-BUTTS Bill, dropping him to his knees.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You can say a hail Mary for me.

John exits. Bill, eye bruising, watches him go.

INT. CANDY STORE - BACK ROOM - DAY

John sits across from Cohen, Pittsburgh Phil, Tannenbaum, Eckstein, Weiss, etc. A virtual welcoming party.

TANNENBAUM

You've been doing good work for us, Klein. Charlie's vouched for you.

(Charlie winks at him)

So we talked it over, and we'd like you to become an official member of this thing. Full-fledged.

John sits up. He wasn't expecting this.

JOHN

Really?

ECKSTEIN

Really. Lepke and Meyer gave it the okay, so. Okay.

JOHN

...It'd be an honor, sir.

TANNENBAUM

But there's one thing we need. To seal the covenant and all that.

JOHN

Sure, anything...what?

COHEN

When we took Groghan, we had some interference. We looked into it. Looks like they were FBI.

JOHN

...FBI? You sure?

TANNENBAUM

We don't know why they're eyeballing us, but they need to back off. You get to communicate this to them.

Weiss slides an envelope across the table.

WEISS

This agent showed up at the UFW. We think he's in charge.

John opens the envelope. Grainy photos, taken from a car, fall out. He lifts one, stares at it. Doesn't respond.

JOHN'S POV: THE PHOTOS ARE OF BILL.

COHEN

We think his name's Bill Oakley. We'd rather it was "deceased." Think that'll be a problem?

John looks up. His expression unreadable.

JOHN

Not at all.

INT. BILL'S OFFICE - DAY

Carroll stares at Bill, eye black. Stunned.

CARROLL

You think the mob's acting on behalf of someone in the Bureau?

Bill nods. Carroll rubs his face. Bill looks out. Catches stray pairs of eyes looking at him through the blinds.

BILL

We have to be careful here. Do not say anything to anyone. Not Percy, not your dog. Anyone.

CARROLL

I don't have a dog.
(off Bill's look)
Right, right. Nobody.
(pause)
What about John? Can we honestly rely on him at this point?

Bill looks to Carroll. He doesn't know the answer.

EXT. FEDERAL OFFICE - EVENING

Bill emerges. As he walks, he looks around. Scans the faces of people around him with a heightened, paranoid focus.

He notices a MAN pacing with him across the street. He looks away, then back. The man is gone. He increases speed. Looks back -- the man is visible again. Bill veers into

AN ALLEY

Hurries along. Nearing the end, he glances over his shoulder. Sees a figure walking after him.

Bill turns the corner casually, as if nothing is wrong.

EXT. NEXT STREET - CONTINUOUS

Bill hurries across the street, ducks behind a car. Peers over the windshield, squinting. A moment passes...

The man emerges. Looks both ways. Walks in the direction opposite from him.

Bill exhales. Starts to turn -- a GUN BUTT SMASHES into his face, followed by a hand clasped over his mouth. Stunned from the blow, he is dragged into

THE STAIRWELL OF A NEARBY BUILDING

And thrown against the stairs. He pulls his gun -- it's kicked from his hand. He stares up at

JOHN. Handkerchief masking his face. Only his eyes visible. A pistol pointed at him.

Bill stares. Doesn't quite recognize him. John stares back. Reaches into his coat, pulls out a photo. Tosses it at Bill's feet. Bill picks it up. Looks at...himself.

Bill looks at John. Recognition starts to hit him.

A loooong, intense moment. Pull-the-trigger time...BEAT.

John freezes. Turns, bolts from the building.

EXT. NEXT STREET - CONTINUOUS

John ducks into the nearest alley. Rips off his handkerchief. Vomits. Gasps. Runs off down the alley.

Behind him, Bill emerges, looks around. Too late -- John is gone. He looks down at the photo. Realizes what it means.

INT. CARROLL'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Stark contrast to Bill's place, a late '30s bachelor pad. The PHOTO on Carroll's coffee table. Bill, eyes red, maybe from crying, staring at it. Carroll watching him.

BILL

...Will they kill my family?

CARROLL

(maybe, maybe not)

...They're civilians...

Bill sinks his face into his hands.

CARROLL (CONT'D)

He let you know what's coming. So at the very least, he's conflicted.

(Bill nods)

Could you tell him about Cohen?

BILL

It doesn't matter now. There's a contract. He doesn't execute, they'll kill him and use Cohen. Strauss. Anybody. And Gance dies.

CARROLL

Pearcy could...

One of Carroll's numerous LADY FRIENDS wanders in from the bedroom, half-dressed.

CARROLL (CONT'D)

Morning.

Waiting for her to leave. The Lady Friend, seemingly used to this, rolls her eyes, heads to the kitchen.

CARROLL (CONT'D)

We could put you in protective custody. Pull a Houdini.

BILL

They'd know someone tipped me off.
Figure out it's John, he's dead.
Then they'd come looking for me,
anyway. Wouldn't they?

(no response = "yes")

...If Hoover knew what Cohen had
done...would he protect my family?

Carroll looks down. Bill exhales, slackens.

BILL (CONT'D)

If John kills me...then my family's
safe. They're safe...John is
safe...if he kills me. If I die.

(as if repeating a mantra)

If I die. If I die.

INT. JOHN'S NEW APARTMENT - KITCHEN - EVENING

John and Maureen eat dinner. He catches her watching him.

MAUREEN

No air?

JOHN

What?

MAUREEN

It's just, you look like you're
holding your breath.

John stares at her a long moment.

JOHN

...Have you...if you had to make a,
a choice...a bad...choice...

He trails off. Changes the subject:

JOHN (CONT'D)
Did anyone see you come in?

She studies him, disappointed that he's shut down:

MAUREEN
No. No one saw me.

INT. BILL'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING

Marie cooks dinner while Elliott plays on the floor. Bill appears in the doorway. Marie sees him. He smiles. Elliott runs to him. He picks Elliott up, swings him around.

PEARCY (V.O.)
We appreciate this, Leary.

INT. BELLEVUE HOSPITAL - MORGUE - NIGHT

Row after row of storage. LEARY, 30s, shuts and locks the door behind them. They pass discarded STRIKE PLACARDS, stained with blood.

LEARY
Please. All the mugs in here, it's me'll do the appreciatin'.

INT. BILL'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - EVENING

Post-dinner. Bill plays checkers with Elliott at the table, careful to let him win. Elliott laughs.

LEARY (V.O.)
These chumps haven't been logged yet. Wink, nudge.

INT. BELLEVUE HOSPITAL - MORGUE - NIGHT

Leary leads Bill and Carroll to the end of the room, where several MALE CORPSES are laid out.

LEARY
Try the second one on the end. He should meet your specs.

Bill sees the corpse Leary is referring to. A MALE, 30s. About Bill's height and body type.

Bill looks to Carroll. Nods. Carroll removes his wallet.

INT. BILL'S HOUSE - ELLIOTT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bill reads a bedtime story to Elliott as Marie watches.

INT. BILL'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bill and Marie make love. Warm and tender.

INT. JOHN'S NEW APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

John and Maureen make love. More violent. John looking as if he's trying to escape from his own skin.

EXT. BELLEVUE HOSPITAL - REAR ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Leary wheels out the body on a stretcher, under a sheet, to Carroll's car. Bill keeps an eye out as Carroll and Leary load the body into Carroll's trunk and SLAM it shut.

INT. BILL'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Bill dresses himself in the darkness. Watches Marie sleep.

INT. JOHN'S NEW APARTMENT - BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

John, who looks like he hasn't slept in days, watches Maureen sleep. Drinks straight from a whiskey bottle.

EXT. BILL'S HOUSE - MORNING

Bill walks outside. Looks up at his house for a long moment. Turns and walks up the street until he vanishes from view.

INT. CANDY STORE - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

John, on pins and needles, plays cards with Cohen, Weiss, and a young guy, IRVING, 20s.

COHEN

Did Levine fix that slot problem at
Workman's arcade?

WEISS

Course not, Levine can't fix shit.
Why'd you pick him to fix a slot?
He'll rob it himself.

(MORE)

WEISS (CONT'D)

Won't schlep the coins, neither,
he'll heist the fucking machine.

(to John)

You take care of that thing yet?

John squirms. Cohen notices, covers for him:

COHEN

Quit stalling. I raise you fifty.

WEISS

Fifty? Dark and lonely road you're
traveling. Raise you sixty-five.

COHEN

Weiss, you are cruel. Fold.

IRVING

I'll see that action.

(to John)

How about it? Or you feeling
scared like your old man?

Without hesitation, John tackles Irving to the ground,
PUMMELS him. Cohen yanks him off.

COHEN

Enough. Home with ya. Home!

John storms out. Cohen looks at Weiss, chuckles.

WEISS

Younger generation, I swear...

They sit and deal another round, not bothering to help
Irving, still laid out on the floor.

EXT. DARK STREET - NIGHT

John walks along a dark, empty street. Suddenly, Carroll's
car pulls up next to him. FOOTSTEPS rush up...and before
John can experience deja vu, Keller and Malvoy grab his arms,
throw him into the back seat of Carroll's car, walk away.

INT. CARROLL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The car takes off. John recognizes Carroll at the wheel.

JOHN

What is this? Where's Bill?

Carroll doesn't respond or look back.

EXT. CITY PARK - NIGHT

An empty Brooklyn field. Carroll's car pulls in, parks. Carroll gets out, draws a pistol, opens the back door.

John gets out, wary. Carroll jams the gun into his side, pushes him forward towards another car, parked in the center of the field.

They reach the car. Carroll tosses John the keys. John looks at the keys. Looks to the trunk. Unlocks it. Opens it. Revealing

BILL'S BODY. Or a dead ringer for it. Same build, Bill's clothes. Face down. Head half shot off. Badge next to him.

John stares. Looks to Carroll, face filling with horror, rage...and relief. His hand moves to the gun in his belt.

CARROLL

Don't make me put you in there with him. He wouldn't have wanted that.

JOHN

(barely able to speak)
...Why...?

Carroll reaches into his coat, removes the photo John gave Bill. Lays it on the body where John can see it.

CARROLL

If you didn't kill him, they would have killed you. He didn't want you to have to make that choice. So he put a gun to his head and chose for himself.

John closes his eyes. He looks as if he's going to explode. Carroll takes out Bill's gun, tosses it in the trunk.

CARROLL (CONT'D)

You tell them you shot him in the head with his own gun, then you burned the body. His teeth are blown out, you'll want to leave the badge so his family knows who to bury. Gas is in the front seat.

John stares at him. Trying not to shake.

CARROLL (CONT'D)

You're on your own. We can't protect you now. Not that you wanted it...

(MORE)

CARROLL (CONT'D)
 (off John's face)
 Never forget what he did for you...

Carroll lowers his gun. Backs up. Turns, hurries to his car, starts it, drives away.

John watches him leave. Looks to the gun and badge. Looks to the body in the trunk. Starts to lift it to see the face. Sees a bed of blood and brain. Drops the body. Turns away. Breathes in, out. In, out. In, out.

LATER

John pours gasoline over the body. Lights a match, tosses it in. Backs away. Watches the car ignite and EXPLODE. Turns, runs, vanishes into the darkness.

INT. PEARCY'S OFFICE - DAY

Pearcy pacing, seething. Carroll at attention.

PEARCY
 Can't ID his teeth with dignity.
 Just a mangled fucking badge...

CARROLL
 We'll nail them, sir.

PEARCY
 He has a boy, Carroll. A kid...

CARROLL
 Elliot. I know...uh...John Oakley
 is still in the wind, sir.

Pearcy looks at Carroll a long time.

PEARCY
 What do you suggest?

CARROLL
 Leave him in the field. He might
 be able to find out who did this.
 We, uh, we owe it to Bill.

PEARCY
 ...So be it.

INT. JOHN'S NEW APARTMENT - DAY

The fern sits by the window, sunlight hitting it.

John stares at it. On the table before him, a newspaper. Headline: FBI AGENT KILLED, above a photo of Bill.

John moves to the fern. Trims a leaf away. ON SOUND OF A FUNERAL HYMN...

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

A graveside funeral service. Everyone in Percy's squad present. Also: Marie, Elliott, MARIE'S PARENTS. Marie WAILING as the PRIEST intones.

At a distance, where no one can see him, John watches from behind a tree. Absorbing what he's helped facilitate.

WE SEE B&W PHOTOS, accompanied by CAMERA CLICKS: The service as captured by FBI PHOTOGRAPHERS...then we see...

MORE B&W PHOTOS. Only now, these are OF the FBI photographers...

ALONG THE CEMETERY PATH

Lined with mourners' vehicles, a GANGSTER LENSMAN in a car photographs the ceremony -- and, incidentally, every member of Bill's squad -- with a telephoto lens.

GANGSTER LENSMAN

Show me them pearly whites, you
fearless lawmen...that's it...

(to DRIVER)

All right, I got 'em. Let's get...

Trailing off, he notices someone in the distance. John.

GANGSTER LENSMAN (CONT'D)

...what do we have here?

Gangster Lensman aims at John, SNAPS.

INT. BAR IN BENSONHURST - DAY

John sits, drinking. Cohen sits next to him. John tries to mask the angst in his face. Nonchalant:

JOHN

I took care of it.

Cohen claps him on the back, proud. Walks off to sit with other MOBSTERS at a table. John keeps drinking.

INT. CARROLL'S CAR - NIGHT

Parked in a deserted lot. A RAPPING at the passenger door; then a figure slides in -- IT'S BILL. Four-day scruff.

BILL
How'd it play?

CARROLL
He bought it. He's with them now.

BILL
Good...how's, uh...

CARROLL
Her husband died. How you think?

BILL
...You look after her. Do that.

CARROLL
...Yeah...Bill...

BILL
What we...stand for has
been...used. I can't let that
stand. I shouldn't let it stand.
(losing control a bit)
I did what was necessary, what was
right, I did what I had to...

Carroll reluctantly nods. Bill clears his throat.

BILL (CONT'D)
This was a high-level operation.
Who's in charge of the files for
ongoing ops?

CARROLL
That's kept hush-hush. If anyone
got access to the opens, they'd
know everything we're involved in.

BILL
Hush-hush, not unknown. Someone
knows that person's identity. Who
do we know that would know that?

CARROLL
...Office heads would be privy to
that information.

BILL
We never did get a private office.

EXT. BILL'S HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - EVENING

John knocks on the door. Marie answers. Stops moving.

INT. BILL'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

John stares at the photos of John and Hoover on the wall. Marie approaches, hands him a cup of coffee.

MARIE

You didn't come to the funeral.

JOHN

...Circumstances...

MARIE

It's all right. I know you two weren't close.

John removes an envelope from his pocket, holds it out.

JOHN

I brought something...I thought...

She looks at him askew. He places it on the coffee table.

MARIE

Why did you come here?

JOHN

...I, um...I feel like I should have...known him better...I thought I did, but...I look at these walls, and it's...he's a mystery to me.

MARIE

...That's a thing about Bill.

INT. PEARCY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Bill and Carroll, faces masked with handkerchiefs, jimmy the door to Percy's office and move through it with flashlights. Pulling files from his desk and cabinet. Searching.

MARIE (V.O.)

He hates mysteries. I think that's why he worships Hoover. Like having a father with the answer to every stupid question.

Bill flips through papers. Stops at one. Waves it. They rush from the office.

INT. BILL'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

MARIE

But as far as what went on inside his heart...he was like looking into a lake with ice all over.

JOHN

...Did he ever talk about us?

MARIE

...He...felt guilty, I think. About things that happened between you...things he didn't...
(off John's face)
No. He didn't talk about you much.

Elliott, pajamas on, wanders in rubbing his eyes.

ELLIOTT

Mommy...

MARIE

Shh. Time for sleep...

She picks up Elliott. Looks at John a moment. Then walks away, whispering to her son. John watches them go.

CARROLL (V.O.)

Who's in D.C.?

INT. PHONE BOOTH OUTSIDE FEDERAL BUILDING - MORNING

Carroll on the phone. Up above, YELLING can be heard from Percy's office, even out here. INTERCUT WITH:

INT. PHONE BOOTH OUTSIDE GRAND CENTRAL STATION - CONTINUOUS

Bill, looking through the file stolen from Percy's office.

BILL

Harold Ailesworth. He's in charge of open cases. If I know FBI, he's got the sensitive files off-site, maybe at his house. I'll know tonight. How's the office?

CARROLL

Federal break-in, pal, it's a shitstorm. Percy had to report to Hoover. He is not happy.

BILL
Just keep your head down and act
dumb. I'll be in touch.

CARROLL
Will do.

Carroll exits the booth -- and is nearly hit by a PHONE
hurled from Percy's window. CONSTRUCTION WORKERS HOOT as it
SHATTERS on the pavement.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER
Steeee-riike!

INT. JOHN'S NEW APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING

A BANGING at the door. John crawls from bed and heads to
THE FRONT DOOR

Opens it to see Cohen, pissed.

COHEN
Train time.

JOHN
Uh, sure, sure. Where?

COHEN
Washington D.C.

INT. A TRAIN BOUND FOR WASHINGTON D.C. - DAY

ANGLE, a wallet photo of Bill, Marie and Elliott.

Bill stares at it hard. Puts it away. Glances at the paper
in his lap. Headline: NATIONWIDE FACTORY STRIKES END. Sub-
head: "New UFW Heads Promise No More Un-American Influence."

He puts it down. Examines his reflection in the window.

INT. A DIFFERENT D.C. BOUND TRAIN - DAY

John and Cohen. Cohen seems distracted.

JOHN
You okay?

COHEN
Sorry. I'm in a bad place.

JOHN
Anything I can do?

COHEN
No, no...I, uh, think Maureen might
be involved with someone.

JOHN
(tenses up)
...No...

COHEN
I shoulda seen it coming. She's
young, pretty. What am I to her?

JOHN
A fuckin' catch.

Cohen nods. Coughs. Looks away.

EXT. AILESWORTH'S HOUSE - WASHINGTON D.C. - NIGHT

AILESWORTH, 50s, walks up to his front door. Slips a key
into the lock, opens the door. Suddenly, Bill jabs a SAWED-
OFF SHOTGUN into his back while covering his mouth. Shoves
him inside, SLAMS the door.

INT. AILESWORTH'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Bill pushes Ailesworth forward, flips on the nearest light.

BILL
You're in charge of files for
ongoing operations. I know you
carry the ones you don't want on
the books. Where are they?

Ailesworth squints.

AILESWORTH
...I know you...you're Oakley...
(Bill freezes)
We were mildly curious how you got
yourself dead when you're supposed
to be monitoring subversives...
(realizing)
...but that's not what Percy has
you doing in that office, is it?

Bill SMASHES Ailesworth across the forehead with his gun.

AILESWORTH (CONT'D)
 Hoover'll be thrilled when he finds
 out you faked your murder during an
 unsanctioned mission...

BILL
 He'll be giddy when he finds out
 your death wasn't faked at all.
 (puts gun to his head)
 Files.

INT. AILESWORTH'S HOUSE - OFFICE - NIGHT

CU - A file cabinet lock is rotated.

Ailesworth is shoved into a chair as Bill opens the cabinet,
 revealing dozens of anonymous-looking FILE FOLDERS.

AILESWORTH
 You're digging a deep hole, son...

BILL
 I'm not interested in all ops, just
 one. Supplying Bureau cover to
 Murder Incorporated.

AILESWORTH
 ...Zero Red? How do you...

Bill looks up.

BILL
 You know what it is.

Ailesworth is silent. Bill FIRES his gun next to
 Ailesworth's head. Ailesworth cringes.

BILL (CONT'D)
 Talk.

AILESWORTH
 Son, you want to turn around and
 walk out that door, believe me...

A KNOCK is heard at the door. Bill stares at Ailesworth.
 Holds up his gun. Holds up his finger -- SHH.

Ailesworth reluctantly nods. Stands, exits the room. Bill
 backs against a wall, peering around the doorjamb...

BILL'S POV: Ailesworth answers the door, just out of sight.
 Before he can speak --

A muffled THUMP and CRY -- Ailesworth is dragged into view, a wire wrapped around his neck, by...JOHN.

Bill panics. Sees a mirrored closet, ducks inside, shuts it -

INT. TWO-WAY CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

Bill realizes he's behind a TWO-WAY MIRROR. A moment later, John drags Ailesworth into the room. Cohen follows, twirling a pipe in his hand.

Bill blanches as Cohen shows Ailesworth the pipe before BASHING him in the face with it, over and over. Bill has no choice but to watch in horror, completely silent. John avoids looking at this, instead studying Ailesworth's expensive desk as he lowers the body to the floor.

JOHN

Who was this guy, we had to rush here so quick?

COHEN

Beats me. Somebody wanted him dead before somebody else could get to him, and that's that. Wait here.

Cohen exits. John sits at the desk. Kicks his feet up. Rotates so he can examine himself in the mirror... Bill watches him...

John looks at Ailesworth. His expression changes. He stands. Walks over. Kneels by the body. Looks sickened, either with the body or with himself. Looks up.

Bill stops breathing as John stands in front of the mirror. He looks far older than he did only a few months prior. He removes his pistol. Aims it at his reflection.

Bill's heart stops. The gun is aimed between his eyes. He watches John's face tighten with anger, fear, vulnerability --

Cohen walks in, can of gasoline in hand.

COHEN (CONT'D)

See something you like, princess?

John snaps out of it. Cohen pours gasoline on Ailesworth. Drops a lighter, IGNITES the body, walks out. John follows.

Bill exhales. Exits the closet.

INT. AILESWORTH'S HOUSE - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Bill rushes to the file cabinet. Scans through the folders as fast as he can, the flames almost at his feet. He spots something thick, lifts it. The folder name: "OP ZERO RED."

He races from the room, folder in hand, as the room is engulfed in flames.

INT. NEW YORK-BOUND TRAIN - NIGHT

Bill sits by the window, folder in lap. Notices a streak of red on his pants ankle. Crosses his leg. Up close: it's Ailesworth's BLOOD.

INT. NEW YORK-BOUND TRAIN - BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Bill rubs the blood with a wet towel. It smears. He tosses the towel to the floor. Tucks his sock over the ankle. Composes himself. Tries to act casual as he sits back down.

INT. CANDY STORE - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

The room is filled with members of Murder Inc. John and Cohen near the back. Tannenbaum handing out photographs.

TANNENBAUM

Lepke asked me to convey to you all that you've been doing a grand job. You get a big fucking bonus now this union thing's consolidated.

CLAPS, CHEERS. John examines the photo he's been handed. Pretends not to recognize the face of GORDON GANCE, taken at a political rally.

TANNENBAUM (CONT'D)

Each of you is getting a snapshot. Front's a man, back's his info. Memorize both. Now beat it. Go home before your wives get mad.

Everybody heads for the door. Weiss catches John by the arm.

WEISS

Hey, John, you mind holding up?

John shrugs. The room clears out, leaving only him, Weiss and Tannenbaum. Weiss gestures to a seat. John sits.

JOHN
Is this about D.C.?

TANNENBAUM
No. You did good up there.

WEISS
This is about we're getting eyes on
the FBI guys that are tailing us.

Weiss drops a photo in his lap. It's of John at the funeral.

WEISS (CONT'D)
Lo and fucking behold, we get eyes
on you, too. Whaddya know?

John doesn't respond. He's starting to sweat.

TANNENBAUM
It seems odd that you'd hang around
the funeral of a man you just
contributed to the dirt. Don't you
think it seems odd?

JOHN
(long, careful pause)
He was doin' for his side what we
do for ours. That deserves a show
of respect. That's how I see it.

WEISS
That's how you see it...

Tannenbaum looks to Weiss -- relax. BEAT.

TANNENBAUM
I can appreciate that. But don't
get sentimental on us. Okay?

John nods. Gestures to the door. Tannenbaum nods. John
exits. Weiss looks to Tannenbaum, doubtful.

WEISS
I don't like it.

TANNENBAUM
Charles likes him. Last thing we
need right now is Charles angry.

WEISS
Yeah...I don't know. Do another
background on him. To be safe.
(thinks)
(MORE)

WEISS (CONT'D)

And check up this dead agent that's got him all respectful. See if he's worth a soft heart.

INT. CARROLL'S APARTMENT - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Carroll answers a knock at the door to see Bill, looking paranoid. Bill holds up the "OP ZERO RED" folder.

INT. CARROLL'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Bill and Carroll pore over files. Scribbling down dates and names with pencils worn to the nub. Mainlining black coffee.

BILL

1931...do we have any cases pre-dating 1931?

CARROLL

Let me see, let me see...no.

BILL

So this begins in 1931. Why 1931?

CARROLL

...When were the last big mob wars? On the national level?
(Bill looks at him)
Last eight, things have been business-like. Relatively.

Bill snaps his fingers, scribbles away.

BILL

Underworld enters period of peace and prosperity, commensurate with the inauguration of Zero Red...

CARROLL

...which is also when Murder, Incorporated becomes active.

BILL

Zero Red begins, Murder Inc. begins, mob starts playing nice. All at once. So they're connected.

Carroll flips through the files, brow furrowing.

CARROLL

What are these numbers?

BILL

What?

Carroll traces to a series of numbers in each file.

CARROLL

These are serial numbers. For weapons, like with Groghan.

BILL

Is there a file for Groghan?

CARROLL

(finds file)

Groghan, Groghan...yep.

(checks numbers in file)

Bingo. They match. The numbers we couldn't find for the stolen guns.

BILL

...So all these guys were killed by the mob using FBI cover...but why? Why them? Why these men?

CARROLL

Robert Sherman, National Socialist Workers, car crash...Albert Prince, Federal Labor Union, radio in bathtub...

BILL

All union?

CARROLL

All heads of unions...all officially unsolved...all killed and replaced by figures associated with Murder, Incorporated. Benjy Shapiro, Marty Robinson...Christ, we're looking at every union takeover in the last decade. And we engineered them.

BILL

That doesn't make sense. Why would the Bureau...

Suddenly, he pauses. BEAT.

SILENT FLASH of Bill on the train. Glancing at the newspaper headline. Sub-head: "New UFW Heads Promise No More Un-American Influence."

Bill looks at the folder heading again: OP ZERO RED. CLOSE ON the last word: RED.

BILL (CONT'D)
 Zero Red...Zero Red...no Reds...
 (realizing)
 What were Groghan's politics?

CARROLL
 What?

BILL
 His political affiliations.

CARROLL
 (checks file)
 ...Sighted at American Communist
 Party meetings. Huh.

BILL
 What about the others?

CARROLL
 (examining files)
 National Socialist Workers...
 Marxist Labor Party...what is this?

BILL
 What were those unions like after
 these men died? Were they still
 engaged in Socialist activities?
 Marxism? Communism? Any so-called
 anti-American movements?

Carroll examines the files. Squints.

CARROLL
 ...No...no, they weren't. But
 that's crazy. Since when does the
 mob care about that stuff?

BILL
 ...They don't. But we do.
 (eyes lighting up)
 All these men are enemies of the
 state. Murder Incorporated rubs
 them out and takes over. Unions
 are back in the hands of good,
 clean...democratic hands.

CARROLL
 Gangsters are immigrants. They do
 love the land of opportunity...

BILL

They kill political dissenters in power positions, and we blind-eye whatever else they do.

(working it out)

Gance wants to dig into the labor rackets. If he connects the dots, that's it. All this falls apart.

CARROLL

My God. Bill, they're not just killing citizens. They control half the work force in the country. Under our say-so.

Bill doesn't answer. He doesn't want to.

CARROLL (CONT'D)

...Who would authorize this? Who's obsessed with Reds in the...

BEAT. Carroll looks to Bill. He already knows the answer. His face is sinking.

CARROLL (CONT'D)

Hoover...subversives and bunny rabbits. Jesus fucking Christ...

Bill sits perfectly still, the enormity of what he's pondering hitting him for the first time. HOLD.

INT. JOHN'S NEW APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

A bedside phone RINGS. John, still wide awake, answers:

JOHN

What?

COHEN (V.O.)

(drunken or upset)

...Johnny?

JOHN

Charlie? What time is it?

COHEN (V.O.)

...I need you...to help me out...Johnny...Johnny Boy...

JOHN

Where are you?

COHEN (V.O.)
 ...Maureen's...I'm at...this isn't
 good...Johnny...

JOHN
 ...Sure. What's the address?
 I've, uh, never been there...I'll
 be right over.

John panics. He hops from bed, grabs his keys --

EXT. MAUREEN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

A taxi pulls up; John gets out. He stares up at the well-kept building. Terror in his eyes.

INT. MAUREEN'S APARTMENT BUILDING HALLWAY - NIGHT

The elevator opens. John proceeds slowly down the hallway to Maureen's apartment. The door is ajar. He opens it, steps

INSIDE

And his foot hits an overturned lamp. As he stares down at it...

QUICK FLASH of Young John staring at his mother's coat rack.

John slowly looks up, blood draining from his face. Down the hallway, a FOOT can be seen. Maureen's. Twitching.

John slowly approaches. Rounds the corner and looks into

THE KITCHEN

Cohen at the sink, aggressively scrubbing his hands to wash them of blood. Maureen on the floor, face down.

John stares in mute shock. His eyes rise to meet Cohen.

Cohen raises his head slightly. Doesn't turn. Speaks in a voice both intoxicated and angry:

COHEN (V.O.)
 I got carried away again...why do I
 always get carried away?

Over this, CRACKLY MUSIC STARTS TO PLAY...CONTINUING OVER:

EXT. DINGY MOTEL - EARLY MORNING

Like it sounds. Sun rising.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - EARLY MORNING

Sun coming through the cheap blinds. Hitting all the files. Spilling out over a ratty bed.

Bill stands in a corner. Up all night, maybe a little drunk. Staring at them. The sum total of his mission.

INT. MAUREEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Cohen and John roll up Maureen's body in her rug.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - EARLY MORNING

Bill crouches in the corner. Stares at his family photo.

INT. COHEN'S CAR - NIGHT

Cohen and John ride in silence, the only sound the MUSIC we've been hearing, coming over the car radio.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - EARLY MORNING

Bill now looks at a photo of himself and John as kids with their sister and parents. Tears running down his cheeks.

EXT. BROWNSVILLE STREET - NIGHT

Cohen and John force the rug into the trunk of some REGULAR JOE's car on a quiet street, SLAM it shut. John stares at Cohen. In the dark, his eyes can't be read.

EXT. CEMETERY - MORNING

Bill stands at his own grave. Stares at it. Eyes red. Pulls a gun from his belt.

INT. JOHN'S NEW APARTMENT - MORNING

John, eyes blazing, stares at the fern plant on his window. He grabs it by its stalk. Squeezes.

EXT. CEMETERY - CONTINUOUS

Bill holds the gun up. Studies it. Holds it under his chin, ready to pull the trigger...staring at his grave. BEAT.

Then something flickers in Bill's eyes. A sense of something internal resolving itself. He lowers the gun.

INT. JOHN'S NEW APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

John slowly TEARS all the leaves from the fern in one movement, drawing blood from his hand. Eyes on fire.

INT. CANDY STORE - EVENING

Cohen kneels, perusing the candy behind the counter.

ECKSTEIN (O.S.)
Charlie. Break away from sweets
and spare a moment.

Cohen stands, walks to the back room.

INT. CARROLL'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Carroll enters. Heads for his living room, flips on a light:

Revealing John, standing in the dark, waiting. Carroll jumps back, reaches for his holster. John raises something -- it's not a gun. Carroll lowers his hands.

CARROLL
What is that?

JOHN
Not here. I don't feel safe here.

INT. CANDY STORE - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Tannenbaum drops the picture of John at Bill's funeral in front of Cohen. He gazes at it mildly, looks up.

WEISS
Your boy's with the FBI.

Cohen looks at the picture again.

EXT. ROOF OF CARROLL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

John holds up the picture of Gance to Carroll.

JOHN

I found Gance's hitter. Say hello.

INT. CANDY STORE - BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

TANNENBAUM

We checked up. This Agent Bill
Oakley has a brother.

(hands him another photo)

Whoever the FBI's got fixing old
prison records, someone should tell
'em to be more thorough.

Cohen stares at an old prison mug shot of John, from his
early 20s. Name beneath the face: OAKLEY, JOHN.

JOHN (V.O.)

You know something.

EXT. ROOF OF CARROLL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

John stares at Carroll. Torment in his voice.

JOHN

You know something I don't know.
And if you want Gance alive, you're
going to tell me what it is.

INT. CANDY STORE - BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cohen shakes his head.

COHEN

You're lying to me.

Weiss looks to Tannenbaum. Tannenbaum nods. Weiss drops one
last photo in front of Cohen. He wills himself to look.
It's of John and Maureen entering her apartment building.

JOHN (V.O.)

Stop lying to me!

EXT. ROOF OF CARROLL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

John yelling at Carroll now, as much desperate as angry.

CARROLL
I'm not lying to you --

JOHN
Yes, you ARE. You're LYING.

CARROLL
About what? What am I hiding?

JOHN
Cohen. Why him? Why did Bill want
me to get close to him?

INT. CANDY STORE - BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cohen's face slowly changes as he stares at the photo. Fills
with an animal rage we haven't seen from him before.

EXT. ROOF OF CARROLL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Carroll looks at John. Almost apologetic.

CARROLL
He thought you...it would help you
if you were the one who got him.

JOHN
...Got him for what?

INT. CANDY STORE - BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cohen looks up. Tannenbaum and Weiss are frightened despite
themselves.

TANNENBAUM
We figured you'd want to take him.
Being as you're close and all.

Cohen stares at the photo again. Trying to decide.

EXT. ROOF OF CARROLL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Carroll sighs helplessly.

CARROLL
...Your family. Your parents...

JOHN
-- Wait. What about my family? My
family? What...

CARROLL
Cohen...he...

John blinks. BEAT.

JOHN
No.
(Carroll is silent)
No.

Carroll approaches; John backs up. Pulls out his pistol.

CARROLL
He couldn't tell you yet --

JOHN
Get away from me.

CARROLL
John, look at me.

John aims his pistol at Carroll's face. His eyes crazed. Carroll doesn't blink. Deciding how much to reveal.

CARROLL (CONT'D)
If you kill him, you're putting
Bill's wife and son in danger. He
sacrificed himself for them. And
you. Don't waste that.

John doesn't lower the gun. But he may have heard Carroll.

INT. CANDY STORE - BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cohen looks to Tannenbaum. Calm resolve in his eyes.

COHEN
He lives.

TANNENBAUM
Charles, we gotta assume he told
the feds everything about us.

COHEN
You were going to have me take him
after Gance, anyway. Weren't you?

Tannenbaum looks to Weiss. Cohen sighs.

TANNENBAUM
A fall guy's the smart play.

COHEN

It is...

(thinking)

...and the FBI might not be too aggressive investigating if their own spy was to kill a senator.

Tannebaum straightens up -- Cohen's onto something.

COHEN (CONT'D)

So. We let him take Gance.

(pause)

And since he's telling them what they want to hear...let's tell them what we want them to hear.

EXT. ROOF OF CARROLL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

John slowly lowers the gun.

CARROLL

We have to catch them in the act. When the Gance hit is in motion, we'll move in. At which point, you do what you have to do. Just wait. This will all end soon, I swear.

John regains his composure. Looks away. HOLD.

INT. FEDERAL OFFICE - MORNING

AGENTS nudge each other, murmuring as they see Bill. Beaten-up, but still recognizable. Walking towards Percy's office. The OP ZERO RED folder in hand.

Percy, on the phone, sees him coming. Goes slack-jawed. Hangs up mid-call as Bill enters his office.

BILL

...Help me...

Percy shuts the door. Shuts the blinds.

INT. PEARCY'S OFFICE - LATER

Percy closes the OP ZERO RED folder. Looks at Bill, sitting across from him. Carroll has joined them.

PEARCY

After I reported the theft of the ops file, Ailesworth was intercepted by Cohen. We must assume any intel given to Hoover will be relayed to the mob. Do we have a date on the Gance hit?

CARROLL

Soon. Very soon.

PEARCY

Does John know about Cohen?

Carroll looks to Bill. Nods. Bill grimaces a bit.

PEARCY (CONT'D)

Does he know you're alive?

BILL

No.

PEARCY

Good. Neither will anyone else. You're confined to the office until further notice.

(pause)

You are one...mad son of a bitch. You know that?

Bill nods. Pearcy studies his face.

INT. ELDRIDGE STREET SYNAGOGUE - DAY

Nearly empty, despite its massive size. Cohen reclines on a bench, studying the stained-glass windows. John enters, sees him. Approaches, sits beside him. The atmosphere strange.

COHEN

Beautiful. They used to bring new immigrants in here. Did it with me, said, welcome to your new home. Come in here now, I feel like I'm desecrating the place.

JOHN

It's quite an accomplishment.

COHEN

It's the scale. Someone built this. Makes you wonder what else you could have done with the time you're given.

JOHN
You wish you did something else?

COHEN
Repentance is for Catholics. I
came here, I did what I had to.

JOHN
...No regrets?

Cohen shrugs. John grits his teeth as he continues:

JOHN (CONT'D)
...Not even Maureen? All that
talk...letting a lady go free?

Cohen shifts in his seat, reaches into his pocket. Almost
unaware, John panics. Fingers his gun in his pocket...

COHEN
Yeah, well. I contradict myself.
They called me as a kid, "Charlie-
and-Change", 'cause I was of a
handful of minds on anything.

Cohen pulls out a box of lemon drops. John relaxes, barely.
Cohen pops one, offers John the box. John shakes his head.

COHEN (CONT'D)
Gance is making a round of speeches
next week, Saturday to Wednesday.
Rallying for Armistice, hoping
maybe the Jews, wops, micks and
Polacks are dumb enough to take the
first bullets if we join the war.
He's doing one Tuesday in Central
Park. He won't finish it to do one
on Wednesday.

JOHN
Not a problem.

Cohen smiles, as if at some private joke.

COHEN
I never understand why more Jews
don't have that American, ahh...

He makes a balled-fist gesture.

JOHN
Balls?

COHEN

Balls, yeah. Swagger. We're supposed to cower, but we were first. All these other cunts, they forget that. What to do? We act like mice, they stomp. We act like wolves and bite back, they cry wolf and come hunting. It's a spiral, it's just a question, do we spiral down, or up? Down or up.

(sighs)

Anyways. Generation or two, there won't be Jews or anyone else in America. Just Americans. Then we can put down the guns and breathe. Be gentle again. Hopefully.

A long silence. Then Cohen spits the lemon drop into its wrapper. Claps his hand on John's shoulder.

COHEN (CONT'D)

You're a good boy...

He stands and walks out. Never once having looked at John.

John stares up at the stained glass. HOLD.

INT. FEDERAL OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

Bill and Carroll up front. The other Agents eyeing them with something approaching awe.

PEARCY

All right, stop gawking at Lazarus and listen up. Next Tuesday, Murder Incorporated will hit Gance. Unfortunately for the Fuckhead Glee Club, we are going to sweep them in one wave, one day prior. That's Monday, so mark your calendars.

(more serious)

You are also aware, by now, of the rumors that we have been betrayed by our own higher-ups. That if we were to arrest mob members, their incarcerations would be short-lived. These are not rumors. They are fact.

(groaning around the room)

On the other hand...if said members were to react violently when approached...well, then, what option would fate leave us?

Everyone looks around, nodding their assent.

PEARCY (CONT'D)

This is not a choice you should have to make. It may end your careers. It will almost certainly end mine. But doing the right thing can be measured in sacrifice. This, I believe...

Bill looks out at the other Agents. Silent.

PEARCY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

...this, Agent Oakley has learned.

EXT. BLOCK ON THE LOWER EAST SIDE - MORNING

An early winter morning, snow falling, which isn't deterring hundreds of people, mostly Jewish, a few Italian, from flooding the block for a STREET FESTIVAL, part political rally, part block party. MERCHANTS have stands up. A few cars slowly push their way through the crowd. At the end of the block, a STAGE has been erected with two microphones and a bandstand, upon which a MARCHING BAND is rehearsing.

INT. PEARCY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - MORNING

Pearcy fast asleep, snoring.

INT. WEISS' KITCHEN - MORNING

Weiss prepares breakfast, stopping to turn the radio dial, next to which dangles his gun holster.

INT. CARROLL'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING

Carroll asleep with a DIFFERENT LADY FRIEND.

INT. PITTSBURGH PHIL'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Pittsburgh Phil loads a tommy gun without looking, his attention occupied by the paper. We notice the date of the paper: SATURDAY. Three days before the scheduled attack.

INT. BILL'S OFFICE - MORNING

Bill on a cot in the corner. Squinting as sun hits his eyes.

INT. JOHN'S NEW APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING

John bolts awake as the front door is KICKED in. A moment later, Cohen appears.

EXT. BLOCK ON THE LOWER EAST SIDE - MORNING

A rented LIMOUSINE rounds the corner at the end of the block.

EXT. ECKSTEIN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Eckstein walks out his front door, a satchel slung over his shoulder. His WIFE steps outside; he hurries back, kisses her goodbye, walks to his car.

We catch a glimpse of a PHOTO in his hand, the one he was handed at the meeting -- of CARROLL, taken at Bill's funeral.

INT. PEARCY'S OFFICE - MORNING

Bill stands, walks to the window. Looks over the cityscape.

EXT. JOHN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - MORNING

John, hurriedly dressed and more than a little worried, gets into Cohen's car. They take off.

INT. GANCE'S LIMO - MORNING

BYSTANDERS press their faces against the glass, YAMMERING, trying to glimpse the passenger, who we see only in shadow...

INT. RANDOM HITMAN'S CAR - MORNING

Two RANDOM HITMEN. One drives, the other checks the chamber of a shotgun. A funeral photo of PEARCY visible on his lap.

INT. PEARCY'S OFFICE - MORNING

Bill looks around at the office, empty on a weekend.

GANCE'S ASSISTANT (V.O.)
Sir, I wouldn't recommend it...

INT. GANCE'S LIMO - MORNING

GANCE, 40s, suited, looks out at the crowd:

GANCE

Of course you wouldn't, Hank, which is why you have friends. I, on the other hand, have constituents.

Gance opens the door and steps outside, smiling and mingling with passerby as if he's one of them.

GANCE (CONT'D)

Hello, hi, how are you? Senator Gordon Gance, pleased to meet...

EXT. ROOFTOP - THAT MOMENT

Looking down on Gance as he moves slowly toward the stage at the end of the block, gladhanding the crowd gathering around him. MARCHING BAND practice tunes mixing with CROWD NOISE.

John and Cohen come into VIEW, staring down at Gance from a tenement rooftop. They pace him, Cohen a couple steps ahead, jumping from rooftop to rooftop. GOLF BAGS on their backs.

John keeps glancing at Cohen, tempted to shoot him in the back right then and there, resisting the urge...

ON THE STREET

As Gance reaches the stage, the marching band starts PLAYING A CELEBRATORY THEME. An ANNOUNCER taps the microphone.

ANNOUNCER

Is this thing on? Okay, uh, greetings, everyone! On behalf of everyone in our office, I want to welcome you to this celebration...

ON THE ROOFTOP

Cohen, leading John, stops at a building just adjacent to the stage. Pulling a blackjack from his coat, he BREAKS the lock on the roof stairwell, ducks into it. John follows.

EXT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS

ANNOUNCER

...so I'd like to introduce, now,
the man who made this possible...a
true American patriot...your
representative to the United States
Senate, Gordon Gance!

A wave of APPLAUSE as Gance makes his way onstage...

INT. TENEMENT - TOP FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Cohen and John stop before an apartment. Cohen HAMMERS on the door. An OLD MAN unlocks, speaks in Polish. Without pause, Cohen SMASHES the Old Man with the blackjack, dropping him. He and John head inside, shut the door.

EXT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Gance at the first microphone, Translator at the second.

GANCE

Hello.

(pause)

Shalom.

(CLAPS from Jews)

Buongiorno.

(YELLS from Italians)

Dia daoibh -- whoops, wrong
neighborhood.

Laughter, appreciative APPLAUSE.

INT. OLD MAN'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Cramped. Everything backlit by falling snow, visible through windows on the side of the room.

Cohen is already sliding up by one of the windows and unloading a SNIPER RIFLE from his golf bag. John is positioned by another window, staring at the Old Man lying by the door, apparently dead.

Cohen coughs. John snaps to. Takes out his own rifle.

EXT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Gance faces the crowd.

GANCE

My father was an immigrant. He came here to find a good life.

INT. PEARCY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Bill listens to a radio broadcast of Gance's speech.

GANCE (V.O.)

And so, when asked who I would like to speak to first this week, I said to them, let me speak to my people, those who remember their lives from before, who honor this great nation by continuing their lives here!

(APPLAUSE from audience)

Friends, I'm here to talk about sacrifice. The greater good...

INT. OLD MAN'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

JOHN'S POV: Gance is in the sights of his rifle scope.

John glances over. Cohen is setting up his rifle for a backup shot. John stares at him, adrenaline racing...

JOHN

When do we take him?

COHEN

When the fireworks go off.

EXT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Gance stops talking. Becomes "solemn," politician-style.

GANCE

But first, here is something I would like to request. Please indulge me if you would. A friend of mine, Harry Goldstein, your district representative, passed away yesterday...and with respect to his faith, I ask permission to say Kaddish, here, on his behalf.

Gance bows his head, as do many of the Jews watching. Italians snicker. The Announcer slips him a sheet of paper with the JEWISH MOURNERS' KADDISH written on it. He begins to recite (he's rehearsed), and members of the crowd recite along with him, INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. KELLER'S HOUSE - MORNING

Keller walks to the curb to get the morning paper. Weiss steps up behind him, SHOOTS him in the head, walks off.

INT. MALFOY'S HOUSE - MORNING

As Malfoy eats breakfast, Pittsburgh Phil KICKS IN the door. STRAFES him with tommy gun fire as his WIFE SCREAMS.

INT./EXT. VARIOUS OTHER AGENTS' HOMES - MORNING

Various HITMEN interrupt the morning routines of various AGENTS from Bill's office by SHOOTING them dead, with pistols, tommy guns, shotguns. Wholesale slaughter.

INT. CARROLL'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MORNING

As Carroll pours coffee for his Lady Friend, Eckstein bursts into the living room, sees him in the kitchen, FIRES. Carroll pushes his SCREAMING Lady Friend to the floor, grabs his holster from the coat stand. Eckstein enters the kitchen, SHOOTS, hitting Carroll in the arm; Carroll RETURNS FIRE. Eckstein's brains splatter the refrigerator.

Carroll stares at this as his Lady Friend keeps SCREAMING.

INT. PEARCY'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - MORNING

Pearcy stands in the shower, HUMMING to himself.

INT. PEARCY'S HOUSE - STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

The two Hitmen with his picture walk up the stairs.

INT. PEARCY'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Pearcy turns off the shower. Stops HUMMING.

INT. PEARCY'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The Hitmen move down the hallway and into

THE BEDROOM

No sign of Percy. A LIGHT on in the bathroom. The Hitmen move to the door, KICK IT IN --

Revealing Percy sitting on the toilet in his bathrobe, a HUNTING SHOTGUN in his arms.

PEARCY

Hi there.

BLAM -- the First Hitman is blasted in half. The Other Hitman turns and runs. Percy walks after him into

THE UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

The Other Hitman makes it to the stairs, turns to fire. Percy is there to stick the shotgun in his chest. BLAM. The Other Hitman is blown down the stairs.

Percy smiles -- then sees the blood streaked across the photo of himself mounted on the wall. He frowns.

EXT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS

The Kaddish prayer ends. Gance raises his head.

GANCE

Thank you for that. It's such a beautiful prayer, isn't it?

INT. PEARCY'S OFFICE - MORNING

The phone RINGS on Percy's desk. Bill considers, picks up:

BILL

Bureau.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. CARROLL'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Carroll holding a towel against his arm. His Lady Friend CRYING hysterically in the b.g.

CARROLL

Bill, someone just shot me!

BILL

What? Slow down --

CARROLL

Shooter's dead. Bill, he's Murder Inc., I recognize him. We've been set up. They're not doing it Tuesday, they're doing it today.

(MORE)

CARROLL (CONT'D)

Now.

(Bill doesn't respond)
John lied to us. Either that or
they gave him false...

(realizing)

Christ. Bill, they know he's
undercover. Gance. Where's Gance
giving a speech today?

(no response)

Bill?

INT. PEARCY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The phone is dangling off the desk. In the b.g., Bill can be
seen running down the hall until he vanishes.

CARROLL (V.O.)

Bill? Bill?

INT. OLD MAN'S APARTMENT - MORNING

JOHN'S POV: Gance giving a speech below. The audience rapt.

John, sitting by his window, looks away from the scope to
Cohen. Nervous as hell, unsure of what to do.

JOHN

Shoulda hit him in another
neighborhood. Last thing we need
is people blaming Jews for
something else they didn't do.

COHEN

They won't. We've got a fall guy.

JOHN

Yeah? Who?

COHEN

Just a fella. Real piece of work.
A lover of the Irish.

John freezes. BEAT.

EXT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS

GANCE

To conclude, there's something I want to say to all of you, and I'm gonna say it in a language we can all understand, because all of us here, we're not Jewish any more. We're not Italian. Not Irish, or Polish, or anything else. We've been reborn on this soil, friends. We are Americans.

INT. OLD MAN'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

APPLAUSE below. Cohen shifts balance, keeps an eye on Gance.

COHEN

Why were you asking me about Maureen the other day?

John stares at Cohen. Squirms. Sweats, even in the cold...

Then he makes a decision. A decision to answer.

JOHN

...Her dying...it reminded me of my mother dying...did I ever tell you about my mother?

(no response)

She was shot. Just like my father and my little sister.

COHEN

That's just tragic.

JOHN

...Her name was Kaitlin. Her maiden name was Riordan.

Cohen remains absolutely still. His finger TWITCHES against the gun. John notices.

Cohen slowly turns toward him. His voice doesn't raise.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Funny. I thought I'd told you about her.

EXT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS

GANCE

So, fellow Americans, I'd like us
to sing our real national anthem,
in honor of a great Yank, Mr. Lou
Gehrig, and his retirement this
spring past, which came too soon...

(CHEERS from crowd)

...and because hearing it makes me
feel so good. Boys?

And with that, Gance starts to SING "Take Me Out To The Ball
Game." The band kicks in, and nearly everyone in the crowd
falls into line, turning it into a MASS SINGALONG...

INT. OLD MAN'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Cohen and John stare at each other. No breathing. The SONG
can be heard below, like a Christmas carol.

John reaches into his coat. Cohen does likewise. They both
draw their pistols, aim at each other. Neither fires.

Cohen rises. So does John. Their movements synced. Cohen
moves to the door, opens it. John keeps a bead on him.

The dam breaks -- John FIRES, just missing Cohen as he ducks
and runs into the hallway. John follows.

EXT. STAGE - CONTINUOUS

The song FINISHES. CHEERING, APPLAUSE.

GANCE

THANK YOU, AND ENJOY THE PARADE!
GOD BLESS AMERICA!

On cue, FIREWORKS are set off beside the stage...

INT. TENEMENT - TOP FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

John whips his gun around the corner. Sees Cohen disappear
into the stairwell. Takes off in pursuit. Races into

THE STAIRWELL

Sees the door to the floor below swinging open. GUNSHOTS are
heard, followed by SHATTERING GLASS. John runs onto

THE FLOOR BELOW

Turns, heads into

ANOTHER APARTMENT, ITS DOOR OPEN

Plows through the living room, gun drawn. Sees a broken window, moves toward it -- catches a glimpse of Cohen on the FIRE ESCAPE OUTSIDE -- a bullet SMASHES into the wall by his head. He ducks, hurries along the wall into

THE KITCHEN

Dodging more SHOTS. Stumbling over the apartment's TENANT, on the floor, shot dead. John looks away, continues into

THE BEDROOM

He heads to the window, BREAKS IT --

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE - CONTINUOUS

John looks down, sees Cohen leap to the fire escape of the adjacent building tower, two floors below. He spins and exchanges SHOTS with John.

John climbs onto the fire escape. Keeping low, he moves to the corner of the tower where Cohen stands, RETURNING FIRE.

A bullet glances off the railing above John's head. He ducks, slips on the ice-crusted escape. Falls. Catches the escape with his free hand just in time -- his gun slides away on the escape.

Cohen empties his gun FIRING at John, who twists and turns, trying to dodge. One shot GRAZES his loose arm. He grits his teeth, but doesn't let go.

Cohen's gun CLICKS. He curses, looks for an escape route. He sees a parked car directly below --

John dangles in mid-air. Sucks in breath, pulls himself up. Moves to the edge of the fire escape, scooping up his pistol on the way, then stops, not about to jump to the adjacent landing. Cohen looks down. John takes aim --

Cohen JUMPS. John FIRES, hitting his arm in mid-air, spinning him out of control -- he lands sideways on the windshield. Rolls off the car, falls to the ground.

John puts his gun away, kneels, begins descending the fire ladder at his feet.

Below, Cohen grabs the car bumper, slowly rises. John, back to him, doesn't notice.

As Cohen makes it to his feet, he places one foot on the bumper. Pulls a tiny PISTOL from his sock. Aims, FIRES. A bullet PINGS above John's head.

John loses his grip, slides down a few rungs, catches himself. Frees his gun from his coat, but is off balance and can't aim properly.

Another bullet PINGS next to his head. He twists, BLASTS away. Shots land all around Cohen, who drops his gun, turns, takes off, limping a bit, but still fast.

John grips his ankles to the ladder rungs, slides down the full length, touches ground, turns, takes off after Cohen...

EXT. BLOCK ON THE LOWER EAST SIDE - MOMENTS LATER

John rounds the corner into the crowded festival. Looks back and forth -- Cohen is nowhere to be seen. Pushes his way through the crowd, which is surging *en masse* to the next street over, where the sounds of a PARADE can be heard...

As he passes a darkened taxi garage, he looks in. Spots a glimmer of movement between the cabs. Looks back and forth, considers a moment, then moves down

THE GARAGE RAMP

Entering darkness, he raises his gun...

A FLASH of motion. John spins to find a trash can flying toward him. He raises his arms. The can knocks him down. Cohen charges from his hiding spot, out into the snow...

John gets to his feet, runs up the ramp to

THE BLOCK

Catches a glimpse of Cohen moving through the crowd, toward the parade. He gives chase, finding himself confronted with:

A PACKED LOWER EAST SIDE PARADE

Americana-themed in honor of Armistice Day. Marching band leading the crowd. Various IMMIGRANTS sporting flags, buttons, etc. Bystanders in both directions, separated from the marchers by police barricades. Cohen nowhere to be seen.

John pushes his way through the bystanders, searching. Then: he sees what appears to be Cohen moving through the parade. He ducks under the barricade and enters the moving throng. The band's drums RAT-A-TATTING ahead of him.

He slips past marchers in the direction of Cohen, who is no longer visible. Faster and faster he moves. No sign of his quarry...then:

A BLADE darts out from somewhere near John, SLASHES his grazed arm. He gasps, clutches his arm, turns -- the blade's owner is nowhere to be seen. The push of people forces him to keep moving...

Then another SLASH at his shoulder. He tries not to scream, turns in another direction. No Cohen, just jolly paraders.

Another SLASH -- this time on his chest. Then another, and another. He turns back and forth, raising his arms, trying to block the blade that's dicing him from all sides...his shirt soaks with blood...SLASH, SLASH, SLASH --

Suddenly, he has a realization. He pulls out his pistol, raises it in the air, FIRES. The BANG is just loud enough to top the crowd's noise. Nearby paraders FREAK, scramble to get away from him. He stands motionless as the throng around him parts...

All except for COHEN, who stands right behind John. His ever-present knife in his hand, like a reaper's scythe.

SOUND FADES TO NOTHING AS:

John turns. Sees Cohen lifting his knife...

Then he sees something just beyond Cohen. Something that causes his face to go fathomlessly blank...

BILL. Standing a few feet behind Cohen. Staring at him.

Cohen sees the look on John's face. Turns. Sees Bill. Recognizes him. Also recognizes the sawed-off in Bill's hand as he raises it to Cohen's chest.

Cohen smiles, just slightly. BEAT.

BLAM. The blast ECHOES between the buildings. Cohen is blown practically into John's arms.

John looks from Cohen's body to Bill. They stare at each other across an expanse of light snow and blood. Just as they did in prison. Just as in childhood.

John, bleeding, sinks to his knees. Bill is rushed and tackled by POLICE. They never break their gaze.

INT. WASHINGTON D.C. BOUND TRAIN - DAY

Bill sits by the window, handcuffed, two ARMED MARSHALS at his side. He observes the scenery as it rushes by, much as Cohen did earlier.

INT. FBI HEADQUARTERS HALLWAY - DAY

Bill is escorted down a hall by the Marshals towards a closed door. They stop before the door. Bill's cuffs are removed. A Marshal opens the door, he enters, the Marshal shuts it.

INT. J. EDGAR HOOVER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

J. EDGAR HOOVER sits behind a desk, reading a file. Bill gazes around the office at various framed pictures of Hoover with different PRESIDENTS. Without looking up:

HOOVER

Have you ever read your personnel file? You should. Sit.

(Bill sits)

The level of thoroughness we use can be disturbing, even to myself. I'm afraid to look at mine. It deprives one of the ability to forget. Tell me about your mother.

BILL

Tell me about something first.

HOOVER

And what might that be?

BILL

Operation Zero Red.

Hoover looks up. Small, hooded eyes.

HOOVER

Classified above your clearance level, I'm afraid.

BILL

You authorized the killing of American citizens --

HOOVER

I turned common hoods into silent soldiers preserving democracy, which is what I was put here to do. Tell me about your mother.

BILL

You're a murderer. A traitor and a disgrace to your post --

HOOVER

And a realist. Like all do-gooders, you seem to find reality distasteful. May I suggest you try a career in the floral industry.

Bill nearly leaps from his seat. Hoover sighs.

HOOVER (CONT'D)

Our job is to dismantle threats foreign to this country. Now, if I owed you my reasons, I'd explain that crime isn't foreign to this country, it is an integral part of it, one we can fight to stalemate, like a bad cold, or one we can put to use, to vaccinate against more troubling illnesses. But I don't feel I owe you anything. So accept that I will continue acting as I feel necessary. Agreed?

Bill stares at him, stunned. Finally:

BILL

No. No, you won't.

(pause)

As you said, the level of thoroughness in your files can be disturbing. I imagine the public would be even more disturbed than a worldly man like yourself.

Hoover smiles a bit, maybe impressed, maybe not.

HOOVER

You have the Zero Red files?

(beat)

Hmm. Well played. Fortunately, I have other stories to entertain me. So, mothers. Shall we proceed?

Bill is silent. Hoover nods, looks down at Bill's file.

HOOVER (CONT'D)

Kaitlin Riordan. Resident of Limerick, Ireland, till she fled here in 1908, after the pogroms. A Jew in a land of drunk Catholics. How old were you?

BILL

..Two...

HOOVER

Remember it?

BILL

No.

HOOVER

Hmm. Kaitlin, two-year-old William, your brother John still a bun in the oven. No father. Dear Kaitlin must have fled before he knew he had another mouth to feed. Better life in America and all.

BILL

...What are you --

HOOVER

(interrupting)

Soon married to Jack Oakley, who ushered her through immigration, how romantic...a little girl several years later, boring domesticity...ahh...

(clearing his throat)

A few months before she sailed, a number of Limerick Jews were jailed after anti-pogrom riots, fighting back. Good for them. The most violent got ten years. Upon release in 1918, they emigrated, as well. Did Kaitlin ever talk of your real father?

BILL

...No...

HOOVER

Of course not. Among the freed rioters is registered a Charles Riordan. No middle name given on arrival at Ellis Island, just an initial. Charles C. Riordan.

Bill doesn't react. His mind is starting to reel.

HOOVER (CONT'D)

He arrives. Soon after, your runaway mother, her husband, their daughter, all die. Charles C.

(MORE)

HOOVER (CONT'D)

Riordan's sons, one of whom he didn't know existed, are left alive. He is not seen again.

(leans back in chair)

And all these years later, you persist in some vendetta against poor Charlie Cohen. Hard for us to track immigrants when they go by their middle names. Not very sporting of them.

(pause)

John blames you for your family's massacre. Imagine how he'd feel if he knew you'd finished the job.

Bill slowly bites his knuckle. Melting down.

HOOVER (CONT'D)

I could have you dead within the hour. Or you can do as I ask and try to restore your life. Your choice.

Bill looks at Hoover. In shock, barely composed.

BILL

...What...do you propose?

HOOVER

Drop this. Return my files. Forget you ever heard of the FBI. Repeat the word "compromise" over and over and over.

BEAT. A moment of cruel choice. Bill doesn't move. But his choice is clear. Hoover nods.

HOOVER (CONT'D)

The marshals will escort you home. We'll have to put you in protective custody, of course. The mob holds grudges, even against those who rise from the dead. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have work to do.

Bill is speechless. Hoover waits for him to leave. He slowly rises, walks to the door. On his way out:

HOOVER (CONT'D)

Mr. Oakley.

(Bill looks back)

Your wife might be startled at your resurrection. Remind us to send her a fruit basket.

Bill stares at him. A Marshal shuts the door in his face.

INT. PEARCY'S OFFICE - DAY

Pearcy moves around the office, pulling commendations off the wall and boxing them. John, bandaged, sits nearby.

JOHN

What now?

PEARCY

Mob'll find another way to get Gance. Or not. Way things are going in Europe, Lepke's bunch may have bigger enemies to worry about.

JOHN

I meant, what now for me?

PEARCY

Who? John Klein? Police report says he was killed by Cohen at the parade, and we have no record of employing a John Oakley. He was paroled, left prison and vanished. For all the documentation we have on him, he might as well be a legend or bad dream or something.

John briefly smiles at the echo of Cohen's words.

JOHN

...What about Bill?

Pearcy looks to John. More serious.

PEARCY

He'll go into hiding. Start a new life somewhere. Like you.

JOHN

...Will I be able to see him?

PEARCY

We might be able to arrange a meeting. But once he goes under...

John nods. Percy watches him. Almost with sympathy.

PEARCY (CONT'D)

Now get the fuck out. This is my last day. I'm supposed to have a little "contemplative privacy."

John gets up. Starts to leave. Turns.

JOHN
 Why'd you do it? All this? Just
 to nail a few gangsters...

Pearcy looks at John. For a moment, wordless. Finally:

PEARCY
 The bad ones make it hard for the
 rest of us.
 (beat; back to normal)
Please get the fuck out.

John nods. Exits.

Pearcy watches him through the blinds. Turns back, looks at his empty office. Sits behind his desk. Opens the drawer.

He removes a Star of David chain. Holds it up to the light. Kisses it. Holds it in his fist as he gazes out the window.

EXT. DINER - MORNING

An anonymous diner in Brooklyn. John approaches, enters.

INT. DINER - CONTINUOUS

He scans the diner. Sees someone. Walks across the room. Sits beside Bill at the counter. Neither man speaks, or even looks the other in the eye. Finally:

BILL
 What do you feel like?

JOHN
 Peach cobbler sounds good.

BILL
 Cobbler for breakfast?

John shrugs. Bill considers, nods. Signals to a WAITRESS:

BILL (CONT'D)
 Could we have a slice of peach
 cobbler, please? Two forks.

The Waitress leaves. Bill and John sit quietly.

The Waitress brings the cobbler and the check. Bill takes out money first, drops it on the table.

Then they eat. Finish. Sit. All in silence. BEAT.

Bill stands and walks away. John sits alone. HOLD.

EXT. PUBLIC PARK - DAY

Snow. Marie watches Elliott run in circles. Then she sees Bill. Standing twenty feet away.

She stares and stares.

Bill steps toward her.

EXT. OAKLEY HOUSE - DAY

Snowcapped. Looking much as it did twenty-some years earlier. Even the swing is still there. At the moment, two BOYS are playing on it, one pushing the other in the snow.

A TAXI pulls up. John steps out. Stares at the house. Then looks to the swing.

The Boys stop playing as John approaches.

JOHN
Good swing?

BOY ON SWING
It's okay.

John nods. Looks to the BOY PUSHING. Slightly older.

JOHN
You his brother?
(Boy Pushing nods)
Shouldn't push him too fast when
it's icy out like this.

The Boy Pushing nods. John looks around. Exhales. Walks back to the cab, gets in. It drives away.

The Boys look to each other and LAUGH. Their MOTHER calls to them from the house. They run out of FRAME.

The snow falls. The wind blows.

The swing twists and turns.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END