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The Gavones of Philadelphia

**A Non-Mob Family Comedy
by Joseph Sorrentino**

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The Gavones of Philadelphia

by Joseph Sorrentino

CHARACTERS

Tony: about 50; a stocky Italian-American blue collar worker

Mary: Late 40's; Tony's wife, also Italian-American

Joey: Mid-20's; Tony and Mary's son

Pauley: Mid-40's; Mary's brother. An overweight, mostly under-employed blue collar worker

Nicky: Late 40's; Mary's older brother. A washed-up, borderline alcoholic lounge singer desperately trying to hold onto his failing voice and classic Italian good looks.

Danny: Late 30's/early 40's; the large, rather intimidating enforcer for a local bookie. Preferably African-American.

THE SETTING: *The Mid 1980's*

ACT I; SCENE ONE and ACT II, SCENES ONE and THREE: Tony and Mary's kitchen in a modest home in a modest Philadelphia neighborhood

ACT I; SCENES TWO and THREE: Pauley's kitchen, equally as simple and modest.

ACT II; SCENE TWO: A visiting room in a local funeral parlor

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Guns do play a role in this play...although no shots are ever fired

Italian words and phrases are underlined. Americanized versions of Italian words (mostly slang) have been represented phonetically. Translations of Italian slang words included at end of script.

The Gavones of Philadelphia

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ACT I; SCENE ONE

SETTING: TONY and MARY's kitchen; a table covered with a plastic flowered tablecloth, three chairs, and a refrigerator overrun with small magnets and notes. There is a pantry and exit off right and a door to the dining area and rest of house left.

AT RISE: PAULEY, dressed as a security guard, enters from the outside. He wears a backpack and carries a book, newspaper and brown bag lunch. He goes to the refrigerator, moves things around then pulls out a lunch pail, looking inside. He exchanges his sandwich for the one in the lunch pail, and then takes the fruit and dessert from the pail and places them in his brown paper bag. We hear TONY OFFSTAGE.

TONY, *Offstage*

Mare? Mare that you?

PAULEY

(Quietly closing refrigerator) No. It's me...Pauley.

TONY

Oh. Hey— stay outta my refrigerator, Pauley.

PAULEY

(Looking around; to himself) Whaddya got, cameras in here now? *(Louder)* I ain't in your refrigerator.

TONY

Good. Keep it that way.

PAULEY

(Opens cabinet; to himself) I'm in your cabinets. *(Finds box of pizelle)* Ooh...pizelle...I like pizelle...

PAULEY eats one, then another, then empties the box of pizelles into his lunch bag. TONY enters. HE is dressed in a painter's work clothes.

TONY

(Entering) I don't mind if a person's hungry but you...

PAULEY

Relax, would ya? Your refrigerator's safe.

TONY

Not when you're around it's not. Don't Annie cook for you?

PAULEY

You've tasted her cookin'.

TONY

You got a point there. Just show some restraint, would ya?

PAULEY

Mary home?

TONY

She's at the funeral home. Hadda go check on the flowers or somethin'. I thought she'd be back by now...Guess I gotta make my own breakfast.

TONY starts getting out bowls to make scrambled eggs.

PAULEY

We all gotta make sacrifices, right? *(Lights cigarette)*

TONY

Hey Pauley, lemme get one of them would ya?

PAULEY

Sure.

TONY

(Lights it) Just hope Mary doesn't get back. If she catches me...

TONY takes long drag and then puts the cigarette in the ashtray.

PAULEY

Hey Tone, if it ain't too much trouble...I mean, since you're makin' ...

JOEY enters.

Morning Dad.

JOEY

Hey, Joey.

TONY

JOEY kisses TONY on the cheek. They hug.

Hey, Uncle Pauley

JOEY

JOEY and PAULEY hug.

How ya doin' kid?

PAULEY

OK.

JOEY

I didn't expect you up this early.

TONY

Who can sleep with you and Uncle Pauley making all this racket?

JOEY

We ain't makin' no racket. You were out late again last night.

TONY

I know. So?

JOEY

You could stay home once in awhile.

TONY

And do what? Watch Jeopardy with you?

JOEY

You can learn a lot from that show, mister. But...but I'm not sayin' every night...just once in awhile.

TONY

(Sits, notices ashtray) You're smokin' again.

JOEY

TONY

Me? No. I quit.

JOEY

So Uncle Pauley, you smokin' two cigarettes at a time now?

PAULEY

Yeah, yeah. It's a discovery I made...I'm thinkin' about patentin' it. See, this way you get twice the nicotine in half the time.

JOEY

That's four times the nicotine then.

PAULEY

It is? Mingya, it's even better than I thought.

TONY

Look, just don't tell your mother. Besides, one every once in awhile really ain't smokin'. (*JOEY pours a cup of coffee.*) I'm makin' eggs. You want some?

JOEY

Nah.

TONY

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. You should eat somethin'. I'll make ya some eggs.

JOEY

I'm not hungry.

TONY

It's just eggs, they don't fill you up...

JOEY

But I'm not hungry.

TONY

Eat 'em without bread.

JOEY

Eat them without...Dad, I said I'm not hungry...besides, I don't like eggs.

TONY

You don't like eggs? Since when?

JOEY

Since when? Since...since forever. I never liked eggs.

I like eggs. PAULEY

No one asked you. TONY

I know...I'm just sayin'... PAULEY

How 'bout some toast then? TONY

I don't want anything, OK? JOEY

I'll take a couple slices. PAULEY

Would you stay outta this? I'm talkin' to my son here. TONY

I thought you was offerin'... PAULEY

TONY
(*Tosses PAULEY bag of bread*) Know what? G'head...take the whole loaf...knock yourself out.

PAULEY makes toast.

Where's Ma? JOEY

Funeral home. Ya know, she's gonna miss your grandfather, God rest his soul. TONY

Everyone is. JOEY

You're right...but it was his time...May he rest in peace. So you were out with...uh...what's her name last night? TONY

Janice? JOEY

TONY

Yeah.

JOEY

She dumped me, remember? I was out with some friends. Going out with her's not an option.

TONY

It's for the best. I never thought she was good for you.

JOEY

Yeah, you made that real clear to her.

TONY

What's that supposed to mean?

JOEY

You never made her feel welcome. No one did. No one except Uncle Nicky.

PAULEY

Is that the 'Merigan you was datin'?

JOEY

Yeah.

PAULEY

Your father's actually right this time kid.

TONY

Oh, thanks.

PAULEY

I'm talkin' from personal experience here— Never marry a 'Merigan.

JOEY

Who said anything about marrying her?

PAULEY

Hey, you know women. Once they get their hooks in ya, fuggedaboutit. You marry a 'Merigan, all they know how to cook is macaroni and cheese and they always overcook the macaroni. You'll be eatin' overcooked macaroni covered with that melted yellow crap they call cheese the rest of your life.

JOEY

Maybe there's more to a relationship than food.

PAULEY

Of course there is. There's arguin', too.

TONY

Jeez, look at the time. I better make breakfast. (*Cracks some eggs into bowl*) It's the most important meal of the day...Joey, how do you want your eggs?

JOEY

Didn't I just tell you I don't eat eggs?

TONY

But I already cracked them.

PAULEY

I'll take mine scrambled.

TONY

Why don't you just eat your toast and be quiet?

PAULEY

I am eatin' my toast. I'm just sayin', if you already cracked 'em...it's a sin to waste food.

TONY

Look, you worry about your sins, I'll worry about mine.

MARY enters.

MARY

How are my boys? (*To JOEY*) You're up early. How are you? (*Kisses him*)

JOEY

OK

MARY

Pauley, what're you doing here so early?

TONY

What else? Scroungin' for food.

MARY

(*To TONY; walking to him*) Hi hon. (*Kisses him; stares*)

TONY

What?

MARY

Tony, you're smoking again?

TONY

No...

MARY

Then why are there two cigarettes in that ashtray?

JOEY

They're Uncle Pauley's. He's smokin' two at a time now. Gets more nicotine that way.

PAULEY

Four times the nicotine. Einstein there did the math.

MARY

Pauley, how many times I tell you *do not* give my husband cigarettes?

PAULEY

He made me.

MARY

He made you?

TONY

Thanks a lot, Pauley.

PAULEY

Serves you right. If you'd given me a lousy couple eggs I wouldn't have ratted you out.

MARY

I'm warning you...when you're dying a slow painful death...

TONY

Mare, I won't do it no more. I swear. So how you feelin'?

MARY

All right...considering. I saw Pop. He looks so peaceful. Like he's asleep. Thank God, no more suffering. I have to go back to the funeral home...the flowers didn't get there yet. I wanna make sure they're OK. Joey, you can take me?

JOEY

Sure.

MARY

This heat, I don't wanna walk back.

TONY

You want me to throw on the air conditioner?

MARY
Sure, throw it on. I'll get your breakfast.

TONY
I already started it.

MARY
(*MARY finds bowl of eggs*) Eggs?

TONY
It's the first time this month, I swear to God. C'mon Mare...if I have one more bran muffin...

MARY
I'm telling you, when your arteries clog...Joey, you eat?

JOEY
Nah. I'm not hungry.

MARY
You have to have breakfast.

JOEY
OK. Gimmee some toast.

MARY
That's a start.

MARY puts two slices of bread in the toaster.

TONY
I thought you weren't hungry.

JOEY
I wasn't then. I am now.

PAULEY
Me too.

TONY
How the hell can you be hungry? You ate a half a loaf of bread already.

PAULEY
I got a hollow leg.

TONY
Matches your hollow head.

NICKY, OFFSTAGE, is singing “Mala Femina” in Italian, very loudly. Dressed in a suit with his shirt collar open, he walks onstage where he finishes the song.

NICKY

Hey, not bad for an old fart, huh? All those years singin’ and the lungs are still good.

TONY

You should have some respect. Your father just died.

NICKY

I got plenty of respect. Pop loved my singing. I gotta sing loud now so he can hear me. *(Pinches Tony’s cheek)* Good to see you too, Tone. *(Turns to Mary)* Mary!

NICKY and MARY hug tightly.

MARY

Why didn’t you call when you got in? Joey wanted to pick you up.

NICKY

Nah, I took a cab. I didn’t wanna bother no one. You know that airport...all that traffic... *(To PAULEY)* Oh! Wyatt Earp! Who’s protectin’ Macy’s from robbers and other vermin if you ain’t there?

PAULEY

Macy’s? I never worked at Macy’s. I worked at K-Mart.

NICKY

Macy’s, K-Mart...

PAULEY

But I don’t work there no more. I work security in a bank now, Nick. A bank.

NICKY

Mingya. A bank. That’s impressive. A big step up for my big brother, huh?

PAULEY

It’s a livin’.

NICKY

I guess. *(Hugs NICKY, then to JOEY)* Giuseppe, que fa? *(To Mary)* Mingya, he’s still growin’. You better stop feedin’ this kid. *(To JOEY)* Comma giva you ungle a hug. *(JOEY hesitates.)* What you too old? Don’t give me that. *(He grabs JOEY and they hug.)* Don’t you love these kids? He goes to college, all of a sudden, he’s too old to hug me anymore. I oughta... *(Raises his hand pretending to hit JOEY)*

TONY

My son hugs me.

NICKY

Yeah? Well I guess he draws the line at uncles. (*Joking*) And after all I done for you...desgraziade. (*JOEY laughs. NICKY gets serious and turns to MARY.*) Sorry I couldn't get here sooner, Mare...you know...show biz. I couldn't get away. Did Pop...you know...ask for me?

MARY

Nick, he wasn't himself.

*PAULEY has begun to scramble the eggs
TONY cracked.*

TONY

What the hell are you doin'?

PAULEY

What? I'm scramblin' some eggs. You already cracked 'em.

TONY

I cracked 'em for me. Get away from 'em before I crack you too.

NICKY

(*To MARY*) So...how ya doin'?

MARY

Fine.

NICKY

Don't you lie to me now.

MARY

I'm OK, really...considering...

NICKY

Everything taken care of?

MARY

Just about...just waiting for the flowers now. I have to get back. Joey, c'mon, get dressed. We gotta get goin'.

JOEY exits

NICKY

(*Pulls out a wad of money, pulls off a couple of bills*) Mary...here...for the flowers.

MARY

Nick, you don't have to...

NICKY

Oh! You gonna argue with me? I said it's for the flowers. You need more?

MARY

No...this...this is plenty. (*Kisses him*) We're having the dinner here tomorrow. Pauley wanted it over his place but he's too upset.

PAULEY

(*Eating*) Yeah, I'm real broke up.

MARY

I'm makin' baked cavatelli...Pop's favorite.

PAULEY

I hope you're makin' enough. You know them people...

MARY

I'm makin' twelve pounds.

NICKY

Twelve pounds? Jeez.

MARY

They don't swell when you cook 'em.

NICKY

Of course. (*Pause*) Please tell me you're makin' the gravy.

MARY

Who else?

NICKY

I love this girl. (*Hugging her*) I was afraid (*Gesturing to PAULEY*) his wife might wanna.

TONY

What, a 'Merigan makin' the gravy? That'll be the day.

NICKY

You forget Goomba Jeech's retirement party?

PAULEY

I told you not to let her make the gravy but did anyone listen?

NICKY

Twenty years ago that was and I still got agida.

TONY

Who the hell puts garlic *powder* in gravy?

NICKY

‘Merigans, that’s who. No spice in their gravy and even less in their lives.

PAULEY

Hey, you’re lucky she didn’t make macaroni and cheese.

MARY

(Calling) Joey, c’mon! We’re gonna be late.

Joey enters

PAULEY

Can yas gimmee a ride?

MARY

But Pauley, it’s in the opposite direction.

PAULEY

I know but at a time like this, family should be together, don’t ya think? Besides, it’ll save me the bus fare.

MARY

All right...C’mon.

JOEY

Uncle Nick, you gonna be around when I get back?

NICKY

(Joking) Oh, you want me to wait around but you won’t hug your uncle huh? G’head...I’ll be here when you get back. I’m no two-face like you.

MARY kisses TONY then stops.

MARY

Oh, your breakfast...

TONY

That’s OK. I can make it myself. It’s just eggs.

MARY

(As she exits) Your lunch is in the fridge. Don’t forget it.

I won't.

TONY

Nicky, you make sure you get something to eat. *(To TONY)* And you...one egg, cabish?

MARY

MARY, JOEY and PAULEY exit. TONY speaks stiffly to NICKY.

You want somethin' to eat?

TONY

Whatcha got?

NICKY

Eggs. I'm makin' eggs.

TONY

Nah, I don't like eggs.

NICKY

What's the matter with eggs? Am I abnormal 'cause I eat eggs? The hell with it, I don't want 'em either.

TONY

TONY loudly and deliberately puts the eggs and bowl in the refrigerator.

Hey, Tone, I'm sorry. Don't take it personal...You got anything to drink? I been up all night.

NICKY

NICKY takes out small mirror and combs his hair; lights cigarette.

There's a bottle in the cabinet. Hey Nick, lemme have a cigarette, would ya?

TONY

(Tosses him pack) Knock yourself out.

NICKY

I quit but one every now and then really ain't....

TONY

Wait, you quit?

NICKY

TONY

Yeah, but...

NICKY

Gimmee them. (*Grabs pack*)

TONY

C'mon. One every now and then really ain't...

NICKY

(*Looks in mirror*) Man, I look like terrible. (*Takes out bottle of whiskey and a water glass. He pours a large drink and swallows it.*) There, that's better. (*He pours a second glass. He continues to drink throughout the scene. He notices a spot on his suit and starts to clean it.*) Oh man, look at that. Damn. I dropped a bundle on this suit. There, that's better. I'm pretty good at this. Maybe I should get a job in a cleaners or somethin'...somethin' to fall back on. You know, some shit job. Somethin' like you got. (*Sits*) So how ya been Tone?

TONY

All right...

NICKY

Keepin' busy?

TONY

Yeah. You?

NICKY

Fugedaboutit. You know show biz.

TONY

Stayin' long?

NICKY

Couple of days. Just 'til they read the will...outta respect for Pop.

TONY

Pauley's expectin' to get a lot extra outta it.

NICKY

He deserves it...Pop kept Pauley jumpin'.

TONY

Whaddya kiddin'? Look, Pop was livin' with Pauley but it was your sister still doin' most of the work. Of course, Pauley made sure he controlled all Pop's money and was the one payin' the bills. Whaddya call it...the executor guy.

NICKY

So?

TONY

So you don't think he was maybe takin' a little for himself here and there?

NICKY

He'd never do that. And even if he did, I he deserves a few extra bucks. I loved Pop, may he rest in peace, but he wasn't always so easy to get along with, ya know.

TONY

Whatever Pauley gets from the will, he's just gonna piss away...hand it right over to them bookies. He finally got a couple of 'em real pissed. You know Pauley, always "forgettin'" to pay. But he went too far this time.

NICKY

Them bookies ain't gonna do nothin'.

TONY

Sal's after him.

NICKY

Sal? *(Exhales loudly)*. Mingya.

TONY

He'll use his share from the will...that'll keep Sal off his back for awhile but knowin' Pauley, next week...if there's anythin' left...he'll bet that.

NICKY

So what? It's just money.

TONY

It ain't just money. It's what Pop left the family. It shouldn't go to them bookies.

NICKY

Better he pays Sal than we gotta bury Pauley too. Just thank God Pop socked all that money away. *(Pause)* Hey Tone, you got any of them pizelles from Isgro's?

TONY

Yeah, Mary just bought a box. *(Gets up)* I thought you wasn't hungry.

NICKY

I wasn't then. I am now.

TONY

Got 'em right here. *(Opens cabinet)* Wait a minute...that's funny.

NICKY

What?

TONY

The box is empty. Mary just bought these...huh...(Pause). That damn Pauley, I'll kill him. Hey, I got some anisette toast. Want that?

NICKY

From Isgro's?

TONY

Where else?

TONY pulls out the anisette toast, puts it on a paper towel and places it in front of NICKY.

NICKY

(Eats) I'm tellin' ya, you can't get nothin' like this nowhere else.

TONY

So, how's...what's her name?

NICKY

What's her name? Who the hell's 'what's her name'?

TONY

I dunno...that girl you brought last time you was here. Tall...red head...lotts make up...Trish or somethin'.

NICKY

Trish...yeah. Jeez, I forgot about her. Nah...that was over a long time ago...Women, Tony, mingya, you think I'd learn my lesson by now. You...you're lucky. My sister worships the ground you walk on. Me...Terry, my first wife, she was the only woman I ever really loved. And she left me. She left me. Them other three marriages...

TONY

Four.

NICKY

Four? Now wait...that two-week one don't count...damn showgirls...

TONY

(Looks at watch) A jeez, I gotta get to work.

TONY gets his lunch pail, is about to leave.

NICKY

But Terry, I was happy with her. I don't know why she hadda leave.

TONY

Probably 'cause you never treated her good.

NICKY

Whaddya mean? I treated her good.

TONY

You kept screwin' around. You call that treatin' her good?

NICKY

So I made a few mistakes. Who doesn't? That's all they were...simple mistakes.

TONY

Simple mistakes? Correct me if I'm wrong, but didn't she catch you with a waitress on your honeymoon? On your honeymoon. You call that a simple mistake?

NICKY

I know what I done. You don't hafta rub it in.

TONY

I'm just sayin'...

NICKY

Don't preach to me, Tone. Don't be playin' holier than thou with me. You ain't exactly no saint either.

TONY

I never said I was. *(Pause)* I'm runnin' late. I gotta go. *(Starts to leave)*

NICKY

Saint Anthony we got over here.

TONY

Hey, I never cheated on my wife. At least I never did that.

NICKY

Yeah, right.

TONY

(A little wary) Whaddya mean, "Yeah, right"?

NICKY

Ain't a man alive don't cheat.

TONY

Well you're lookin' at one.

NICKY

(Stands; faces TONY, studies him) Yeah, on second thought, you're probably right.

TONY

What's that supposed to mean?

NICKY

No offense Tone, but a Casanova you're not.

TONY

Maybe not but I had my chances.

NICKY

Sure, Tone, sure.

TONY

Lot you know.

NICKY

What, you tellin' me there are women interested in you? You? C'mon...

TONY

You'd be surprised.

NICKY

I'd be shocked.

TONY

You know...the women you end up with...there *are* women interested in other things.

NICKY

Like what? Sittin' around watchin' Jeopardy?

TONY

You're a real comedian, Nick.

NICKY

All right Casanova...so who was it?

TONY

Nobody.

NICKY

Nobody? What about all these women chasin' you? All them interested in...in...whatever the hell it is you're offerin' them?

TONY

I was speaking...whaddya call it...hypothetical.

NICKY

Hypothetically? Oh, so women are interested in you...hypothetical. You're so full of it. You ain't gettin' nothin'.

TONY

Oh yeah?

NICKY

No way. No broad's that desperate.

TONY

Desperate had nothin' to do with it.

NICKY

So you did? You really did?

TONY

Well...

NICKY

I underestimated you...

TONY

Once. Just once. I swear...it was years ago... If Mary ever found out...it'd kill her.

NICKY

Hey, don't feel so guilty about it. It just shows you're human, that's all.

TONY

It never shoulda happened.

NICKY

Look, men are animals. We're animals. It's them hormones or somethin', understand? It ain't our fault.

TONY

I don't know...

NICKY

That's all it is...hormones. (*Lights a cigarette; offers one to TONY*) So tell me, who was it?

TONY

Come on, you don't hafta know that... It'd kill your sister.

NICKY

I won't tell no one. You can trust me.

TONY

I didn't say I didn't trust ya...

NICKY

Then who was it? If ya trust me, who was it? *(Pause)* C'mon...

TONY

OK, OK. It was *(Somewhat proudly)* Madeline.

NICKY

Madeline?

TONY

Yeah, Madeline.

NICKY

Who the hell is Madeline?

TONY

You know...she lived down the street from the old place? Blonde hair...tall girl? I painted her house one summer. It was that place on the corner...

NICKY

Wait a second. You don't mean Madeline Petrone.

TONY

Yeah, yeah that's her. I was paintin' her place, she invited me in for lemonade...

NICKY

Madeline Petrone?

TONY

Hey, keep your voice down, will ya?

NICKY

Look Tony, you gonna cheat on my sister, at least pick someone halfway decent.

TONY

We don't all have the selection you do, Nick. I didn't plan it...it just happened...I don't wanna talk about it no more.

TONY starts to leave

NICKY

(Grabs TONY by the arm) Well that's just too bad. I can't believe you cheated on my sister.

TONY

You wanted to know. C'mon Nick...

NICKY

I can't believe you. You have someone that worships you...worships you...and you're gonna go foolin' around with Madeline Petrone?

TONY

Nicky...

NICKY

You cheated on my sister!

TONY

(Panicking) You wanted to know! You wanted to know! I didn't wanna say nothin'

NICKY

(Grabs TONY's lapels) You cheated on my sister! I'm gonna...

JOEY enters the kitchen as NICKY and TONY struggle.

JOEY

What the hell..?

TONY

It's OK...it's OK. We was just...

NICKY

...I was just showin' him...you know...a new kung fu move I learned. I'm studyin' kung fu.

JOEY

Kung fu...?

TONY

Yeah, kung fu.

NICKY

Just like Bruce Lee. *(He releases TONY; looks at suit)* Gots, look at that. I hate it when my suits get dirty *(He brushes off his suit then takes out the mirror and combs his hair until he notices JOEY looking at him.)* Hey, c'mon, siddown.

TONY

I gotta get to work.

NICKY

Hey...you pass Madelin Petrone's house, don't ya? You see her, tell her I said hello.

TONY

Yeah...sure. See ya Joey.

JOEY

OK...Oh, Ma said she'll be at the funeral home tonight. She'll leave your dinner in the fridge. All you have to do is heat it up. She wants you to meet us there.

TONY

OK. See ya. *(Exits)*

NICKY

Siddown, kid. Have a drink.

JOEY

Little early in the day for me, thanks.

NICKY

Whaddya kiddin'? *(Holds up glass)* Most important meal of the day, breakfast is. Salud!

NICKY pours another drink as he and JOEY sit at the table.

JOEY

What were you guys..?

NICKY

Nothin'...we was just screwin' around. Mingya, your father, he's some piece of work.

JOEY

He sure is. Sometimes...I don't know...sometimes I hate livin' here, ya know?

NICKY

So move out.

JOEY

And do what? Start World War III? Man, he can be such a pain in the...

NICKY

Hey—he's still your father. You show some respect. *(Pause)* So, how ya been? I ain't seen you in awhile.

JOEY

Yeah, not since me and Janice caught your show at that VFW in...where was it, Cherry Hill? Why'd you even play there? I mean, a VFW in Cherry Hill...

NICKY

Doin' a favor for a friend. So, you hear from her?

JOEY

Janice? Hell no. And I don't want to.

NICKY

I warned you about datin' a 'Merigan, didn't I?

JOEY

Yeah.

NICKY

All I ever do is warn people about marryin' 'Merigans. Look at what happened to your Uncle Pauley. He didn't listen to me and look at what happened. Poor guy has never had a decent meal in his own house. His own house! I hope you learned your lesson.

JOEY

I have. I haven't seen her since that night. We broke up right after that. Did she say anything to you...you know...about us?

NICKY

Me? Why would she say anythin' to me?

JOEY

I was just wondering. Man, I really got hammered...that was your fault.

NICKY

What'd I do?

JOEY

Buying me drinks.

NICKY

You weren't complainin'.

JOEY

That's 'cause I was passed out.

NICKY

But you hadda get sick in the back of her car before you passed out.

JOEY

Oh, man...

NICKY

Listen to your uncle, this is gonna turn out for the best, believe me. Forget her...get on with your life.

JOEY

I know but it's tough...we were getting pretty serious.

NICKY

Serious? Joey, c'mon. You're still young. Serious...what you gotta do is play the field.

JOEY

Yeah...maybe you're right.

NICKY

Maybe? Look, there's plenty of other fish out there. All you gotta do is toss 'em a line, *cabish?* But I'm tellin' you, you start gettin' serious... (*Raises fist*) Budda-bing!

JOEY

I won't. I won't.

NICKY

Listen...you gotta learn you can't trust outsiders. Family's the only ones you can trust.

JOEY

Absolutely. (*Picks up glass, pours a drink*) A farewell toast to...what's her name?

NICKY

There ya go. *Salud.* (*Drinks*) Just like the old days, huh?

JOEY

Man, how many nights we drive to them shows, just the two of us?

NICKY

Oh baby...kick back in the dressin' room after the show...have a few drinks...maybe chase a few showgirls?

JOEY

Maybe?

NICKY

Hey—who hooked you up your first time?

JOEY

You did. Man, I was only 16.

NICKY

Old enough, old enough. (*Looks at watch*) Hey...I gotta run...see some people. We'll talk more tonight...have a couple of drinks. You do drink at night, don't you?

JOEY

I been known to.

NICKY

(*Standing to leave*) Good.

JOEY

Oh— I almost forgot. I bumped into Sal when I was coming out of the funeral home. Strange guy, Sal...said we all gotta be careful...once there's one death in the family, everyone else has to be careful...weird. Anyway, he said to say hello to Uncle Pauley.

NICKY

I'll be sure he gets the message.

NICKY exits. LIGHTS DOWN.

ACT I; SCENE TWO

SETTING: PAULEY's kitchen; later.

AT RISE: PAULEY sitting at kitchen table, reading. In this scene, his attention stays on the book until NICKY mentions money. Phone rings. PAULEY answers.

PAULEY

Hello? Oh, hi Sal. How ya doin'?' (*Pauses, goes to cabinet, takes out pizzeles and eats as he talks*). Of course I know what day it is. It's Wednesday. What the hell kinda question is that? (*Pause*). Oh...well, my father just died. Don't ya got any respect? (*Pause*) I have been makin' payments. (*Pause*) OK, OK, so maybe I missed one or two (*Pause*) Nah, that many? (*Pause*) Sal, I have never said you were stupid...Look, I'm gonna be straight with you here...money's a little tight right now, you know, with the funeral and all. If you can wait a couple, two, three days, a week at the most...(Pause) Sal...Sal...Sal! *Aspet! Mingya!* What the hell got into you? I swear to God, I'm gonna pay ya. Look, I can get you a couple hundred now and...(Pause) What's so funny? (*Pause*) How much? Tomorrow? I can't get that much by tomorrow. Look, you wait 'til they read the will, like I said, a couple, two...(Pause) OK, OK. Listen, I'll talk to Larry, Pop's lawyer, tell him I need my share of the will early. Now, tomorrow's the funeral but for you, after the dinner, I'll come over...(Pause). No, you don't gotta come here, I'll come to you. (*Pause*) Whaddya kiddin'? Of course you can come over if you want. I'm just tryin' to save you the trouble...(Pause) Cavatelli...Mary's makin' cavatelli...twelve pounds...(Pause) Yeah, but they don't swell

PAULEY, *Continued*

when you cook ‘em. *(Pause)* Sal, I swear to God I’m gonna pay ya. *(Pause, then with bravado)* Or else you’ll what? *(Stares at receiver)* Oh man...oh man...

NICKY enters

NICKY

Yo! Pauley!

PAULEY

Oh...hey, Nicky.

NICKY

(Holding up a bottle of liquor) I love stealin’ Tony’s booze. C’mon, siddown. Drink?

PAULEY

Little early in the day for me. *(Starts reading a book)*

NICKY

Don’t nobody in this family drink before sundown? *(Pours a drink)* Salud! You OK?

PAULEY

Yeah...you know...considerin’.

NICKY

You don’t look so good.

PAULEY

It’s, you know, the funeral and all.

NICKY

One more day and it’s over Pauley. You just gotta hang in there one more day. I know you’re missin’ Pop but mingya, he was a handful those last couple years.

PAULEY

You’re tellin’ me.

NICKY

You know what Pop was, Pauley? Huh? You know what he was? He was senile. Senile.

PAULEY

Yeah.

NICKY

That’s what Pop was, Pauley. Senile.

PAULEY
Yeah, senile.

NICKY
You know what that means?

PAULEY
Yeah, I know.

NICKY
Huh? Do ya?

PAULEY
Yeah, it's...

NICKY
Do ya know what senile is Pauley?

PAULEY
Yeah. Jeez, I just told ya I did, didn't I?

NICKY
It's when you lose your mind Pauley. It's when you lose your mind. Nobody can tell you nothin' no more. You go batty. Man, I hope they shoot me before that happens. It runs in families Pauley, did you know that? Jeez, can you imagine me on stage singin' my lungs out and I forget the lyrics? And my kids, they wouldn't take me in like you did with Pop. They'd put me in a home. One of them places where they dress you in them pajamas...the ones with the strings down the back. They feed you baby food, keep you in one of them beds with the railings on the sides...I don't wanna go like that, Pauley. I wanna be shot before that happens. I swear to God I do... *(Sits)* Would you shoot me Pauley?

PAULEY
What?

NICKY
Would you shoot me?

PAULEY
Why would I shoot you?

NICKY
If I'm senile.

PAULEY
You're senile?

NICKY

No...if I *was* senile.

PAULEY

But you're not. So why would I shoot you?

NICKY

Pauley, I'm sayin' if I *was* senile. Would you shoot me if I was senile?

PAULEY

(Pauses a moment) No. No, I wouldn't shoot you.

NICKY

But I want you to.

PAULEY

I'm not gonna shoot you.

NICKY

But I want you to.

PAULEY

I'm not...

NICKY

Pauley, you have to. I don't wanna embarrass myself.

PAULEY

Shoot you? Nick, this is crazy talk.

NICKY

You gotta shoot me Pauley.

PAULEY

I ain't gonna shoot...

NICKY

You have to...

PAULEY

Nick...

NICKY

Promise...

PAULEY

OK, OK. If it'll shut you up, I promise to shoot you.

NICKY

Good. I feel better.

PAULEY

Mingya...

NICKY

But that's what Pop was...senile. Hey, you got any of them pizelles from Isgro's?

PAULEY

No, no...we're all out.

NICKY

Too bad. I really got a ooli for them.

PAULEY

Hey, if I got 'em, you got 'em.

NICKY

Don't I know that? That's the way you are. Just look at how you took Pop in. You and your wife...uh...

PAULEY

...Annie...

NICKY

Right, Annie. You and Annie, takin' care of him when no one else would. It fell to you, Pauley, and you took him in. I know Pop split everything he had equal between us kids...that was his way... but them others don't deserve a cent...

As the topic turns to money, PAULEY begins to pay attention.

PAULEY

Well...

NICKY

Even I don't deserve as much as you do. I shoulda seen Pop more but too busy, right? Too busy chasin' this career...this lousy career and all them women. And what do I got Pauley? Huh? What do I got? Fame...all the money I could ever want...a broad in every city. And you know what Pauley?

PAULEY

What?

NICKY

It don't mean nothin'. All that money, them broads chasin' me, the fame...I swear to God it don't mean nothin'. You could make a pile with all the money...toss my little black book on top for spice and torch it. Make a bonfire outta it and I wouldn't give a damn if I could just have Pop back for one day. Just one day so I could tell him how much I love him... Damn it, I shoulda took the time. It's too late now. It's too late, Pauley. I know I didn't get back here for a couple of months...

PAULEY

(Closes book) More than that.

NICKY

What?

PAULEY

I said, "Imagine that" But who's countin'?

NICKY

You can bet them others are.

PAULEY

But...But about that money?

NICKY

Money?

PAULEY

Yeah, you said you could make a bonfire outta it...?

NICKY

Oh yeah, light the whole damn thing up. It don't mean nothin'.

PAULEY

You know, Pop's funeral's really costin'.

NICKY

He left money in the will for that.

PAULEY

Oh yeah, sure, but we can't get to it now... Larry, Pop's lawyer, that stroonz...he won't lemme have a cent...not even for the funeral...and this funeral Nick, it's really costin'.

NICKY

You sayin' you need money?

PAULEY

Well...

NICKY

Tell me.

PAULEY

I can't ask...

NICKY

What do you mean you can't ask? You're my brother. Now tell me, you need money?

PAULEY

It's just 'cause Larry won't lemme have none from the will.

NICKY

(Takes out wad of bills, tosses them on the table) Here, take it. I don't know how much it is...somethin' like a grand. It's yours. And if that ain't enough, I'll get more. I just gotta call my manager and tell him to send it. He'll love that. He's always sayin' I spend too much money but the hell with him. It's my money and this is family.

PAULEY

A grand...jeez Nick...I can't...

NICKY

Don't argue with me. What's money? Huh? What the hell is money? It's just paper. Family, that's what matters.

PAULEY

But Nick...

NICKY

I'll burn it then.

NICKY takes out his lighter and puts it to the money. PAULEY grabs the money.

PAULEY

OK, OK, I'll take it.

NICKY

You're my brother. My flesh and blood. That's what matters. Not this lousy paper. I love ya. You and your wife Anna—

PAULEY

Annie...

NICKY

...Annie, whatever...you're my family. I wish I had a wife that loved me...

PAULEY

Nick, I gotta tell ya. We're havin' problems.

NICKY

Problems?

PAULEY

She...well...she ain't happy. I know that. You know her...she likes good stuff... fancy stuff.

NICKY

(Looks around apartment, sarcastic) Yeah, I can see that.

PAULEY

She wants a house. She hates this apartment. And me...this new job I got...bank security guard? It don't pay nothin'...damn jobs...I figured a bank would at least pay decent, but it's like all the rest of them jobs... I'm trapped.

NICKY

Didn't I warn you about marryin' a 'Merigan?

PAULEY

Yeah...

NICKY

I told ya they ain't like us. *(Pause)* Pauley, listen to me.

PAULEY

Yeah?

NICKY

You listenin'?

PAULEY

Yeah, I'm listenin'...

NICKY

You sure?

PAULEY

Yeah I'm sure. I just told you I was listenin', didn't I?

NICKY

That money? Don't use it for Pop's funeral. Use it to take Angie...

PAULEY

...Annie...

NICKY

...use it to take her out.

PAULEY

But the funeral...

NICKY

My manager will send more. It'll give him somethin' to do. All he ever does is sit around figurin' out how to steal my money. Why the hell did I hire Vito...embezzlin' rat. I'm tellin' ya Pauley, never hire family. Ya can't trust 'em...

PAULEY

Hey...when it comes to money, family don't matter.

NICKY

Now that's a depressin' thought.

PAULEY

But this money... Nick, I don't... I don't know what to say... I'm overwhelmed...

NICKY

You don't hafta say nothin'. You're my brother. I wouldn't be a man if I didn't help ya. I couldn't look at myself in the mirror no more. (*Standing*) You need more, you tell me, hear?

PAULEY

Yeah, OK. Nick...I...thank you.

NICKY

Be quiet now. I don't wanna hear nothin' more about this. You buy...Abb— your wife somethin' nice.

PAULEY

I will. Damn right I will.

NICKY

And hey, don't you go investin' none of that on them ponies, cabish?

PAULEY

I won't, I swear. Hand to God. I don't do that no more. Jeez, I blew a bundle on 'em a couple months ago. Danny, you remember Danny, don't ya?

NICKY

The bookie.

PAULEY

Right. Anyway, Danny calls me, says you got any money, put it on this long shot at Belmont. Fortun. Fourth race this was. You know Danny, he's not gonna screw ya so I do

PAULEY, *Continued*

it. Horse pulls up lame comin' outta the gate. Never even got started. Can you believe it? Right outta the damn gate this happens. *(Pause)* Dropped three grand.

NICKY

Three grand? Where the hell you get three grand? I thought you was broke.

PAULEY

I had some stuff goin' good for awhile. You know, on the side...under the table stuff...kept it from the wife.

NICKY

So what happened?

PAULEY

I just told ya...damn horse went lame.

NICKY

Not the horse. The under the table thing.

PAULEY

Oh that...well, it was a one shot deal, ya know? I was helpin' Danny move some merchandise and after a couple weeks we was done and...I know I shouldna bet on that horse, with my luck...but Danny said it was a sure thing. Good thing I placed the bet with Sal instead of Jimmy...that stupid Wop never remembers who owes him what.

NICKY

Joey just saw Sal at the funeral home. You better square this with him.

PAULEY

He ain't gonna do nothin', that stupid Wop's gonna mouth off but...

NICKY

Hey, you forget what happened to Johnny? *(Pause)* You learn your lesson?

PAULEY

Damn right I did. *(Crosses his heart)* No more ponies. I swear. But if that horse runs like it's supposed to, my worries are over. Just one big score, my worries are over.

NICKY

One big score. *(Laughs)*

PAULEY

What's so funny?

NICKY

I don't know...maybe Pop was right.

PAULEY

Whaddya mean?

NICKY

You know how he was always wantin' us to join the union like him. "You earn a good livin'" That's all he ever said, "You earn a good livin'" But I used to watch him practically crawl home after layin' them bricks and I said, "Forget that. There's gotta be more to life than that." So I spend my life lookin' for that one big score and here I am, 40 years later, still lookin' for it.

PAULEY

You've had plenty of shots Nick. Me, I'm a workin' stiff. How'm I gonna get a shot like you? I gotta take a chance now and then. All's I need is one big score. One sure thing. I'd risk everythin' for it. Everythin'.

NICKY

How many times you risk everythin' on a sure thing Pauley? Huh? How many times you come to me needin' some money for a sure thing?

PAULEY

Hey, you want your money back...

NICKY

Forget the money. It's history. It ain't about the money. You got a job, a wife...why can't you be satisfied?

PAULEY

Satisfied? (*Laughs*) What the hell I got to be satisfied about? Know what I got? I got gooboyka...nothin'. Satisfied. I'm a workin' stiff. I wasn't born with the talent to be some big shot singer or the brains to be a bank president. I gotta work for a livin'. I can't even stand the thought of goin' to work no more. Be satisfied bein' a security guard? The job's a joke. They won't even give me a gun. Don't wanna create the wrong impression. Somebody comes in to rob it, I'm gonna stop 'em? Yeah, right. Help 'em fill their bags is more like it. The job's drivin' me nuts, standin' there day after day, starin' at the walls, watchin' that money rollin' in and rollin' out. All that money. I hate that lousy bank, I swear to God I do.

NICKY

So quit.

PAULEY

And do what? Get another lousy job? Them jobs are all the same...don't pay nothin'. And you think Annie's on my back now... I quit? Fugedaboutit... I'll never hear the end of it... All I hear is buy me this, buy me that...buy me a house.

NICKY

How the hell you gonna swing that?

PAULEY

That's what I keep tellin' her... I can't. My own bank won't give me a mortgage. When I went in...manager laughs in my face when he sees how much I make...and they're the ones payin' me. Right in my face. Damn bank. Ya know, I shouldn't ask 'em for it. I should just take the money. Walk right in and take the damn money... (*Realizes something; sits, distracted*) Just take it...

NICKY

(*Pauses*) Hey, look at us. A couple of jooches gettin' all depressed. (*Laughs*) Go on, finish your book. You'll feel better. (*Looks at books*) Whaddya readin'?

PAULEY

Just some books...

NICKY

"The Life and Times of Frank and Jesse James"... "Willie Sutton"...what, you plannin' a heist?

PAULEY

What? No...of course not. I just love to read is all. I'll read anythin'. The library, it's a great resource.

NICKY

I never have the time. I'm lucky I watch two, three hours of TV a night, just to unwind. (*Looks at watch*) Jeez, look at the time. I'm supposed to be at Mary's for dinner. How do I look? (*Takes out a mirror, looks. He takes another drink, looks at mirror again, combing hair.*) There, that's better. See ya, Pauley.

PAULEY

Yeah, see ya.

*NICKY exits. PAULEY looks at the books.
He paces a moment, about to leave then he
reaches into his pocket, pulls out a wad of bills.
He thinks a moment then dials the phone.*

PAULEY, *Continued*

Danny? Hi. Yeah, Pauley. Listen, the Phils are playin' tonight...yeah, the Mets...I hate the Mets. I wanna put some money on the Phils. A grand... (*Pause*) Yeah, I got the money. What the hell kinda question is that? I got it right here in my hand (*He takes out the money and waves it.*) Of course I know I owe Sal but it's only a couple... (*Pause*) Well, he's wrong. I just talked to him and we straightened it all out. That stupid wop got his books all screwed up again. So...you takin' my bet? (*Pause*) I'm not gonna screw ya Danny. (*Pause*) All right, the hell with it. But I'm tellin' ya, I got a thousand bucks right here in my hand and when Jimmy hears you ain't takin' my bets...(*Pause*) Yeah I do. I gotta tell him. Me and Jimmy, we go way back. (*Pause*) That's right, Einstein, the will. I got a little advance. (*Pause*) All right, then. (*Pause*) No, no. Don't come over now. I'm goin' to the library.

PAULEY, *Continued*

(Pause) Because that's where the books are, you illiterate...Look, just bring the money tonight. (*Hangs up and gets more excited*) The library. What a great resource.

PAULEY races off stage. LIGHTS DOWN.

ACT I; SCENE THREE

SETTING: Same.

AT RISE: PAULEY's kitchen; later that same evening. PAULEY sits at the table, a pile of books and papers laid out in front of him. He's furiously poring through "The Great Train Robbery." Detective novels and mysteries are among the stacks of books. There's a knock at the door.

PAULEY

Yeah? Come on in.

DANNY enters.

DANNY

Yo Pauley!

PAULEY

Danny. Que se diche?

DANNY

Uh...what's the answer to that again?

PAULEY

All these years we known each other and you still don't know. Why do I even try?

DANNY

Ain't my fault. Italian's a funny damn language man...So how ya doin'?

PAULEY

OK...considerin', you know, the funeral and all.

DANNY

Sorry about your father. A good man he was.

PAULEY

Senile is what he was. It was his time, though. Too bad it came in the middle of a heat wave.

DANNY

It is pretty damn hot, ain't it?

PAULEY

You're tellin' me. This heat takes a lot outta ya. You drinkin' enough fluids? You gotta be sure of that.

DANNY

Yeah, I think so...

PAULEY

I got a book outta the library last month, right when the weather started to get hot to find out what to do. You ever go to the library? It's a great resource. Whenever I got a question, I go there. They got so much...

DANNY

Pauley, I didn't come to talk about the library.

PAULEY

Huh? Oh yeah, the Phils. Where's my money?

DANNY

Your money? That's the wrong question. The correct question is, where's Jimmy's money? They lost.

PAULEY

Whaddya mean they lost? They was leadin' by two in the eighth.

DANNY

New York scored three in the ninth.

PAULEY

They lost? How the hell could they lose? They were ahead...

DANNY

They blew it. What else is new? Gimmee the money and I'm outta here.

PAULEY

Damn it...Them damn Mets. I hate 'em.

DANNY

Yeah, so does everyone else in the city. Now just gimmee the grand and...

PAULEY

I ain't got it.

DANNY

Whaddya mean you ain't got it? You had it this morning... You said you had it right in your hand. What the hell you do with it?

PAULEY

My wife...you know how she is...

DANNY

She spent the whole grand? Pauley...How'd she get it?

PAULEY

I had it stashed under my socks.

DANNY

Yeah. That's original.

PAULEY

Woman never cleans, never does the laundry, today she decides to go through my sock drawer. I swear, she's got some sorta sixth sense it comes to money...sniffs it out. Damn it, how the hell could the Phils lose?

DANNY

Forget the Phils. You got a serious problem here Pauley. You think Sal's pissed at you? When Jimmy hears about this... How could you be so stupid?

PAULEY

Don't you call me...

DANNY

Ya placed a bet and ya don't have the money to cover it. If that ain't stupid...

PAULEY

It was Annie...

DANNY

You gotta lay down the law with her.

PAULEY

My wife ain't none of your business...

DANNY

But collectin' for Jimmy is. You make me look like an idiot. You set me up for this and now I gotta catch hell from him. I ain't coverin' for you this time. Ya know, Jimmy was gonna send Frankie Pazzo over to collect.

PAULEY

What?

DANNY

That's right. Crazy Frankie. Jimmy's tired of gettin' jerked around. When I tell him you ain't got the money...

PAULEY

Danny, you gotta...you gotta tell him I'm good for it.

DANNY

(Angry) How the hell I'm gonna tell him that? You ain't got the money! You just told me that. You want me to lie to him? Hey Pauley, you got yourself into this, you get yourself out. I'm tired of coverin' for you. I'm turnin' this over to Frankie.

DANNY starts to walk out; PAULEY grabs him by the arm.

PAULEY

Danny...Danny...wait...come on, siddown. Hey, how long we known each other? Huh? How many years. We grew up together...

DANNY

Don't start with that...

PAULEY

We was like brothers. It's like family with me and you. And you're gonna walk out on me when I need you? Come on, siddown. *(DANNY sits.)* I'll get you a beer.

DANNY

No beer. I'm on a diet.

PAULEY

How 'bout some pizelles then?

DANNY

They from Isgro's?

PAULEY

Where else?

PAULEY pulls pizelles from the cupboard and puts them in front of DANNY.

DANNY

Well...maybe one or two. *(Eats)* Damn these are good... You lied to me Pauley. You lied to me.

PAULEY

(Sits) No I didn't. I made a mistake is all. I had the money... Who woulda believed the Phils was gonna lose? They're on a tear. Then Annie found the money...

DANNY

You gotta do somethin' about her.

PAULEY

I can't say no to her. She knows that.

DANNY

Maybe it's time you learned. But that's your problem. Whaddya gonna do about the money?

PAULEY

I need time...

DANNY

(Standing; yelling) You ain't got time. Don't you understand Jimmy's fed up with you? When I tell him...

PAULEY

You ain't gotta tell him.

DANNY

Yeah I do. I ain't stickin' my neck out for you no more.

PAULEY

I'll get the money, don't worry.

DANNY

Yeah sure, don't worry. Somebody's gotta worry. You sure as hell ain't. *(Pause)* Why don't you borrow it from Nick?

PAULEY

Nick? I can't borrow it from him.

DANNY

Why not? Ain't he loaded?

PAULEY

Yeah he's always talkin' 'bout how much money he got...but you wouldn't believe how tight that louse is. Never gives no one a cent. And when he does, he's on your back forever about payin' him back.

DANNY

Really? Man, I never knew...

PAULEY

Oh, he's a real pain... Ya can't borrow no money from him. Yeah, he's always, "family this and family that" but in the end he's a cheap son of a...

DANNY

What about the will? I don't mean no disrespect here but there's gotta be money in the will. Your old man was always sockin' money away.

PAULEY

Yeah sure, but who knows when they're gonna read it...damn lawyers. It's gonna be weeks...if Jimmy can wait...

DANNY

He can't. So whaddya gonna do?

PAULEY

(Pause) I got a plan.

DANNY

Plan? What plan?

PAULEY

I can't tell you.

DANNY

Whaddya mean you can't tell me? Whaddya want me to do, go to Jimmy and say, "Hey Jim, how ya doin'?" How's the family? They doin' good? Good. I'm happy for ya. Oh, by the way, Pauley just screwed ya outta the grand but don't take it personal. And don't worry 'cause he got a plan. No, I don't know what it is but he got one." And Jimmy's gonna go for that? I suggest you start takin' this serious; very serious 'cause Jimmy wants that money by tonight.

PAULEY

Tonight? I can't get the money by tonight.

DANNY

You better come up with somethin' by tonight.

PAULEY

I can get you a hundred...maybe two. The rest'll be here tomorrow. I told ya I got a plan.

DANNY

What the hell is this plan of yours?

PAULEY

I can't tell you.

DANNY

You better 'cause if you don't come up with more than two hundred by tonight, Jimmy himself is gonna come over for a visit. Cabish?

PAULEY

All right...All right...I'm...you can't tell no one.

DANNY

Pauley, I ain't gonna tell no one.

PAULEY

OK, OK. *(Long pause)*

DANNY

Pauley!

PAULEY

OK, OK...I'm gonna hit First Federal.

DANNY

What?

PAULEY

I'm gonna rob the bank.

DANNY

You're nuts. You're outta your mind, Pauley. Your father ain't the only one that went senile. Ain't that the bank you work at?

PAULEY

Yeah but...

DANNY

That ain't a plan. That's a joke.

PAULEY

No, no. Listen. That's the beauty of it. I know their whole operation. I know the place, the people...they got idiots on security. There's only two people there when they open up. It'll be a cinch. A piece of cake.

DANNY

It's just down the street.

PAULEY

Look, I stick it up, sneak down the alley and I'm home before they even ring the alarm. I do it tomorrow, they have a new guy on and I got an alibi— Pop's funeral. Hey, tell ya what, this caper can really use one more guy. You help, we split the money. Fifty-fifty. Right down the middle.

DANNY

Thanks but no thanks Pauley. I ain't as dumb as I look.

PAULEY

Fine. I'll do it alone. More money for me.

DANNY

You're nuts. They're gonna recognize ya.

PAULEY

I'm wearin' a disguise...hat, dark glasses... I got Annie's wig. They'll never know.

DANNY

Pauley, you can't do this. You don't know how to pull it off.

PAULEY

Yeah I do. I got all these books. I'm gettin' lottsa ideas. It's a great resource, the library.

DANNY

(Picks up a book) "The Great Train Robbery." I thought you was robbin' a bank.

PAULEY

I'm gonna modify it.

DANNY

Modify it? Pauley, this is not a good idea.

PAULEY

What choice do I have? Either I get the money or I'm walkin' with a limp the rest of my life.

DANNY

But a bank... Man, I don't know...

PAULEY

Unless you got another idea... You just tell Jimmy I'll get him the money tomorrow. Tell him with Pop's funeral and all, you didn't wanna bother me. I'll get him the money tomorrow. Right after the funeral's over.

DANNY

Man...You got a gun?

PAULEY

Uh-uh.

DANNY

How the hell you gonna hold up a bank without a gun? What, you're gonna ask 'em nice for the money and they're gonna hand it over?

PAULEY

I don't need a gun. I got this. *(Holds up a large bar of soap)*

DANNY

Soap? What the hell you gonna do with a bar of soap?

PAULEY

I'm gonna carve a gun outta it...use black shoe polish... They won't know the difference.

DANNY

It'll never work.

PAULEY

Yeah it will. That's what this guy in Florida did. I got the article right here...take a look.

DANNY

(Reads slowly) It says the cops shot him.

PAULEY

Exactly.

DANNY

So this guy gets shot for pointin' a bar of soap at a cop and you think this is good?

PAULEY

They shot him 'cause they really thought it was a gun.

DANNY

(Taking out his gun) Here, take my gun.

PAULEY

I don't want a gun.

DANNY

You gotta have a gun.

PAULEY

But it's illegal. I don't got a permit.

DANNY

Robbin' a bank's illegal. You think they're gonna ask to see your permit? Now take the gun.

PAULEY

What about you?

DANNY

I got plenty of guns.

PAULEY

OK but keep the bullets. I don't wanna hurt no one.

DANNY

You won't hurt no one. Just don't fire it. It's a psychology thing, understand? It'll make you feel safe...in control. Keep the bullets.

PAULEY

I don't know...I mean, that guy in Florida used a bar of soap...

DANNY

Listen to me Pauley. You gotta come up with that money some kinda way. You don't, you're not the only one Jimmy's gonna be pissed at I damn sure don't want him comin' after me. Take the gun and the bullets. If you're gonna do somethin' stupid like robbin' a bank, you gotta cover yourself.

PAULEY

(Turning the gun over in his hands) Yeah, right.

DANNY

As soon as the funeral's over, you're gonna pay. Right?

PAULEY

Right.

DANNY

I'll keep Jimmy off ya until then.

PAULEY

Don't tell him about the heist...

DANNY

I'm just gonna tell him you're all broke up about your father...you'll pay him tomorrow. *(Starts to leave)* And Pauley...no games this time. Cabish?

PAULEY

No...no...no games. Thanks Danny. Thanks. (*DANNY exits. PAULEY stares at the gun, turning it over in his hands. He puts it in his waistband, struts around the stage. He stops, pulls out the gun and points it above the audience while holding it with both hands.*) OK Mister Bank Manager, you little rat, you. I'm in charge now. Remember how funny I was when I asked for a mortgage? Well, how funny am I now? You do what I say or I'll blow a hole in you so big they'll drive a truck through it.

PAULEY pretends to shoot then stops, shaken. He stares at the gun, removes the bullets and is looking at them as LIGHTS DOWN.

END ACT 1

ACT II; SCENE ONE

SETTING: MARY and TONY's kitchen, the morning of the funeral.

AT RISE: The room is empty. PAULEY rushes in, dressed in a raincoat that's too small for him, carrying a garbage bag and ANNIE's wig. He stops, stuffs the wig in his pocket. From offstage, we hear MARY approaching, calling "Tony, c'mon we're gonna be late!" PAULEY panics, runs to the pantry with the garbage bag, re-enters the kitchen and washes his face at the sink. Takes a drink of water and then leans on the counter. MARY enters dressed for the funeral.

MARY

Pauley? Pauley what are you doing here?

PAULEY

I...I...

MARY

Why aren't you dressed? Is that Pop's raincoat you're wearin'?

PAULEY

Well, I...I...

MARY

It's gotta be 90 out already.

PAULEY

I know but...it...it...makes me feel close to him, ya know? Like's he's still around. Almost.

MARY

(Helps him out of the raincoat) He passed away, Pauley. His funeral's in an hour. You have to pull yourself together.

PAULEY

I know, I know. Look, Mare, the uh...the washing machine, in our building, it broke. The super said he'd fix it tomorrow.

MARY

Yeah...so?

PAULEY

Well, see...I got all this laundry...I gotta do it for work tomorrow, right? So I brought it here. I didn't think you'd mind. I stuffed it in a plastic bag... that's all there is...just one bag. I put it in the pantry. But where I put it, it's outta the way. I'll do it after the dinner. If that's OK with you, that is.

MARY

It's fine Pauley, but...

PAULEY

Look, I better get changed. I'm gonna leave out the back...don't wanna bother no one.

MARY

You won't bother...

PAULEY

Oh...your back door? It was locked.

MARY

Yeah? So?

PAULEY

So when I come over, I hadda come around the front. No big deal. Not really. It's just...I didn't want no one to see me 'cause I'm grievin' and all. But the back door was locked.

MARY

We're all goin' to the funeral. No one's gonna be home so of course it's gonna be locked.

PAULEY

Right, right. Like I said, no big deal. You got other things to worry about, right? So, OK. I'm gonna go now. But I'll lock that door. Don't you worry. OK. See ya. Bye.

PAULEY exits, NICKY enters wearing a black suit.

NICKY

Mornin', Mare. (*Kisses her, notices she's perplexed*) You OK?

MARY

Yeah...I'm OK...considerin'...but...Pauley was just here. He came over with his laundry.

NICKY

What?

MARY

Said the machine in his buildin's not workin'...put it in my pantry.

NICKY

That's a little strange.

MARY

What's strange is he's wearin' Pop's raincoat. Said it makes him feel like Pop's still around.

NICKY

He ain't takin' this too good.

MARY

I know. I just hope he can make it through the funeral.

TONY enters, also wearing a black suit.

TONY

Mare, it's time to go. You ready?

MARY

Yeah. Nick, we have to get there early. OK if you go with Joey? He should be down soon. Give him a holler if he isn't.

NICKY

You two go ahead. I'll bring the kid.

NICKY lights a cigarette.

MARY

And do me a favor, tell him to get the tablecloths for the dinner. They're in a bag in the pantry...on one of the shelves.

NICKY

OK. See ya there...cigarette, Tone?

TONY

No thanks. I quit.

NICKY

Oh really?

MARY

I'm telling you, when you're lyin' there gaspin' for air...no sympathy...none at all.

TONY

Oh yeah? Well if you're so concerned with my health, how the hell can you give me a baloney sandwich for lunch?

MARY

What're you talkin' about?

TONY

That's what I had for lunch yesterday.

MARY

I've never given you a baloney sandwich.

MARY picks up her purse to leave.

TONY

Well somebody did...

MARY

(As they exit) Well it wasn't me.

TONY and MARY exit. NICKY gets a bottle of whiskey out of the cabinet and pours a glass. He quickly downs the drink, pours a second one, picks up the phone and dials.

NICKY

Oh! Vito! Nicky, yeah...Listen, I want you to send me some money. I had to lay out a bundle for this funeral...*(Pause)* Because I had to, that's why...Whaddya mean there's nothin' left...you embezzlin' piece of...Look, there's always somethin' left...*(Pause)* Well sell a car or somethin'... *(Pause)* We already did, huh? OK, loan me a couple of grand, just 'til I get back on my feet again. I'm good for it *(Pause)* You lousy, cheap...*(Pause)* Don't tell me to calm down! I'm broke, understand? *(Calms down slightly)* Come on, I got that gig next week...*(Pause)* They cancelled? How the hell...it's a community center. How..? *(Pause)* So tell 'em I ain't drinkin' no more. Damn it. *(Pause)* What about the will? *(Pause)* In a few days, why? *(Pause)* Of course there's money in it but...see if you can follow this, all right moron? I am completely broke right now, understand? That money ain't doin' me no good 'cause I ain't got it. And I need that money to get the hell outta this one-horse town. Is that

NICKY, *Continued*

clear enough now you stroonz? Look, just loan me the money... *(Pause)* All right, that's it. You're fired... And what's so funny?...Hello? Hello? *(Slams down the receiver)*
Desgraziade!

NICKY downs his drink. He thinks a moment and then dials again.

NICKY, *Continued*

Hey Janice, how are ya? *(Pause)* Nicky...Ni... *(He is cut off.)* Yeah, thanks a lot. Same to you...women...

NICKY puts down the phone just as JOEY slowly enters, apparently suffering from a hang-over. He has on a black suit but is not wearing a tie and his shirt tail is out. He sits, placing his head on the table.

JOEY

My head...my head...

NICKY pours them both a drink.

NICKY

When are you gonna learn you can't keep up with me...especially drinkin'? Here, this is what you need. Hair of the dog... Go ahead, drink it. You'll feel better.

JOEY

Yeah?

NICKY

Yeah, trust me.

JOEY

Well...

NICKY

G'head, drink it.

JOEY takes a sip; NICKY drinks all of his and then pours another.

NICKY *(Continued)*

Here's to Mom and Pop. *(He raises his glass and drinks. JOEY does the same. NICKY pours two more drinks.)* Their worries are over now. They're at peace.

JOEY

Yeah.

NICKY

They're together again now. Can you believe all the crap they musta went through? Pop comin' over here by himself, leavin' Ma back in the old country...What trust they had, what trust. And love... Man, it don't happen like that no more.

JOEY

You can say that again.

NICKY

You ask me, it's all that women's lib crap.

JOEY

Whaddya mean?

NICKY

They think they can do whatever they want now...have all the flings they want.

JOEY

That's not true.

NICKY

No? Look at you and what's her name...

JOEY

Janice?

NICKY

Thinkin' she could do whatever she wanted.

JOEY

What are you talkin' about?

NICKY

Joey, grow up would ya? Face facts. There ain't some fairy godmother lookin' out for you, you know.

JOEY

I don't know what you're talkin' about.

NICKY

Look, forget it.

JOEY

Wait...there's another guy?

Bingo! Light bulb goes off.

NICKY

I knew it!

JOEY

What do you care?

NICKY

I don't....It's just...ah, the hell with her.

JOEY

Look, your mother wants you to get some tablecloths. They're in the pantry...in a bag or somethin'. Better hustle up, the show's about to start.

NICKY

OK. (*He stands to go, then stops.*) I gotta know. Who was it?

JOEY

What does it matter?

NICKY

I'll call the poor fool...wish him luck. Thank him for taking her off my hands.

JOEY

(*Pause*) You're welcome.

NICKY

For what?

JOEY

For takin' her off your hands.

NICKY

(*Stunned*) You're the guy?

JOEY

Yeah.

NICKY

You?

JOEY

Yeah. Fugedaboutit, huh? Did you a big favor.

NICKY

JOEY

You? You son of a...

NICKY

Hey, you just said you wanted to thank the guy...

JOEY

But...but you're my uncle. Uncles aren't supposed to do things like that.

NICKY

Really...I musta cut class the day they taught that.

JOEY

I can't believe you...

They tussle a bit but NICKY quickly gets the best of JOEY, twisting JOEY's arm behind his back.

NICKY

Whaddya want from me? I took her off your hands. (*NICKY pushes JOEY away.*) Fangool! Get the damn tablecloths! (*NICKY sits at table and pours another drink. He rubs his eyes, looks into his mirror.*) Damn kids...

JOEY laughs from OFFSTAGE.

NICKY

(*Stands*) What the hell's so funny?

JOEY enters carrying a gun.

JOEY

(*Laughs*) Look what I found.

NICKY

Joey, put that down.

JOEY

(*Struts with gun*) Jeez...

NICKY

Where'd you get that?

JOEY

My fairy godmother musta left it. Who said she ain't lookin' out for me, huh?

NICKY

Easy with that thing.

JOEY

Nice piece, huh?

JOEY pauses, checking out the gun. He laughs.

NICKY

Yeah...yeah, sure. C'mon...careful with that.

JOEY

You could really do some damage with this. *(Draws gun)* Man, this feels great.

NICKY

(Reaches for gun) Stop playin' with that. That ain't a toy.

JOEY

(Avoiding his reach; still in control) I know that. Don't you think I know that? *(Draws again)* Just like John Wayne.

NICKY

Gimmee that before you...

JOEY

Get away.

NICKY

You ain't careful, you're gonna shoot someone.

JOEY

Now there's an idea... *(Points gun at Nick)* Siddown. *(NICKY hesitates.)* Siddown!

NICKY

(Sitting) Stop playin' around.

JOEY

Playtime's over Uncle Nick. Hey, you wanna join Grandpa? Would you like that?

NICKY

Joey, you gotta see...Janice...she wasn't no good. You gotta see that.

JOEY

Yeah...I mean, if she's foolin' around with washed-up old drunk like you.

NICKY

(Starts to rise) Why you little...

JOEY

(Points gun) Sidddown! *(NICKY sits.)* Everything's OK. See, now I know the truth. That's what family's all about, right? Truth, trust, all that crap. Family, that's all that matters, right? Relax...it'll be over soon.

NICKY

No. Not me...please...not me...

JOEY

Then who? Janice? You want me to shoot Janice?

NICKY

Well... it was her fault.

JOEY

Women...they do have a way of doin' things to you.

NICKY

You're right. You're absolutely right...

JOEY

Tell ya what. I'll shoot you first and then I'll shoot her.

NICKY

I don't think you gotta shoot me.

JOEY

Yeah I do.

NICKY

No you don't.

JOEY

Yeah I do... Think about it...you'll get to see Grandpa again...tell him how much you love him... *(Points and cocks gun)* Tell him I said hi, Uncle Nick.

MARY walks in, sees JOEY with the gun.

MARY

Joey!

JOEY

(Turns to MARY) Ma?

NICKY lunges at JOEY and grabs the gun. There's shouting as they grapple. The gun is pointed upward as both of them hold it.

NICKY
Leggo. Leggo of it.

MARY
Joey...Joey my God...

JOEY
Stop it...Stop it...It isn't loaded.

All freeze for a moment.

NICKY
What?

JOEY
It isn't loaded. There aren't any bullets in it.

NICKY takes the gun and opens the barrel. It's empty.

NICKY
Son of a...

MARY crosses to JOEY and slaps him.

NICKY
Hey, let me...

MARY
You stay away from him. Joey, what were you doing? (*Hugs him*) What made you do something like that?

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

MARY
Where did you get the gun? (*To NICKY*) Is it yours?

NICKY
No it's not mine.

MARY
Then whose is it? Where'd you get it?

JOEY
The pantry.

MARY

Pantry? Pauley put his laundry out there...Does he have a gun now too?

NICKY

I guess that bank finally gave him one. Just like him to forget to load it and leave it somewhere ain't it?

MARY

But Joey, why point that thing at your uncle like that?

NICKY

He was just foolin' around (*Pours a drink*) ...got carried away. A good act but too realistic for me Joey. Way too realistic. You were just yankin' your uncle's chain, ain't that right Joey?

MARY

Joey..?

JOEY

I'm sorry Ma. I was just fooling around, like he said. I got carried away. I'm sorry.

NICKY

Yeah, he got carried away

NICKY goes to take a drink but MARY grabs it from him.

MARY

I need this more than you. (*Takes a sip*) This heat is making everyone crazy. Pauley's not making any sense. It's Pop's funeral and all he talks about is doing his laundry. Everybody's running around talking about the bank robbery...

NICKY

Bank robbery?

MARY

...and you two are playing with a gun. What's going on?

NICKY

What bank robbery?

MARY

Didn't you hear? First Federal, where Pauley works. Thank God he wasn't working today. Someone robbed it this morning, right when they opened. Can you believe that? Right in our own neighborhood. Nothing is safe anymore. What a world. (*Drinks a little more whisky*) I just came back for my checkbook. (*Goes to a drawer and removes it*). I forgot it this morning. I have to pay the balance on the funeral because Charlie, my own cousin, can't

MARY, *Continued*

wait a couple of days until we get the money from the will. I'm tellin' you, family...*(Drinks some more whiskey, hands the rest to NICKY)*. Joey, you come with me. I don't want you doing anything else crazy today...pointing a gun...If I don't get an ulcer before today's over...You drive your father's car. Nicky, you take Joey's car and meet us there.

NICKY

Sure.

MARY

And you put that bottle away. You've had enough. *(To JOEY)* Let's go.

MARY and JOEY walk out but before leaving, JOEY stops and stares one last time at NICKY who looks away and sits at the table. He finishes the rest of the whisky in his glass and pours another. LIGHTS DOWN.

ACT II; SCENE TWO

SETTING: The viewing area of the funeral home.

AT RISE: NICKY and PAULEY stand in the foreground, a spotlight on them.

NICKY

Pop looks good, huh Pauley?

PAULEY

Yeah, real good.

NICKY

Nice turn out too...even Uncle Nunzio showed up. Jeez, Pop didn't talk to him for what...20 years?

PAULEY

At least.

NICKY

And all because Nunzio never paid him the two hundred bucks he borrowed...the nonsense people put themselves through...and for what? For money...for some lousy piece of paper. Don't make no sense...no matter what ya do, this is where ya end up. Right here. Jeez, makes ya wonder why we ever argue. *(Pause)* He looks so peaceful...

PAULEY

Yeah.

NICKY

Everyone took it good, too. None of that hysterical cryin' for the deceased. I hate that kinda stuff. Only one real upset was your wife 'cause she couldn't find her wig...

PAULEY

Yeah, well...women...you know. Jeez, look who's here.

NICKY

Who?

PAULEY

Madeline...Madeline Petrone. Nice of her to show up. *(Waves to her)* I haven't seen her in years. She's still lookin' good.

NICKY

Putan.

PAULEY

Hey, you didn't mind when you was, you know... *(Makes gesture that indicates something intimate happened between NICKY and Madeline. NICKY glares at him.)* So I guess you're headin' back tomorrow?

NICKY

Nah. I'm gonna stick around 'til after they read the will.

PAULEY

But it's gonna be a few days...maybe a week before they read it, Nick. Lawyers...Larry's gonna milk us for every cent he can. No sense you stickin' around that long.

NICKY

I'm in no rush.

PAULEY

But Nick...

NICKY

Just between me and you? I hope you get a little somethin' extra, I really do.. I just wanna see Tony's face when they read it and you get more than him.

PAULEY

Tony ain't so bad...not really.

NICKY

No? See what happens when you get more than him. I just hope Pop still knew what you was doin' for him. You should get extra for all you done.

PAULEY

I just...I just did what I had to.

NICKY

That's what I love about you Pauley, you're humble. All you done and you never asked for nothin' extra.

PAULEY

I did what I believed in my heart was right, that's all.

NICKY

My brother. You're some piece of work. Some piece of work. You feelin' all right?

PAULEY

I'm OK. Fine...considerin', you know, the funeral and all.

NICKY

Yeah, I know it's been tough on you Pauley. But it's almost over. Now you're gonna send me the bill for all this right?

PAULEY

Nicky, you been so generous already.

NICKY

Hey, don't gimme no trouble. You just use that money for you and...uh... your wife. Don't worry about none of this. I'll take care of this.

PAULEY

If you insist, I guess I better. I don't wanna insult you.

NICKY

Good. Family, Pauley, that's all that matters. *(Pause)* Oh, hey I almost forgot. I'm gettin' as bad as Pop forgettin' things. But I should talk...you know what you forgot at Mary's?

PAULEY

Mary's? I forgot somethin' at Mary's?

NICKY

In the pantry?

PAULEY

The pantry?

NICKY

On a shelf?

PAULEY

I didn't put nothin' on a shelf. I put that bag of laundry out there, that's all.

NICKY

It ain't just laundry you left there.

PAULEY

Yes it is.

NICKY

No it's not. Pauley, look, I know what you left there.

PAULEY

You do? Hey...you're my brother. You gotta understand.

NICKY

Understand? I do understand Pauley. You gotta look after yourself these days.

PAULEY

That's right. You gotta. No one's gonna help you.

NICKY

Just thank God the damn thing wasn't loaded.

PAULEY

What?

NICKY

(Taking the gun out of his waistband) The gun. Thank God it wasn't loaded. That wacko nephew of ours finds it and starts wavin' it around like he's John Wayne...pointin' it at me. Scared the hell outta me. That kid is a total wacko. *(Pushes gun at PAULEY)* Anyway, here.

PAULEY

It's not mine.

NICKY

Whaddya mean it's not yours?

PAULEY

It's not mine.

NICKY

Mary said you was in the pantry today...we figured the bank finally gave you a gun. But if it ain't yours, who's is it?

PAULEY

I don't know but it's not mine.

NICKY

How the hell did it get there then?

PAULEY

Beats me.

NICKY

You say it's not yours, it's not yours. But it's gotta be somebody's. Mary better call the cops.

PAULEY

Cops? Why? Why call the cops?

NICKY

It don't belong to no one in the family...it had to get there somehow. Someone hadda stash it there. Wait...that robbery. Jeez, you think someone we know done it and stashed the gun there? Damn...why couldn't they be stupid enough to stash the loot there too?

PAULEY

Nobody we know done that...no reason to call the cops...

NICKY

I don't know...Mary better call 'em...they can trace the gun, find out who owns it.

PAULEY

(Pauses, thinks it over.) You're right. It is mine.

NICKY

Whaddya mean? You just said...

PAULEY

I forgot, is all.

NICKY

Forgot? How the hell could you forget?

PAULEY

I got a lot on my mind. I been distracted lately. Here, gimme the gun.

PAULEY takes the gun from NICKY and puts it in his coat pocket.

NICKY

You just forgot?

PAULEY

Yeah, yeah. Just forgot.

MARY approaches.

NICKY

You forgot..?

PAULEY

That's it...forgot. Quiet, here comes Mary.

NICKY

They say that senile stuff runs in families, Pauley. You better watch yourself. Maybe you should take a vacation or somethin'. You and Annie.

PAULEY

...Angie...

NICKY

Angie?

PAULEY

Annie. It's Annie.

NICKY

Annie. That's what I said. Yeah, you better take a vacation Pauley.

MARY

You boys ready? It's time to say goodbye to Pop. C'mon.

MARY links arms with PAULEY and NICKY. They look at one another and exit. LIGHTS DOWN.

ACT II; SCENE THREE

SETTING: PAULEY and ANNIE's kitchen, not long after the funeral service.

AT RISE: PAULEY enters carrying two suitcases, one of them with clothing hanging out, one empty. He goes to the phone and dials.

PAULEY

Yeah...look, I need a number for an airline...I don't care which one. American, Continental, one of them...Damn it, just gimmee...

DANNY calls from offstage.

DANNY

Pauley! Yo! Pauley!

PAULEY

Mingya...Damn it. Hurry up! All right, fine...American... Just hurry up...

DANNY

Yo Pauley!

PAULEY

(Into phone) What? Wait...

DANNY enters. PAULEY immediately hangs up and shoves the suitcase under the table.

PAULEY, *Continued*

Don't you have doors where you live? Aren't you supposed to knock or somethin' before you barge into someone's home?

DANNY

I'm sorry man. I'm all excited. You did it! You really did it! You hit the bank. The damn bank. *(Hugs him)* Just like a gangster you was. Man, I didn't know you had it in ya.

PAULEY

Keep your voice down, will ya?

DANNY

Yeah, yeah. Sorry. Jimmy didn't believe me when I told him what you was gonna do.

PAULEY

Jimmy? Why the hell...didn't I tell you not to tell no one?

DANNY

C'mon. It's just Jimmy. He'll help ya launder the money.

PAULEY

I don't need no help. I can do it alone.

DANNY

Well, he offered. You change your mind, give him a call.

PAULEY

Yeah, yeah, sure. Look, I'm in a hurry here, so if you don't mind...

Hold on, Pauley.

DANNY

Why?

PAULEY

Why... This guy... *(Laughs)* The money. The grand. Remember? I'm here to collect.

DANNY

You said I had 'til the funeral was over.

PAULEY

It's over Pauley.

DANNY

No it ain't. We ain't had the dinner yet. Once we have the dinner, then it's over.

PAULEY

With all respect, Pauley, once the body is in the ground, it's over. The rest is just for show.

DANNY

It ain't for show. It's mournin'. We're still mournin'.

PAULEY

(Getting angry) Look, there's no use arguin'. I ain't makin' the decision here. It's Jimmy. He said as soon as your father's in the ground, he wants his money. Your father's in the ground and I ain't leavin' here without the money. *(Pleading)* C'mon Pauley, you got it.

PAULEY

I ain't got it.

DANNY

Whaddy mean?

PAULEY

I mean I ain't got it.

DANNY

Don't gimme that crap Pauley. You wanna play, you gotta pay. Now it's time to pay. *(Pleading again)* You hit the bank. Gimme the money and Jimmy'll be satisfied. I won't hafta come here no more.

PAULEY

I just said I ain't got it.

DANNY

Then where the hell is it? And don't gimme nothin' about your wife takin' it, neither.

PAULEY

I stashed it where it'll be safe. I'll get it after the dinner. You said I had 'til...

DANNY

Damn you Pauley

PAULEY

Don't you curse me. (*Calms down*) Don't worry, it's safe. I leave it here, Annie's always snoopin' around...she's gonna find it. After the dinner, you come back. It's just a couple of hours. I'll give it to ya then, I swear. Tell Jimmy...

DANNY

(*Grabbing him*) Shut up and listen to me! I'm through playin' with you now. All you ever do is jerk me around. It's over now, cabish? I ain't coverin' for you no more. Now where's the money?

PAULEY

Take it easy Danny. What's the matter here? We're just like...

DANNY

And don't gimme that "we're just like brothers" line. It's over Pauley. It's over. Now where's the money? Where's the money?

PAULEY

(*Visibly shaken*) At Mary's

DANNY

(*Shakes him*) Where at Mary's?

PAULEY

The pantry...in a garbage bag...

DANNY

(*Releasing PAULEY*) All right...now I'm just gonna take the grand, is all. The rest is yours. (*Straightens PAULEY'S clothes*) Sorry about this Pauley. It ain't nothin' personal...it's just business.

DANNY starts to exit. PAULEY, visibly shaken, reaches into one coat pocket, pulls out a handkerchief and wipes forehead. He reaches into other pocket and pulls out the gun. He points it at Danny.

PAULEY

Danny..? Danny!

DANNY

(As he stops, turning back) Now what..? Hey c'mon Pauley, put that away.

PAULEY

You ain't goin' near my money. No one is.

DANNY

Pauley, put it down.

PAULEY

You think I'm stupid? I'm supposed to believe you're only gonna take the grand?

DANNY

That's all I'm takin', I swear. Pauley, you're makin' a mistake.

PAULEY

I'm ain't makin' no mistake.

DANNY

(Walks towards PAULEY trying to call his bluff) You ain't gonna use it Pauley. You ain't got the guts.

DANNY reaches in his suit. PAULEY crouches with both hands on the gun aiming directly at DANNY'S chest.

PAULEY

That's enough! Show me your hands. C'mon...hurry up or I'll blow a hole in you so big they'll drive a truck through it. *(DANNY freezes.)* The bullets, Danny. Remember how you told me to keep the bullets? You said it was a psychology thing. *(Laughs)* Psychology thing... It's a *psychological* thing, you jerk... But you was right, Danny. I feel in control now. I am in control now. *(Crosses to Danny)* Put your hands up!

DANNY

Pauley, listen...

PAULEY

Shut up! Turn around! *(Reaches into DANNY'S coat; pulls out gun)* Danny, my brother. You're just like a brother to me...just like my brother. *(Reaches into DANNY'S waistband; pulls out another gun.)* All that talk about carin' but all you wanna do is take what's mine...ready to turn on me...no one's gettin' a cent of my money. No one. *(PAULEY gropes along DANNY's back and pulls out another gun.)* Got any more?

DANNY
No.

PAULEY
(Pats DANNY's legs; finds another gun) What's this?

DANNY
C'mon Pauley, that's the gun my Daddy gave me.

PAULEY
Too bad. Now gimme your car keys...c'mon...hurry up. Good...Now, empty your pockets...c'mon...all your change...you ain't makin' no phone calls... Is that all?

DANNY
That's it. I'm clean.

PAULEY
OK. Take off your belt.

DANNY
What?

PAULEY
Your belt. Take off your belt. I gotta tie you up.

DANNY removes his belt, hands it to PAULEY

PAULEY
Now siddown. *(DANNY hesitates)* I said siddown! *(DANNY does. PAULEY starts tying him up)* Good thing I was in the Boy Scouts.

DANNY
Pauley, they kicked you out the first day 'cause you was stealin' food.

PAULEY
It was their fault leavin' them cupcakes out. But I was there long enough to learn how to tie a knot. *(PAULEY finishes tying him, then grabs a kitchen towel)*

DANNY
Now what?

PAULEY
Sorry, brother, but I don't want you yellin' and attractin' any of Jimmy's other goons. *(Stuffs towel in Danny's mouth)* All right. Now I'm tellin' you, if I see you, Jimmy or any of them other goons anywhere near my money, I'm gonna come out shootin'. I swear to God I will. After the dinner, I come back here, untie you and then I pay you. Cabish? *(Pause)* Well, maybe...just to be safe. *(Hits DANNY in the head with the gun to knock him out.)* Danny?

PAULEY, *Continued*

Danny! Sleep well, brother. (*PAULEY keeps one gun, puts the rest in the suitcase, starts to exit.*) Like I said, soon's the funeral's over, I'll give you the money. (*To audience*) Yeah. Right. (*Exits*)

DANNY slowly lifts his head—he wasn't knocked out—and struggles against the knots.

LIGHTS DOWN.

ACT II; SCENE FOUR

SETTING: TONY and MARY's kitchen; about the same time.

AT RISE: JOEY comes out of the pantry, upset. NICKY enters.

NICKY

(*Uncertain*) Joey? How ya doin'? (*JOEY turns but doesn't answer.*) Whatsa matter? You upset about the funeral? Look, your grandfather went peaceful. It was his time.

JOEY

It's not that.

NICKY

Look, if it's about that girlfriend of yours...

JOEY

Just shut up about her, all right?

NICKY

Don't talk to me like that. Who the hell you think you are? I'm still your uncle.

JOEY

Lucky me, huh?

NICKY

Hey, the hell with you. I just thought we should talk is all.

JOEY

(*Tosses a stack of money on the table*) You wanna talk? Talk about this.

NICKY

What's that?

JOEY

Money, I think.

NICKY

I can see that. Where'd it come from?

JOEY

I don't know but there's a lot of it. When I went to get the tablecloths, I found a garbage bag...when I reached in I found this. It's full.

NICKY rushes to the pantry. Returns with bag and some money.

NICKY

(Reads wrapper) First Federal? How the hell..?

JOEY

Someone we know must have robbed the bank.

NICKY

Get the hell outta here. No one we know's got the brains. Pauley's the only one in the pantry today and he sure as hell don't.

JOEY

Wait a minute...wasn't that his gun? Do you think..?

NICKY

Mingya...he said it was his laundry. *(Picks up money)* Some laundry.

JOEY

(Rising to get the phone) We better call the cops.

NICKY

(Blocking his path) No. This is a family problem.

JOEY

A family problem? He robbed a bank. How the hell is that a family problem?

NICKY

Look, Pauley's in trouble. Lottsa trouble. We gotta cover for him. Protect him 'til we can sort this out. And...we don't know for sure he done it.

JOEY

Yeah we do.

NICKY

We can't call the cops. Not yet.

From offstage, TONY and MARY call for JOEY to help them with the food they carry. They call "Joey!" several times but the conversation with NICKY keeps him from leaving.

JOEY

That's Mom and Dad. They'll call the cops when we tell them.

NICKY

We ain't tellin' them.

JOEY

What?

NICKY

Look...today's been tough on your mother. Tell them now, your father goes through the roof...

JOEY

Yeah but it's a bank robbery.

NICKY

...and your mother gets all upset. She's had a rough day already. At least wait 'til after the dinner... Joey, think about your mother here.

JOEY

(Pauses) All right. But only until after the dinner. Then we have to tell them.

NICKY

Oh, absolutely. Now you're thinkin' straight. See, nobody gets upset this way. Your mother's had a tough couple of days. We gotta make sure it don't get no tougher. *(He takes the money and stuffs it in his pocket.)* I'll hold onto this...for now...

*NICKY takes the garbage bag to the pantry.
JOEY rushes to grab the food his parents carry.
They all enter the kitchen together.*

TONY

Thanks Joey.

MARY

Nicky, you OK?

NICKY

Fine, fine...Everything's fine.

JOEY

(Sarcastically) Oh, yeah

MARY

(Crosses to JOEY and kisses him) Nice ceremony, wasn't it? It's so peaceful there.

NICKY

Yeah. Pop's restin' with Ma now.

MARY

I'm glad they're together again... Pop's not sufferin' anymore. And with the funeral over, we can all get back to normal.

TONY

All over but readin' the will.

NICKY

There ain't gonna be no surprises there. Pop always said he was splittin' things equal between the kids.

MARY

Joey, go set the table. Get the dishes out there.

JOEY gets some dishes out.

TONY

Unless Pauley got at it already.

NICKY

Whaddya mean?

TONY

Just that. You know Pauley. He was in charge of Pop's money.

MARY

Joey, no. The good dishes.

JOEY gets them and exits

NICKY

Ma fanabla. Don't go talkin' about my brother like that.

TONY

No? Why not? It's true. You know that yourself.

NICKY

He's my brother. My flesh and blood, that's why not. Everything's split equal, just like Pop wants. Your problem is you're an outsider. An outsider always tryin' to stir up some kinda trouble.

TONY

I ain't tryin' to stir up nothin'. I'm just facin' facts is all. All I'm sayin' is I wouldn't be surprised.

NICKY

He wouldn't do that and he wouldn't do some of the things I know you done.

TONY stares at him hard.

MARY

Look you two, can't you let things rest for just one day? We just buried Pop. Let's not have any arguments today. Just one day. Is that too much to ask?

NICKY AND TONY

Yeah...yeah.

NICKY

It's just that...

MARY

That's enough.

PHONE RINGS.

TONY

I'll get it.

MARY

(To NICKY) Can't you two please get along? Just for one day?

NICKY

I just don't like him gettin' on Pauley like that. He's always puttin' him down... makin' trouble.

TONY

(Into the phone) Hold it, hold it... I can't hear you. I'm gonna use the other phone. *(Exits)*

MARY

He's not trying to make trouble, Nicky. He's just...stubborn. A gabba dost. Now come on, I'm asking you for Pop's sake...for my sake. Don't cause trouble. Just for today.

NICKY

All right. For you. But he better not be say nothin' bad about Pauley or so help me...

MARY

(Kissing him on the cheek) Good. Now shut up and open the wine. People'll be here soon.

TONY enters, visibly upset.

MARY

Tony, what's the matter?

TONY

(Pointing a finger at NICKY) Know who that was? That was Larry...Pop's lawyer. Your brother...Pauley...don't say nothin' bad about him, huh? He wouldn't do nothin' to the family, huh?

NICKY

Don't start with me, Tony. I swear. I made a promise to my sister but don't force me...

TONY

You sap. You know what he did?

NICKY

Yeah, he took care of Pop all those years, that's what he did. Pauley took care of Pop. You didn't do a damn thing the whole time.

TONY

No? And what the hell did you do big shot?

MARY

Stop it. Stop it, both of you. Tony, what..?

NICKY

Your problem is you don't know what family is. You have no idea what it's all about.

TONY

Oh I don't, huh?

MARY

Nicky, be quiet. What was that phone call?

TONY

Phone call? I better not say 'cause Mr. Genius, Mr. Intuition here wouldn't like it if I said somethin' bad about his brother. His brother the saint. He's a saint, did you know that?

NICKY

Tony, I'm warnin' you.

TONY

His brother the sufferin' one, takin' care of Pop all those years. You're a sap! That's what you are. A sap!

JOEY, hearing the commotion, enters

NICKY

(Taking a step towards TONY) That's enough. Nobody can say one bad thing about my brother, hear me? Especially you, you rat. At least he don't cheat on his wife.

TONY

You son of a...

TONY grabs for NICKY; NICKY slaps his hand away.

MARY

What..?

NICKY

Yeah, my brother's a saint compared to you, you slime ball. You...you ain't fit to even speak his name.

MARY

What did you say Nick?

TONY

You stroonz!

NICKY

You're the stroonz!

TONY

You rat!

NICKY reaches for TONY but JOEY steps in.

JOEY

Get away from him!

TONY

Fangool! Just like your brother!

NICKY

Don't say nothin' about my brother you..!

NICKY reaches past JOEY; grabs TONY.

TONY

The money's gone! It's all gone!

NICKY stops and they all freeze for a moment.

NICKY

What?

TONY

He went through it all...close to a hundred grand.

NICKY

A hundred...

TONY

It's all gone. Pauley talked to Larry at the funeral...wanted him to put off readin' the will...there's nothin' in it now. Not a cent. Larry figures maybe Pauley's gonna skip...

NICKY

But how...how could he..? All that money...

TONY

He had control of all the money...all Pop's stock...all gone.

NICKY

Pauley..? Pauley..? My brother...flesh and blood...?

MARY

Nicky...

NICKY

I'll kill him. I swear to God I'll kill him.

MARY grabs for NICKY as he rushes off.

MARY

(Calling) Nick stop! Damn it, we just buried Pop. Can't you have some respect?

Doorbell rings.

MARY, Continued

Oh God, people are here already. Joey, go tell them we're still setting up. Don't let anyone in.

JOEY

OK... Dad, you all right?

TONY

Yeah. Yeah, Joey, I'm all right. Do what your mother said...go on.

JOEY exits. There is an embarrassed silence as MARY and TONY straighten their clothes. MARY fusses with food. They avoid looking at each other.

TONY

Mare, I... (*MARY turns.*)

MARY

You... (*Slaps him*) What were you, bragging to Nick about all the women you've been with? What a great lover you are?

TONY

No...

MARY

Good thing 'cause I know the truth.

TONY

Look, it was years ago.

MARY

I know.

TONY

You know?

MARY

What do you think I am, stupid? All of a sudden you're coming home with flower...following me around the house like some little puppy dog. Men... (*Laughs*) ...Boys is more like it. You all think you're so damn smart.

TONY

(*Trying to brush it off*) Look, it was no big deal...one time it was. Ain't a man alive that don't...

MARY

I was going to leave you Tone...

TONY

What?

MARY

That's right. You're lucky Annie talked me out of it...I don't want to talk about it anymore.

I'm sorry...I...
TONY

I said I don't wanna talk about it. Cabish?
MARY

Sure...sure.
TONY

Company's here. Bring them some food. I'll get some more. (*TONY exits toward dining room. MARY enters the pantry. She kicks a bag and from offstage we hear...*) Ma Fanabala Pauley! You and your damn laundry!

LIGHTS DOWN.

ACT II; SCENE FIVE

SETTING: TONY and MARY'S kitchen; dinner time.

AT RISE: Dinner is in full swing. *SOUNDS OF GUESTS OFF.* There are plates of food on the table; a newspaper on the counter. MARY enters with empty plates, picks up some food and is about to walk out when TONY rushes in and grabs a dish towel.

What's the matter?
MARY

Goomba Jeech.
TONY

What'd he do this time?
MARY

Pinched Mrs. Donatucci. Right on the butt. Spilled onion dip down the front of her dress.
TONY

Oh God. Good thing her husband's dead.
MARY

Jeech is 84 and horny as ever.
TONY

MARY

Men never change. Never. Here, take these bread sticks with you. Those aren't people out there. It's locust. I don't think they've eaten since the last funeral. *(As she exits out carrying a bowl of food)* You seen Pauley?

TONY

(Exiting close behind) He come over with Annie but I ain't seen either of 'em since.

PAULEY, carrying his suitcase, enters from the pantry. He is quite visibly upset. He places the suitcase on a chair and starts pacing.

PAULEY

It's gone...the money's all gone. Damn it. I don't believe it.

NICKY enters from the dining room, unnoticed.

NICKY

How are ya Pauley?

PAULEY

Nicky! You scared the crap outta me.

NICKY

What? Think I was a ghost or somethin'? *(Notices suitcase)* Goin' somewheres?

PAULEY

Huh? Oh, the suitcase...no, no...it's just...I wanna...I wanna get my laundry outta here. The machine...all of a sudden, it's workin' again. Machines, right? Go figure. I'm just gonna stuff it in this. It's neater, you know, with company and all. That's all this suitcase is for.

NICKY

You oughta stop worryin' about this laundry thing Pauley. You got bigger things to worry about.

NICKY pulls out a chair and sits.

PAULEY

I do? What's that supposed to mean? *(He sits. Nicky ignores him, picks up the paper and starts reading.)* What's that supposed to mean Nick?

NICKY

Huh?

PAULEY

You said I got bigger things to worry about. What things I gotta worry about?

NICKY

This dinner's gonna be very emotional for you, you bein' so close to Pop and all. You don't wanna fall to pieces in front of everyone.

PAULEY

Yeah, yeah. We was close me and Pop. Very close. We shared so much. That's why I wanna stay in here for a minute. Collect myself. You go ahead. I'll be right out.

NICKY

I don't wanna leave you here Pauley...mournin' all alone like that.

PAULEY

No, I'm fine. Really. I appreciate it but...

NICKY

(Rising) Hey Pauley, tell ya what, let's have a drink together. Just me and you, before we go out there. Whaddya say?

PAULEY

I don't think so.

NICKY

(Still looking at the paper) C'mon. One drink. I love drinkin' Tony's booze.

PAULEY

Really, I just wanna...

NICKY

Get the bottle Pauley.

PAULEY gets the bottle and two glasses. NICKY reads as PAULEY pours. PAULEY hands him the glass. NICKY stops reading; takes the glass.

NICKY, *Continued*

(Raising the glass) Salud!

PAULEY

Salud!

NICKY

To family.

They clink glasses and drink.

PAULEY

I know this ain't none of my business, Nick, but don't ya think ya oughta stop drinkin'?

NICKY

You're right. It ain't none of your business. (*Drinks*) But thanks for your concern.

NICKY returns to reading.

PAULEY

(*Drinks*) Hey, whaddya know? I feel better. You go ahead. I'll be right out. Mary's gonna be worried...

NICKY

Oh my God, Pauley, listen to this... "Bank Robber Sentenced to Die in Electric Chair"

PAULEY

What..?

NICKY

Says here they convicted a guy of robbin' a bank in Florida and sentenced him to the electric chair. They know how to do things down South, don't they? That's the thing to do, fry the stroonz.

PAULEY

For robbin' a bank? Lemmee see that.

PAULEY grabs for paper but NICKY pulls it away.

NICKY

C'mon Pauley, you read all the time. Gimme a chance. Lemmee see if I still can. (*Clears throat*) Listen to what this moron did...he hit a bank in his own neighborhood. His own neighborhood, can you believe it? I mean, how stupid can ya get, huh Pauley?

PAULEY

Well...

NICKY

...and then he hides the money...wait a second...you're gonna love this...hides the money in his sister's house. Brilliant. This guy's a genius. Like nobody's gonna find it.

PAULEY

Did anybody find it?

NICKY

Mingya, you ask me, they're doin' him a favor fryin' him. Put him outta his misery. He's gotta be pretty miserable bein' that stupid.

PAULEY

Maybe he had a plan...

NICKY

A plan? Only plan he better have is makin' peace with his maker.

PAULEY

They can't do that though, can they? For robbin' a bank, they can't...

NICKY

Why not? Jails are too crowded.

PAULEY

But that's in Florida. They'd never do that here, not in Philly.

NICKY

Philly, Florida, what's the difference? Gotta do somethin' with the criminal element. You fry one, the rest'll get the idea.

PAULEY

But you don't really think... I mean for a bank robbery..?

From OFFSTAGE, we hear JOEY

JOEY

All right, Ma. I heard ya...yeah, yeah...the provolone (*Enters*) Jeez. (*To nobody in particular*) They're really scarfin' up out there. Must be afraid no one's gonna die for awhile. (*To NICKY and PAULEY*) Whoa—lookit that. Frank and Jesse James.

JOEY picks up a plate of cheese and starts to exit.

NICKY

Hey wise guy...Gimmee some of that cheese.

JOEY

(Holding out plate) Knock yourself out.

NICKY takes some; JOEY exits.

PAULEY

What'd that mean?

NICKY

What?

PAULEY

Frank and Jesse James. What'd that mean?

NICKY

(Shrugs, eats) You know, they gotta test it before they really get her juiced up.

PAULEY

Test it? Test what?

NICKY

The electric chair. I seen it on TV once...public television. You ever watch public television? It's a great resource. See, they gotta make sure all the connections is right, so there's no problems when it's crunch time. They give you a little juice. Just enough to make you tingle. *(He raises his hand and pretends to pull a lever.)* Fffttt!! Damn, this is good cheese, huh Pauley? C'mon. Mangia!

PAULEY

What? Oh...yeah...

NICKY

Then they jack it up a little to make sure the straps don't pop off... You don't want the straps poppin' off in the middle of an electrocution, do you Pauley? Especially in front of the witnesses. *(Pulls "lever" again)* Fffttt!! *(Eats)* What's the matter? Not hungry?

PAULEY

I lost my appetite.

NICKY

Figures...with the funeral and all. But more for me right? Then they have to get the witnesses. They leave the guy sittin' there by himself. Whaddya think goes through the poor moron's head while he's waitin' for the final jolt?

PAULEY

I...I don't know. I don't wanna hear no more.

NICKY

He probably thinks about all the stuff he done in his life. Like maybe how he screwed over his family or how he never shoulda robbed the bank. Think he regrets bein' so damn stupid? *(Points at some pepperoni on a plate by PAULEY)* You gonna eat that?

PAULEY

No. G'head.

NICKY

Yeah, they know how to treat the criminal element in Florida. They really do. I hope they fry the guy that hit First Federal.

PAULEY

They won't do that here. This is Philly. We're the city of brotherly love. We're very compassionate.

NICKY

Not so compassionate no more. Everyone's gettin' tired of all this crime. Once one state starts fryin' 'em, others are gonna do the same. They're settin' a president, that's what it is, a president.

PAULEY

President? The word is precedent...it's precedent.

NICKY

President, precedent, what the hell does it matter? Once they got you strapped in the chair, what the hell does it matter?

From OFFSTAGE, we hear TONY.

TONY

Look, just sit him down. He'll be fine. *(Enters quickly and grabs a wet dishtowel)* Jeez.

NICKY

What's the matter?

TONY

What else? Goomba Jeech. Has a couple glasses of wine, wants to do the tarintella, grabs Mrs. Donatucci, who is not interested at all. Mrs. Donatucci... budda-bing... Mingya, what a punch that old broad's got. *(Sees PAULEY)* Hey Pauley didn't see you. You're still alive.

TONY exits.

PAULEY

What'd that mean?

NICKY

What?

PAULEY

'You're still alive.' What'd that mean?

NICKY shrugs.

PAULEY *(Continued)*

(Rising) Maybe I better go out there.

NICKY

Now you're sittin' there, all alone... (*PAULEY sits.*) ...the witnesses start filin' in, real slow. They don't look up, don't make eye contact. It's almost over...it's just a matter of time Pauley, just a matter of time...you start gettin' nervous...you look around...you start sweatin'...You're so scared you can't hardly breathe no more... You're waitin'. You don't know when it's gonna come. It's a lifetime for you. Then all of a sudden... (*Pulls "lever"*) Ffftt!! They jolt ya.

PAULEY

Nicky, c'mon. You're makin' me sick...

NICKY

The smoke starts curlin' up from your ankles...smells like a barbecue. (*Holds up piece of pepperoni*) Pepperoni?

PAULEY

Get that outta here.

NICKY

Suit yourself. But sometimes, you don't go out with the first one. Sometimes it takes another shot so they hit you again. Ffftt!! And again. Ffftt!!

PAULEY

Stop! Stop it! I can't take it no more. I didn't wanna do it. I had to. Nicky, you gotta believe me, I had to. I...I need your help. If they catch me...You gotta help me. You gotta. You're my brother...flesh and blood...please...

NICKY

Oh! Fugedaboutit. Absolutely. But first I'm gonna help myself to your...what did you call it...your laundry?

PAULEY

But Nick...

NICKY

No buts here, Pauley. I'm takin' my share of that money. The share I was supposed to get outta the will, you stroonz. After that I don't give a damn what happens.

NICKY goes to the pantry, walks back into the kitchen, hands up. DANNY is pointing a gun at him.

DANNY

Where the hell is it?

NICKY

Where the hell is what?

Don't play stupid with me. DANNY

What the hell? I tied you up! PAULEY

You tie a lousy knot, Boy Scout. DANNY

You said you didn't have no more guns. PAULEY

I lied. DANNY

To me? You lied to me? PAULEY

Go figure, huh? Now. Pauley. Where's the money? DANNY

That's what I was tryin' to tell him. I don't know. PAULEY

I'm gettin' real tired of this Pauley. DANNY

I'm tellin' you it's gone. PAULEY

I'll shoot him, Pauley. I swear to God I will. DANNY

Go ahead. PAULEY

What? NICKY

You think I care? Go ahead. Shoot. PAULEY

I ain't foolin' here, Pauley. DANNY

So whaddya waitin' for? PAULEY

Pauley... DANNY

I can't stand him anyway. PAULEY

You son of a... NICKY

PAULEY
And I'm sure no one's gonna hear the shots, right Danny, you imbecile? Oh...but of course, a genius like you, you probably got a silencer. You got a silencer, moron?

DANNY
Stop callin' me names, Pauley. (*Points gun at PAULEY*) All right. Let's go. Me and you. We're gonna find that money.

PAULEY
(*Points gun at DANNY*) I don't think so.

NICKY crawls under the table

Got a silencer, moron? DANNY

Self-defense, you jerk. PAULEY

You ain't gonna shoot me. DANNY

You sure? Put it down. PAULEY

You put yours down first. DANNY

Like hell. PAULEY

Looks like we got a problem. DANNY

Looks like it. PAULEY

Don't make me shoot you Pauley.

DANNY

I'll shoot you. I swear to God I will.

PAULEY

Don't make me do this.

DANNY

I'm warnin' you.

PAULEY

Pauley...

DANNY

This is it.

PAULEY

I'm through playin' around.

DANNY

Goddamn it! Would one of you idiots shoot?

NICKY (*Sticks head out*)

Shut up!

PAULEY AND DANNY

NICKY crawls out from under the table as MARY walks in. PAULEY hides gun. DANNY lowers his. She walks up to NICKY and smacks him on the back of the head.

Ow! What's that for?

NICKY

That's for blabbin' what my husband did in front of Joey. You think I don't know what he did? (*To PAULEY*) And you, it's about time you showed up.

MARY

I'm sorry I'm late. I had to, you know, compose myself.

PAULEY

MARY smacks PAULEY.

Jeez. What got into you?

PAULEY

MARY

Stealing all Pop's money like that. How could you?

PAULEY

I'm gonna make it right. Believe me.

MARY

How, Pauley? How are you gonna make it right? Whaddya gonna do, rob a bank? (*She laughs. After a second they laugh with her. She motions to DANNY.*) Or is he here because you finally hit it big with the ponies? That'll be the day. (*Sees DANNY's gun.*) What, you playing cops and robbers now? Put that thing away before I smack you too. Go ahead. Do it. (*DANNY puts gun away.*) You guys all think you're cowboys or something. (*Pause*) You get anything to eat?

ALL

No. Not yet.

MARY

You better get out there or there won't be anything left.

NICKY

Pauley's still too upset. I'm gonna stay in here with him. We'll be right out.

MARY

(*Taking out another tray of food from the refrigerator*) Well you better eat something. Here. Sit down. (*To DANNY*) You too, come on. Mangia. This is all from Claudio's. Best in the city. (*They sit, begin to eat. She starts to exit.*) I want you out there soon, cabish?

PAULEY

Hey Mary, you know that laundry I brought over?

MARY

Don't start with the laundry Pauley. As soon as the dinner's over, you can do your damn laundry. (*As exits*) Honestly, as if I don't have enough to worry about.

DANNY

(*To PAULEY*) You brought your laundry over?

PAULEY

No. I told her it was my laundry. It's the money. I put it in a garbage bag.

DANNY

So where the hell is it?

PAULEY

I don't know. I hid it out there. I figured it'd be safe.

DANNY

What am I gonna tell Jimmy? (*To NICKY*) Lemmee have some bread sticks, would ya? Thanks.

NICKY

(*To PAULEY*) You tellin' me the money's gone?

PAULEY

Yeah.

NICKY

And you have no idea where it is?

PAULEY

No. (*To NICKY*) Wine?

NICKY

Yeah. Somebody musta took it.

PAULEY

They always leave that back door unlocked. Somebody musta walked in, looked in that bag...

NICKY

Jeez, ya can't trust no one these days. Hey Pauley, lemmee have some of them olives, would ya? (*To DANNY*) You should try these. These are the best.

DANNY

(*Tries one*) Man, these are great. What the hell could have happened to the money? You know, Jimmy's comin' over to pay his respects. He's gonna want his money. If it's not here...

PAULEY

(*Stands*) What am I gonna do?

NICKY

If you didn't piss away all the money from the will...

PAULEY

What'd you want me to do, leave it for you, you lousy drunk? You never did nothin' for Pop. You never did nothin' for nobody.

NICKY

Who the hell gave you money whenever you asked for it?

PAULEY

But I always had to ask. How do you think that made me feel, havin' to ask for money? I'm the older brother. I ain't supposed to ask you for nothin'...

DANNY

Whoa! Whoa! You guys wanna continue this some other time? We gotta put our heads together and find that money.

PAULEY pauses. HE sniffs the air then opens the oven.

PAULEY

Hey, you guys want some cavatelli? *(He puts on an oven mitt, takes the food from the oven)*

NICKY

Ya think?

PAULEY

Sure. Mary made twelve pounds.

NICKY

Mingya, that's a lot.

DANNY

Yeah, but they don't swell when ya cook 'em.

NICKY

How the hell you know that?

DANNY

You kiddin'? Everyone knows that.

PAULEY

(Starts serving) I'm tellin' ya, Mary makes the best gravy.

NICKY

What do you do when your wife makes macaroni?

PAULEY

Whaddya kiddin'? I eat out.

DANNY

(Eating) Man, this come good. Lemmee have some of that bread, would ya?

NICKY

I don't care what anyone says— Claudio's, they got the best bread in the city.

DANNY

Whadda you people say?

ALL THREE

Fugeddaboudit!

NICKY

Now we gotta do this logical. First, who else knew about that money?

PAULEY

Nobody.

DANNY

Somebody musta known.

PAULEY

Nobody knew.

DANNY

Anyone else in the pantry today?

NICKY

Just Joey.

PAULEY

That little...

NICKY

No way he'd steal it. I mean, he's family. He wouldn't...

JOEY enters. They stop and look at him.

JOEY

What?

NICKY

(Gets up) Joey, siddown. Let's have a little talk.

JOEY

Don't touch me.

DANNY

Siddown kid.

*DANNY Takes gun out and puts it on the table.
PAULEY takes out his gun.*

Put it away, Danny. PAULEY

You put yours away first. DANNY

Looks like we got a problem. PAULEY

Looks like it. DANNY

This is Not the End of the Play
Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes

*Continue to next page for Production Notes with
translations of Italian slang words appearing in the script*

PRODUCTION NOTES

The scene changes between kitchens can be very simply done by just changing the tablecloth—something like a red checkered one for Mary & Tony’s kitchen and green checkered for Pauley & Annie’s.

<i>Merigan</i>	American
<i>Mingya</i>	An exclamation, akin to “damn”
<i>Desgraziade</i>	Ungrateful
<i>Gots</i>	Balls
<i>Cabish</i>	Understand
<i>Ooli</i>	Said when a person really wants something
<i>Stroonz</i>	Literally, calling a person a shit.
<i>Gooboyka</i>	Nothing
<i>Jooch</i>	Idiot
<i>Que se diche?</i>	What do you say? Kind of like, “what’s happening?”
<i>Pots</i>	Pazzo, crazy
<i>Putan</i>	Whore
<i>Fanabala</i>	Literally, “Go to Naples” but used to mean, “Go to hell.”
<i>Gabba dost</i>	Thick-headed
<i>Pompanara</i>	Cock-sucker
<i>Mangia</i>	Eat
<i>Managia</i>	Damn