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F A R G O

"Welcome to the Alternate Economy"

Episode #401

Written by

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The Littlefield Company
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EPISODE #401
Double Blue - 11/18/19

CAST

LOY CANNON.....CHRIS ROCK
ORAETTA MAYFLOWER.....JESSIE BUCKLEY
JOSTO FADDA.....JASON SCHWARTZMAN
RABBI MILLIGAN.....BEN WHISHAW
ETHELRIDA SMUTNY.....E'MYRI CRUTCHFIELD
THURMAN SMUTNY.....ANDREW BIRD
DIBRELL SMUTNY.....ANJI WHITE
LEON BITTLE.....JEREMIE HARRIS
LEMUEL CANNON.....MATTHEW ELAM
OMIE SPARKMAN.....COREY HENDRIX
OPAL RACKLEY.....JAMES VINCENT MEREDITH
EBAL VIOLANTE.....FRANCESCO ACQUAROLI
CONSTANT CALAMITA.....GAETANO BRUNO
DAVID HARVARD.....STEPHEN SPENCER

RECURRING/GUEST STARS

DOCTOR SENATOR.....GLYNN TURMAN
DONATELLO FADDA.....TOMMASO RAGNO
BUEL CANNON.....J. NICOLE BROOKS
SACHEL CANNON.....RODNEY JONES
ANTOON DUMINI.....SEAN FORTUNATO
ZIROMINU "ZERO".....JAMESON BRACCIOFORTE

NON-REGULARS

LIEV MOSKOWITZ.....ANDREW ROTHENBERG
ARI MOSKOWITZ (11).....LEO SHARKEY
ARI MOSKOWITZ (16).....AARON LAMM
OWNEY "YIDDLES" MILLIGAN.....IRA AMYX
PRINCIPAL RICE CRISCOE.....TORREY HANSON
MICHAEL MILLIGAN.....TBD
MISS FRENCH.....EILEEN NICCOLAI
*CLAYTON WINCKLE.....WILLIAM DICK
DOCTOR SANJIT.....TBD
MS. HAGBLOOM.....DIANA BOOS
NURSE TAPLEY.....LUCY CARAPETYAN
SECURITY GUARD.....STAN ADAMS
FLORINE.....HANNAH JONES
PESSIMINDLE.....NADIA SIMMS
PAOLO ENDRIZZI.....NICK DIBRIZZI
NARCISSA RIVERS.....NADIRAH BOST
JANITOR.....TBD
GOON.....TBD
TEENAGE JOSTO FADDA (15).....JUSTIN WELLINGTON
YOUNG RABBI MILLIGAN (7).....ZANE GEE
SLIGHTLY OLDER RABBI MILLIGAN(12).....TBD
TEENAGE RABBI MILLIGAN (15-17).....CARTER SHRIMP
CONSTANT CALAMITA (20s).....LUKE BARELLI
SNOWMAN.....WILL CLINGER

*“Nearly all men can stand adversity,
but if you want to test a man’s character,
give him power.”*

-- Abraham Lincoln

“Whatever the law is, crime can be found”

— Aleksandr Solzhenitsen

"Assimilation is a brutal bargain."

-- Norman Podhoretz

OVER BLACK:

We hear --

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)
*My history report, by Ethelrida
Pearl Smutny.*

MUSIC UP

HARD IN ON:

A CINDER BLOCK WALL

White, non-descript.

We are in --

1 INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE. GROVER CLEVELAND HIGH SCHOOL. KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY (1950) 1

A young BIRACIAL GIRL (16) enters frame, as if pushed. This is ETHELRIDA PEARL SMUTNY. Her parents (white father, black mother) own a mortuary, and so she always smells vaguely of formaldehyde. Which, as you would imagine, is not ideal for a teenage girl.

It is 1950.

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)
Frederick Douglass, runaway slave,
once intoned -- *I stand before you
as a thief and a robber. I stole
this head, these limbs, this body
from my master, and ran off with
them.*

REVERSE ON MS. HAGBLOOM

The Principal's secretary. A heavysset humorless Polish-American woman. She stares at Ethelrida with disdain.

MS. HAGBLOOM
What'd you do this time?

ANGLE ON ETHELRIDA

It's clear she gets dragged to the principal's office a lot.

ETHELRIDA
I been maligned.

BEHIND HAGBLOOM

we can see PRINCIPAL RICE CRISCOE through the window of his office. He's WHACKING another student's behind with a large paddle.

Criscoe is a ruddy Irishman with hams for hands. This is how it works in the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave. All of us are from somewhere else originally.

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

My point being, the moment our feet touched American soil we were already criminals.

ANGLE ON PRINCIPAL CRISCOE

as he comes to his office door, holding the paddle. He's sweating, out of breath. He brushes his comb over into place and glowers at Ethelrida, while the beaten student shuffles out, crying.

PRINCIPAL CRISCOE

Next.

CUT TO:

2 INT. HALLWAY. GROVER CLEVELAND HIGH SCHOOL. KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY (1950) 2

Ms. HAGBLOOM walks ETHELRIDA down the hall. She walks gingerly, feeling the burn of her discipline.

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

But this report isn't about my history. It's about our history.

CUT TO:

3 EXT. JACKSON DEMOCRATIC CLUB. KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY (1900) 3

The Year 1900 --

The street is bustling with activity, merchants with carts selling wares. Horse-drawn carriages. The people we see are mostly Jewish.

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

Kansas City, Missouri. In the beginning there were the Hebrews, and they ran the underworld.

We see MEN in hats on the street outside the club. This is THE MOSKOWITZ CONTINGENCY. They control gambling, prostitution, etc.

4 INT. JACKSON DEMOCRATIC CLUB. KANSAS CITY - DAY 4

Inside the club, local Missourians indulge their baser instincts. Cards are played. Prostitutes visible in the background. Around them we see Jewish gangsters at work, keeping things orderly.

We PUSH INTO a CLOSE UP of Jewish Boss, LIEV MOSKOWITZ (50s) -
- a concrete slab of a man with a face straight out of Deuteronomy.

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)
Then came the Irish.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. JACKSON DEMOCRATIC CLUB. KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY 5

Same angle, same street.

The Year 1920 --

The clothes have changed, but it's still very much an immigrant community -- the neighborhood now less Jewish, more Irish.

As we watch, TWO GROUPS OF MEN approach each other: The Moskowitz Contingency and a group of Irish immigrants we will call THE MILLIGAN SYNDICATE. The two groups appraise each other warily.

Liev SPITS INTO HIS HAND, offers it to OWNEY "YIDDLES" MILLIGAN (40s), a wily Irishman with a facial scar.

Yiddles spits in his own hand. They shake.

CUT TO:

6 INT. JACKSON DEMOCRATIC CLUB. KANSAS CITY - DAY (1920) 6

Later. The two gangs are gathered in the big room, tables pushed back towards the wall, a center circle open -- Jews on one side, Irish on the other.

A young Jewish boy stands next to his father. This is Liev's youngest son, ARI MOSKOWITZ, 11.

As we watch, the boss gives Ari a push toward the center of the room. Ari walks out into the open.

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

To keep the peace, the boss of each family gave offer of his youngest son in trade.

ANGLE ON YIDDLES

who pushes his own son, PATRICK, 7, out to meet Ari. Patrick wears A CAP that's too large for him.

We're not clear. *Are they supposed to fight?*

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

The thinkin' was -- by raisin' your enemy's offspring an understandin' could be reached, and peace maintained.

ANGLE ON BOSS MOSKOWITZ

who beckons the Irish lad over. Patrick approaches reluctantly. Moskowitz pinches his cheek.

MOSKOWITZ

Relax, boychick.
(in Yiddish)
Bist shoyner eyner fun undz.

You're one of us now.

ANGLE ON YIDDLES

The scar on his face is old, the memory of a fight from his youth barely won. These days though he wins them all -- one way or another.

Yiddles pulls out a flask, drinks, then offers the flask to 11-year-old Ari.

YIDDLES

Put some hair on yer bollocks.

The boy drinks. Everybody cheers.

ANGLE ON LIEV MOSKOWITZ

With murder in his eyes, he watches this scarred gentile corrupt his son.

CUT TO:

7 INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY 7

Again, Ethelrida is pushed in front of the cinder block wall. She is in a new outfit, sporting a raw left eye. She's been punched.

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

See, the problem wasn't that I was disreputable.

ANGLE ON MS. HAGBLOOM

Same sour expression.

MS. HAGBLOOM

What'd you do this time?

ETHELRIDA

Punched Dolores Disfarmer with my eye, a course.

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

I was, in fact, a student of exceptional virtue and high achievement.

ANGLE ON PRINCIPAL CRISCOE

He steps into the doorway, paddle in hand and glares at Ethelrida.

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

The problem was -- the only thing worse than a disreputable negro, was an upstanding one.

CUT TO:

8 INT. HALLWAY. GROVER CLEVELAND HIGH SCHOOL. KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY (1950) 8

Ms. HAGBLOOM walks ETHELRIDA down the hall. We see a JANITOR wiping graffiti from the wall.

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

And so I endured the slings and arrows of small minded folk who, in their narrow thoughts, imagined they could teach me a lesson.

CUT TO:

9 INT. JACKSON DEMOCRATIC CLUB. KANSAS CITY - DAY (1925)

9

It is 1925.

The place is full of members of the Moskowitz clan. We PAN PAST THEM to the back, where **Patrick Milligan** (we recognize the cap), now 12, sneaks past the guards and OPENS THE BACK DOOR -- letting in A DOZEN IRISH MEN with TOMMY GUNS.

CLOSE UP ON YOUNG PATRICK

The tattered CAP from his youth almost fits him now. We PUSH IN ON HIM as the men move past him, just dark blurs. He looks nervous, but also filled with a rightness of purpose.

ANGLE ON THE CLUB

as the Irish OPEN FIRE on the MOSKOWITZ CONTINGENCY. It's a massacre.

CLOSE UP ON PATRICK

flinching at the gunfire. A MAN steps into frame. The CAMERA RISES. It's Yiddles. He pats Patrick on the head.

YIDDLES

Well done, boyo.

Patrick beams. He has spent 5 years living in a stranger's family, dreaming of coming home.

YIDDLES (CONT'D)

(call out)

Bring the lad.

TWO MEN drag 16-year-old Ari Moskowitz into the club. He is bleeding from the nose, his left eye swollen shut.

YIDDLES (CONT'D)

And now, my son, are ya familiar with the legend a Goldilocks?

The men throw Ari to the floor. Yiddles puts a foot on him.

YIDDLES (CONT'D)

Someone's been sittin in yer chair.
Someone's been eatin' from yer
bowl. Someone's been sleepin' in
yer bed.

He hands Patrick a REVOLVER.

YIDDLES (CONT'D)

Time for bears to be bears.

ANGLE ON PATRICK

still just a child. The boy on the floor cries, looking up at him. But there is no room for childhood here. Patrick knows what he has to do. But he can't.

YIDDLES

sees his weakness. He GRABS his son's gun hand, aims at Ari.

YIDDLES (CONT'D)

Chew him up.

He squeezes his son's hand, hurting him.

ANGLE ON THE TRIGGER

As Yiddles forces Patrick to pull it.

-- BANG --

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

Logic dictates that in every fight
there is a winner and a loser.

AN OVERHEAD ANGLE

of the massacre. As the Irish search the bodies of their enemies for valuables.

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

But this is a history report, and
what does history tell us?

CUT TO:

10 EXT. JACKSON DEMOCRATIC CLUB. KANSAS CITY - DAY (1928) 10

Same angle, same street.

The Year 1928.

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

Peace don't last for long.

Yiddles Milligan and his gang enter frame left, cocky with power. Now they're the establishment, and as far as they're concerned they'll be kings forever.

They are met by a group of ITALIAN MEN, led by DONATELLO FADDA, 40s, head of the FADDA FAMILY.

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

The Italians came next. That's how it worked. Whoever was last off the boat -- finding the doors of honest capital closed -- rolled up their sleeves and got to work gettin' rich the old fashioned way.

CLOSE UP ON DONATELLO

A first generation immigrant from Sardinia, Donatello made enough money killing anarchists for the Italian government to smuggle himself over to the U.S. when he was seventeen.

Left behind was his beloved CHIANNA, who joined him six years later with their son JOSTO, leaving their other son -- GATEANO in Italy.

Donatello is lean, lethal. He has known hunger so bad he once ate the plaster from the walls, once ate the laces from his shoes. He has come to America to slay all the fattened calfs, to gorge on their flesh and banish hunger from his world.

ANGLE ON YIDDLES

The Irish King of Kansas City, our disfigured, snake-charming, back-stabber. He SPITS into his hand, offers it to Donatello -- who SPITS in his own hand and shakes.

CUT TO:

11 INT. JACKSON DEMOCRATIC CLUB. KANSAS CITY - DAY

11

As before, the tables have been pushed back, a circle open in the center of the room. The two gangs assemble across from each other.

Donatello PUSHES FORWARD his son, JOSTO, 15. A handsome boy, confident, ready to do his part for the family.

ANGLE ON YIDDLES

He has a new son, MICHAEL, 8, on his left. Yiddles reaches for him, then lowers his hand.

With his right hand he PUSHES 15-year-old PATRICK towards the Italians.

ANGLE ON PATRICK

Shoved. He seems stunned, still just a kid. He looks at Yiddles. His eyes say -- *Didn't I do my part? Can't I come home?*

ANGLE ON YIDDLES

His face cold.

YIDDLES

(go on)

Siuthad.

Patrick turns, abandoned, trying not to cry, and crosses towards Josto.

ANGLE ON DONATELLO

who sits at a table out of the light, smoking, his face shadowed by his hat. We PUSH IN ON HIM from Patrick's point of view. Fadda is a much scarier figure than Moskowitz. Like a tiger in a field, faster than you'll ever be.

ANGLE ON TEENAGE PATRICK

He reminds himself that the last five years have made him strong, swallows his fear and approaches the Italians.

As Josto and Patrick pass each other, things slow down. Josto puckers his lips at the Irish boy, kisses air, as if to say *I'll see you soon.*

CLOSE UP ON PATRICK

He is beginning to worry that getting rid of the Italians won't be as easy as killing Jews.

ANGLE ON DONATELLO

who looks up from under his hat and smiles at Patrick.

DONATELLO

(in Italian)

Welcome to the family.

ETHELRIDIA (V.O.)

Websters defines **assimilation** as
"the process of becoming similar to something."

CUT TO:

12 INT. HALLWAY. GROVER CLEVELAND HIGH SCHOOL. KANSAS CITY, MO - 12
DAY (1950)

Ms. HAGBLOOM walks ETHELRIDA down the hall. The same JANITOR is wiping graffiti from the wall.

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

But imbibing these words, dear reader, we are forced to ask -- *similar to what?* If America is a nation of immigrants, then how does one become American?

13 INT. CLASSROOM. GROVER CLEVELAND HIGH SCHOOL. KANSAS CITY, MO 13
- DAY (1950)

After school detention is in session. The teacher, MISS FRENCH is at the front of a room full of African-American students. Ms. Hagbloom brings Ethelrida to the door. It's obvious Ethelrida has been paddled and is walking stiffly.

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

And how come so many of us who are, feel like we don't belong?

MISS FRENCH

This one again.

She leaves. Ethelrida walks gingerly over to a desk, puts down her books, but continues to stand.

MISS FRENCH (CONT'D)

Have a seat, Ethelrida.

Ethelrida starts to bend, but it's too painful.

ETHELRIDA

I take yer meaninin' and applaud yer intent, but if it's all the same I believe I'm gonna go ahead and stand.

The Teacher thinks about sending her back to the principal's office.

MISS FRENCH

Well, if you're too stubborn to sit, you might as well come to the board and show us how to calculate the volume of a sphere.

Ethelrida sighs, approaches the board, takes the chalk. Miss French has set her up to fail. Beat. Ethelrida studies the board, then -- *quickly draws out the solution without hesitation.*

She stands back, hands Miss French the chalk.

ETHELRIDA

You can check it if you want. But
it's factual.

She doesn't wait, just walks back to her seat.

CUT TO:

14 INT. JACKSON DEMOCRATIC CLUB. KANSAS CITY - DAY (1931)

14

It is 1931.

THREE YEARS since the two gangs traded sons.

The place is full of members of the Milligan clan. Yiddles holds court, drinking whiskey and telling tales.

YIDDLES

-- and, ya know, he lied so much
they called the son of bitch *Two
Face*. Which -- ya can't be too
careful -- So after I shot him
between the eyes, I rolled him over
and shot the other side, just ta be
sure.

As he's talking we PAN PAST THE MEN to the back door. TEENAGE JOSTO (now 17) sits on an overturned barrel, whittling with his knife. There's a knock. ONE of the TWO GUARDS opens it, peeks out.

ANGLE ON PATRICK MILLIGAN (now 17)

Out of breath.

PATRICK MILLIGAN

It's the double cross. Lemme in, I
gotta talk to my dad.

THE GUARD

opens the door, but instead of Patrick --

An Italian Man, CONSTANT CALAMITA, steps into view and STABS the GUARD in the EYE. He falls.

As he does -- JOSTO SNEAKS UP BEHIND the OTHER GUARD and STABS HIM with his whittling knife. Then A DOZEN ITALIAN MEN with TOMMY GUNS file in silently, past Patrick.

CLOSE UP ON PATRICK

As before. His breathing slows. He looks changed now, all the innocence of youth gone. We PUSH IN ON HIS FACE as the men move past him, just dark blurs.

ANGLE ON THE CLUB

as the Italians FLOOD IN.

YIDDLES

What the fuck?

The Irish scramble for their guns, but -- *too late* -- the Italians OPEN FIRE. It's carnage.

ANGLE ON PATRICK

This time when the machine guns fire he doesn't flinch, just savors his revenge on the man who made him but refused to raise him. As before, A MAN steps into frame. The CAMERA RISES. It's Donatello Fadda. He pats Patrick's cheek.

DONATELLO

(in Italian)

Well done, Rabbi. Come.

Donatello leads Milligan through the bodies.

ANGLE ON THE CLUB

Irish bodies everywhere. We PUSH THROUGH THEM and RISE to reveal --

YIDDLES

A bloody mess, but somehow still alive. He is struggling to reach his gun, but his legs don't work.

YIDDLES

Pig fuckers. Sons a whores. I'll murder the lot a ya.

DONATELLO

hands Patrick a pistol.

DONATELLO

(in Italian)

Finish it.

Patrick Milligan (from here on to be known as RABBI MILLIGAN) takes the gun. He points it at his father.

CLOSE UP ON YIDDLES

who grimaces up at him with bloody teeth.

YIDDLES

A curse on you -- *agus do leanáí.*

CLOSE UP ON RABBI MILLIGAN

His earlier hesitation is gone. Today he is a man. He pulls the trigger.

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

Winston Churchill said -- *history is written by the victors.* That's a fancy word for *winner.* Here's the thing about America though --

CUT TO:

15	OMITTED	15
16	EXT. JACKSON DEMOCRATIC CLUB. KANSAS CITY - DAY (1949)	16

Same angle, same street.

EIGHTEEN YEARS HAVE PASSED since the Italians destroyed their Irish Rivals. it is now --

The Year 1949 --

The Great Depression has come and gone. World War Two is over. This is post-war Kansas City. Business is booming. The neighborhood is fancier now. Men in three piece suits and hats. Cars on the street.

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

The minute you relax and fatten up, somebody hungrier's gonna come along -- lookin' for a piece a yer pie.

A GROUP of FADDA'S MEN enter frame left, walking in slow motion.

From frame right, walking to meet them, we see a SINGLE MAN --

LOY CANNON, early 50s.

Loy is a *Being of Pure Self* -- self-educated, self-made -- a sophisticate born into an age of brutality. Raised in Harlem, he was a child prodigy nobody nurtured. So -- *fuck 'em* -- he became a titan all by himself, moving west at fifteen to escape the Dutch Shultz takeover of New York.

In a perfect world Loy would be CEO of a fortune 500 company. But his world isn't perfect. There are more doors closed to him than open. So he created an empire of a different kind; running numbers, prostitution, protection.

But where white politicians and police look at Loy and see a criminal, the black community sees **Cannon Savings and Loan**: the only bank that will lend to them. They see **Cannon Fidelity Mutual**: the only insurance company that will write them a life insurance policy or give them home owner's insurance.

Welcome to the Alternate Economy.

ANGLE ON DONATELLO FADDA

(now in his 60s) as he steps forward to meet Loy Cannon. The two men study each other.

DONATELLO

You come alone?

Loy WHISTLES --

His MEN APPEAR from doorways, some crossing the street. Some are BEHIND the Faddas. A tense moment, then Loy's men assemble together behind Loy, facing Donatello.

ANGLE ON DONATELLO

He smiles, SPITS in his hand, offers it to Cannon.

ANGLE ON LOY

He smiles.

LOY CANNON

Nah.

Loy PULLS A KNIFE. The Italians quick-draw their guns. So do Cannon's men.

LOY CANNON (CONT'D)

Relax. I just thought -- bein men,
we should do this like men.

He CUTS his left palm, offers the knife to Fadda so he can
cut his.

ANGLE ON FADDA

Beat. Then he laughs. He says to his men.

DONATELLO
(in Italian)
Look, the boy thinks he is a man.

Which translates as -- *look, the boy thinks he is a man.*

The ITALIANS LAUGH.

ANGLE ON LOY

He doesn't like being laughed at. He looks at Fadda.

LOY CANNON
Serious business calls for serious
men. You a serious man?

ANGLE ON CANNON'S MEN

Behind Loy, guns in hand. They are hungrier than the
Italians, up-and-coming capitalists with nothing to lose.
Among them are --

OPAL RACKLEY (40s) -- Opal came to KC from New York with Loy.
He served in the Navy during WWII, fighting his way across
the pacific. Today he runs the numbers racket for Loy.

LEON BITTLE (20s) -- up from Tennessee. He served in the army
in WWII, killing Germans, most with a bayonet. Now he's a
soldier for Loy.

OMIE SPARKMAN (40) -- born in Mississippi. A man with one
milky eye. Omie had no interest in fighting for a country
that he believed hates him. Today he specializes in punishing
cheaters and *correcting* low lifes.

DOCTOR SENATOR (60s) -- A second-generation Missouri native.
Doctor has a law degree and a degree in economics. He's Loy's
most trusted advisor.

LEMUEL CANNON (20s) -- Loy's oldest son. A sensible young
man, raised with money in a nice house.

From their faces it's clear they don't like being laughed at
any more than their boss.

ANGLE ON FADDA'S MEN

Facing them, still laughing with disdain. We see --

JOSTO FADDA (now 35) -- Fadda's son, the golden boy.

EBAL VIOLANTE (50s) Fadda's consigliere, architect of the Milligan massacre.

ANTOON DUMINI (32) Fadda's son-in-law, a former Italian P.O.W., who stayed in Missouri after the war and married Donatello's middle daughter, **Naneeda**. Antoon is still a bit shell-shocked from the war, and kind of dumb. The others don't respect him.

CONSTANT CALAMITA (40s) Their head enforcer. If the devil had a cousin, this would be him.

PAOLO ENDRIZZI (20s) A Fadda utility player. Will do whatever is asked of him.

and

RABBI MILLIGAN (now 35) adopted son of Donatello Fadda. He has become a hit man and fixer for the family.

At their head is --

DONATELLO FADDA

The capo of the Italian family. A serious man indeed, and one on the verge of war. *How will he handle Loy's challenge?*

A long beat. Then Fadda pulls his own (bigger) knife, cuts his left palm.

LOY CANNON (CONT'D)

Okay then.

Fadda and Loy grab each other's hand. It's not a shake as much as a contest of wills.

CUT TO:

17 EXT. SMUTNY HOUSE & MORTUARY. KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY (1950) 17

The BUS pulls up, door open. Ethelrida climbs down.

She approaches A FUNERAL HOME in a residential neighborhood. The mortuary is set in an old Victorian. Business is done on the main floor, with the Smutny residence upstairs.

The bodies of the dead are prepared and preserved in the basement.

THURMAN SMUTNY (40, Caucasian) stands at the front door of the house, saying goodbye to the line of WHITE MOURNERS who file out. This is Ethelrida's father. He wears a black suit.

He is a proto-beatnik, raised on a farm in North Dakota, a man of modern ideas.

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

My folks have a system. Dad does
the white funerals. Mom ministrates
to the colored.

THURMAN

(to grieving relatives)
Condolences.

Ethelrida, walking gingerly, approaches the front door. A mourner, ORAETTA MAYFLOWER (30s) is on the lawn. A small woman with a hard black handbag, she's crying into her handkerchief. Oraetta is from Minnesota and speaks with a pronounced accent.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER

(as the girl passes)
Apologies.

Ethelrida stops.

ETHELRIDA

What?

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER

I was excusin' myself, as I am not
normally this outta sorts.

ETHELRIDA

It's a funeral. People cry at
funerals.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER

Amen. Those are wise words for a
person a your complexion. But then
I have noticed that your people are
often more in touch with their
spiritual and emotional side.

ETHELRIDA

My people?

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER

The negro. It's the baptist fervor,
I'd wager, what causes them to hoot
and tumble to the floor aflush with
the holy spirit.

ORAETTA takes a small can of SNUFF from her handbag, enjoys
some.

Thurman has seen the exchange and is over quickly.

THURMAN

Miss Mayflower -- I see you met my daughter, Ethelrida.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER

Yer daughter?

THURMAN

One and only.

(to his daughter)

Ethelrida, this is Miss Mayflower. She's a nurse at St. Bartholemew.

Oraetta studies Ethelrida.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER

Ah, yes. Now I see it. This child is certainly the product of miscegenation.

THURMAN

If by that you mean she's the spitting image of her father, then I take that as a compliment.

But Oraetta grabs Ethelrida's hand, turns it over to examine her palm.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER

Your mother must be quite dark skinned, as I have noticed in my study of the human animal that in the combination of the races it is *de rigueur* for the more extreme coloration to prevail.

Ethelrida pulls her hand away.

ETHELRIDA

I'm goin' inside.

She walks away.

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

A wise man once wrote, *history repeats itself. First as tragedy, then as farce.*

CUT TO:

18 INT. JACKSON DEMOCRATIC CLUB. KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY (1949) 18

As before, the tables have been pushed back, a circle open in the center of the room. The Faddas face the Loy Cannon Consortium.

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

And to hear this one might be inclined to equate the word "*farce*" with "*comedy*."

(beat)

One would be wrong to do so.

Loy sits next to Doctor Senator, his elder statesman.

DOCTOR SENATOR

You're sure about this?

LOY CANNON

You're the one who said war was killin us.

DOCTOR SENATOR

I know, but remember what happened to the Irish.

LOY CANNON

We had this back and forth already. They got the upper hand now, but not for long. So we play along. Or keep cutting each other's throats.

DOCTOR SENATOR

(beat)

He's your boy. There's gotta be somethin less we can risk.

ANGLE ON LOY

He thinks about that. If he truly believed he was going to lose to the Faddas he would take a different path, but he's seen his hand and it's all aces. So instead he turns to SACHEL (6), his youngest son.

LOY CANNON

Keep yer head down. If there's trouble -- swing for the balls, then the eyes.

Satchel nods. He's trying to be brave. He walks to the center of the room.

ANGLE ON DONATELLO

He sits with his youngest son, ZERO (6). Unlike the other men in his family, Zero has a softer nature. Almost feminine.

DONATELLO

Learn everything. Sleep with one eye open. Be as Daniel in the lion's den.

ZERO

I don't want to go.

Donatello looks up at Rabbi Milligan, nods.

RABBI MILLIGAN

Come on, kid.

Milligan walks him out towards Satchel, who stands in the center of the room.

RABBI MILLIGAN (CONT'D)

(to Zero)

You want my advice? Be who you need to be, but don't forget who you are.

He escorts Zero past Satchel to Loy.

RABBI MILLIGAN (CONT'D)

This is Zirominu Guglielmo Fadda, youngest son of Don Fadda. Protect his life as your own.

LOY CANNON

Where are you from? Dublin, Italy?

Rabbi smiles at him without humor, turns, stops. Omie Sparkman has move behind him. He stares at Rabbi with his one milky eye.

Rabbi shakes his head. *Amateur*. He steps around him, goes back to his side.

ETHELRIDIA (V.O.)

And here's what you need to know about the people in that room. None of `em were white.

ANGLES AROUND THE ROOM

As we take in the various players of this American underworld.

ETHELRIDIA (V.O.)

They were *dagos*, negroes, micks, all fighting for the right to have been created equal.

CUT TO:

19 INT. KITCHEN. SMUTNY HOUSE & MORTUARY. KANSAS CITY, MO - 19
NIGHT (1950)

Ethelrida comes in. Light spills from the kitchen at the end of the hall.

ETHELRIDA

But equal to what? And who gets to decide?

She enters --

THE KITCHEN

-- and we --

REVERSE TO REVEAL

LOY CANNON sitting at the kitchen table. Opal Rackley and Leon Bittle stand nearby, looking threatening and out of place in the kitchen.

ETHELRIDA (CONT'D)

Momma?

Dibrell looks up at her, alarmed. Something dramatic is clearly being discussed, and she's worried.

DIBRELL

Go to your room.

ETHELRIDA

But I --

Dibrell jumps up, shoos her.

DIBRELL

I said, go to your room.

Ethelrida retreats --

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

And that leads me to this conclusory idea, dear reader, which is that history is made up of the actions of individuals.

As her mother CLOSES THE DOOR --

ETHELRIDA (V.O.)

And yet none of us can know at the time we act that we are making history.

-- we see --

LOY CANNON

looking at Ethelrida through the narrowing gap. He smiles
just as --

The DOOR SWINGS CLOSED and we --

CUT TO BLACK:

TITLE CARD:

FARGO

CUT TO:

20 EXT. KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY (1950) 20

Autumn has come to the plain states.

Over establishing shots of the city and surrounding
countryside we see the following text:

*This is a True Story. The events depicted took place in
Kansas City in 1950. At the request of the survivors the
names have been changed. Out of respect for the dead, the
rest has been told exactly as it occurred.*

We find --

21 EXT. BACK FORTY. FADDA HOUSE. KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY 21

The nicest house in the Italian part of town, a family home
with land, bordered by trees. We find Satchel Cannon (7) with
Rabbi Milligan. The Rabbi is showing him how to chop wood. He
sets a piece on the block.

RABBI MILLIGAN

It's not about strength. It's about
leverage.

He swings the axe up and let's it fall. The axe splits the
wood neatly.

SATCHEL

Are you Jewish?

RABBI MILLIGAN

No.

SATCHEL

Then how come they call you Rabbi?
Isn't a rabbi a Jewish priest?

Milligan chops another piece of wood.

RABBI MILLIGAN

Ya ever play poker?

Satchel shakes his head.

RABBI MILLIGAN (CONT'D)

But you know there's a game called
poker, played with cards.

Satchel nods.

RABBI MILLIGAN (CONT'D)

Well, there's a sayin' in poker --
ya play the hand yer dealt. You and
me, we're proof a dat.

(chop)

See, when yers truly was a boy, he
had the same thing happen ta him
what happened ta you.

SATCHEL

You got traded?

RABBI MILLIGAN

What's that?

SATCHEL

From baseball. That's what my daddy
said -- I got traded to another
team.

RABBI MILLIGAN

Exactly. Except, well -- fer you --
you get ta go back ta yer original
team one day.

SATCHEL

Is this yer original team?

Milligan pauses as he puts the wood on the block.

RABBI MILLIGAN

No. My team was shite.

Behind them JOSTO FADDA comes out of the house with CONSTANT
CALAMITA.

JOSTO

What's this now? You got him
choppin wood? We're s'posed ta be
in the car thirty minutes ago.

He comes over, grabs Milligan by the back of the neck.

JOSTO (CONT'D)

Sometimes I think you got a mind of
yer own.

(to Satchel)

Haul ass, boy. I'd hate to have to
teach you a belt lesson before you
sit an hour in the car.

Satchel runs off toward the driveway.

Josto SQUEEZES the back of Milligan's neck, SHOVES HIM AWAY.

JOSTO (CONT'D)

(to Milligan)

You take the follow car.

He walks off, leaving Milligan with Calamita.

ANGLE ON MILLIGAN

He could kill them all where they stand, but he is trying to
be a spiritually enlightened being, to transform his pain and
betrayal into wisdom, not violence. But as we look at him
it's clear he can only be pushed so far.

He straightens.

RABBI MILLIGAN

Hey, kid.

Satchel stops.

RABBI MILLIGAN (CONT'D)

Here's what they don't tell you.

JOSTO

Careful, Rabbi.

Calamita, standing near the Rabbi, pulls the AXE from the
block, ready to act if Milligan's words are forbidden.

CLOSE UP ON THE RABBI

He sees the danger he's in, but he knows it's important to
finish the lesson.

RABBI MILLIGAN

It's not a team sport. Understand?

ANGLE ON SACHEL

He kind of does, but he's too young to really absorb the lesson. Then Josto SMACKS Satchel in the back of the head.

JOSTO

Get a move on.

ANGLE ON CALAMITA

He menaces the Rabbi with the axe -- we really think he may kill him -- then he smiles

CONSTANT CALAMITA

Chop chop.

He tosses Milligan the axe and walks away.

CUT TO:

22 EXT. ROAD. OUTSIDE KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY

22

TWO LARGE FOUR DOOR CADILLACS cuts through the Missouri landscape. In the BACKSEAT of the lead car we see LOY CANNON and ZERO FADDA. In front sits OPAL RACKLEY and LEON BITTLE.

ANGLE ON LOY CANNON

Sitting in the back with Zero (7). On the other side of the boy is LEMUEL CANNON (22), Loy's oldest son. We hear:

DOCTOR SENATOR (O.S.)

A power share is what they said.
But they still control truckin, the unions, the railroads.

A23 INT. LOY'S OFFICE. APEX VENDING MACHINES. KANSAS CITY - DAY

A23

Loy sits at his desk across from Doctor Senator, Omie and Opal. This is the conference they had before the drive.

OMIE SPARKMAN

So two years in, we're bein squeezed instead a growin.

LOY CANNON

And you're sayin what? Go back to war?

DOCTOR SENATOR
If we could crack the
slaughterhouses on the east side --

INTERCUT WITH:

B23 INT. CANNON CAR (TRAVELING) - DAY B23
We see Loy staring out the window.

DOCTOR SENATOR (O.S.)
-- we could move product with the
meat.

OPAL RACKLEY
A lot of our boys workin the
abattoirs. Why not just take 'em?

C23 INT. LOY'S OFFICE. APEX VENDING MACHINES. KANSAS CITY - DAY C23
ANGLE ON LOY
in his office.

LOY CANNON
Because they got my son.

OMIE SPARKMAN
And you got theirs.

Beat. Loy thinks about that.

LOY CANNON
Go down to the bus station every
day. What do you see? Italians
fresh off the boat? No. Those days
are gone. You see Alabama,
Mississippi, Georgia. The future.
We're the future. And they're the
past. They just don't know it yet.
So we grow. We expand. And they
keep backin up until there they
are, right back in the ocean.

D23 INT. CANNON CAR (TRAVELING) - DAY D23
ANGLE ON LOY
in the car, on his way to meet his enemy. He wants what he
said to be true, but he's not convinced.

CUT TO:

- 23 EXT. CITY STREETS. KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY 23
- TWO different CARS move through the city, heading to meet Loy and his men.
- Inside we see --
- CUT TO:
- 24 INT. FADDA CAR (TRAVELING) - SAME TIME 24
- DONATELLO FADDA sits in back with Satchel and Josto. In the front passenger seat, Constant Calamita is on alert, scanning the area while Antoon Dumini drives.
- CUT TO:
- 25 INT. FADDA FOLLOW CAR (TRAVELING) - SAME TIME 25
- A FADDA GOON drives the follow car, The Rabbi in shotgun. Ebal Violante and Paolo Endrizzi ride in back.
- CUT TO:
- 26 EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY 26
- A SCHOOL CROSSING. A crossing guard steps out with a stop sign. The two cars slow and stop. Small kids cross.
- CUT TO:
- 27 INT. FADDA CAR (STOPPED) - CONTINUOUS 27
- As they wait. Calamita doesn't like unexpected stops.
- ANGLE ON MILLIGAN
- In the follow car. He's on alert as well.
- A LONG BEAT
- Then the crossing guard -- the last child shepherded --
- CUT TO:

28 EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY 28

-- steps onto the sidewalk. Traffic is released. The CARS drive away.

CUT TO:

29 EXT. PLAYGROUND. KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY 29

An out of the way playground, empty of children except for TWO BOYS -- Satchel and Zero. They play together.

Around the edge of the playground we see Fadda and Cannon's men, standing guard.

ANGLE ON JOSTO

He smokes a cigarette. We FIND --

A PARK BENCH

On it are Donatello Fadda and Loy Cannon. Fadda is shelling peanuts from a paper bag, eating them. We PUSH IN on the two men.

DONATELLO

Calamita said the cut was *maggiore* this month. Bigger.

LOY CANNON

Boom times.

(re: Satchel)

He behavin'?

DONATELLO

Boys are boys. But he cleans his plate. He says *sir*.

ANGLE ON ZERO

He sits on one end of a seesaw.

ZERO

(calls to his father)

Babbo. Play with me.

Donatello calls to his men.

DONATELLO

(in Italian)

Boys --

(gestures to seesaw)

Help him.

Paolo goes over and gets on the other side of the seesaw. Up and down they go.

ANGLE ON LOY CANNON

He watches Donatello shell peanuts.

LOY CANNON

We should talk about the stockyards.

DONATELLO

A done deal is done. What could we say?

LOY CANNON

We could talk about how most of the labor on the east side is colored now, and how that should make it ours.

DONATELLO

I own black clothes. Are you saying those are yours too?

Beat. Loy studies the older man.

LOY CANNON

You come here on a boat.

DONATELLO

To Kansas City?

LOY CANNON

I took the train. Pennsy from New York. Fifteen years old. So hungry I once ate Epsom Salt. And then the box.

DONATELLO

In Sardinia momma cooked bread with plaster from the walls. We ate the bark from the trees.

LOY CANNON

When my baby brother was born my job was to stay up all night keepin the rats away. You see -- rats love the taste of baby.

DONATELLO

Basta. So we both know hunger. And now we're fat.

LOY CANNON

Nah. I'm still skinny. And there's
so much left to eat.

ANGLE ON JOSTO

smoking his cigarette, bored. He wanders over to Lemuel, who
stands with Opal Rackley and Leon Bittle.

JOSTO

Which one of you is Samuel?

LEMUEL

Lemuel.

JOSTO

What?

LEMUEL

My name is Lemuel. It's from the
Bible.

JOSTO

The Jew part or the Catholic part?

OPAL RACKLEY

Boy, you better move up out of
here. We're tryin to have a
civilized conversation.

JOSTO

You know who I am?

OPAL RACKLEY

Do you?

JOSTO

What?

Constant Calamita comes over to collect Josto.

OPAL RACKLEY

You say *what* a lot.
(to Leon)
I think he's confused.

Josto starts to pull his gun. Calamita puts a hand on his
arm.

CONSTANT CALAMITA

Boss. It's a playground.

ANGLE ON THE BENCH

Loy sits with Donatello, who is still eating peanuts. Satchel runs over. He's been playing, seems happy. Loy zips his coat.

LOY CANNON

You okay?

SATCHEL

(nods)

Daddy, does that boy sleep in my bed?

LOY CANNON

Gotta sleep somewhere. I slept on top of a moving car once.

SATCHEL

For real?

LOY CANNON

Maybe it was parked. You studyin' yer lessons?

Satchel nods. He points.

SATCHEL

He helps me.

ANGLE ON RABBI MILLIGAN

He stands alone, away from both families, on alert.

LOY CANNON

Good. Cause where we're goin, the smartest man wins.

SATCHEL

Florida?

LOY CANNON

No. To the top. Go play.

Satchel runs off.

LOY CANNON (CONT'D)

His momma needs to see him.

DONATELLO

We arrange something for the weekend. Just the women.

Beat. Loy considers the conversation they've been having. It doesn't feel like a dialogue between equals.

LOY CANNON

You're actin like I work for you.
We got an alliance. And I know you
think part of bein an American is
standin on my neck, but I see the
window signs -- *no coloreds, no
Italians* -- so we're both in the
gutter together, like it or not.

Loy stands.

LOY CANNON (CONT'D)

Now I'm gonna keep growing my
business and making sure my people
are safe. You wanna start murderin
children? Last time I checked you
had more than me.

ANGLE ON DONATELLO

Beat. He smiles.

DONATELLO

Calm down. There's no anger here.
Just business.
(calls in Italian)
All right. My balls are freezing.

ANGLE ON LOY

He isn't used to being dismissed and he doesn't like it. He watches as --

MILLIGAN

walks over to collect Satchel. Opal Rackley approaches Zero.
Time to go.

As Donatello walks by his son, he pats his head.

DONATELLO (CONT'D)

(in Italian)
Be a good boy.

He follows his men to the cars.

JOSTO

smiles at Lemuel.

JOSTO

See you in the Bible.

He walks away.

LEMUEL

That don't even make sense.

ANGLE ON LOY

Watching his son be led away and put in the car. He's not going to put up with this arrangement much longer.

ANGLE ON MILLIGAN

who shuts the car door behind the boy, looks up. He meets Loy's eye, tips his hat.

ANGLE ON LOY

as his men come over.

LOY CANNON

Take the kid back to the house. I got a meetin.

CUT TO:

30 EXT. STREETS. KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY

30

The Fadda cars head back to their home. Josto is agitated.

JOSTO

We should move on them already.
They don't respect you. They don't respect the family.

DONATELLO

(in Italian)

I think you don't respect them.

JOSTO

(in Italian)

Look how they live. They're animals. Am I supposed to respect also the pig?

DONATELLO

(in English)

You think they don't talk about us like this in Mission Hills? In Leewood? *Dago, Wop.*

JOSTO

(in English)

We're the goddam Roman Empire. They were born in huts.

DONATELLO

(in Italian)

Be careful.

Beat. Josto stews.

JOSTO

All I'm sayin is -- who knows what they're doin to my brother.

DONATELLO

(in Italian)

He's doing his part to help the family.

JOSTO

Three years you had me with the Irish. Three years of --

Now Donatello gets worked up. To have his orders questioned. It just isn't done.

DONATELLO

Basta! If I say it's so -- it's so.

Josto turns and SPITS his disgust onto the floorboard.

DONATELLO (CONT'D)

Ay!

From the front seat --

CONSTANT CALAMITA

Tell him about Gaetano.

Josto looks up.

JOSTO

Tell me what?

Donatello gives Calamita a warning look, but he misses it.

CONSTANT CALAMITA

Your brother's comin' over. Wants
to see your ma.

Josto looks at Donatello. This is terrible news. Gaetano is a
mystery, except for tales of his prowess as a killer of
communists for Mussolini and Kingpin of the Sardinian coast.

JOSTO

When?

DONATELLO

Next week.
(in Italian)
A quick visit.

CUT TO:

31 EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. KANSAS CITY, MO - CONTINUOUS 31

The cars have retraced their steps to the school. As they
approach the CROSSWALK again, THE CROSSING GUARD steps out
again, holding up her STOP SIGN.

The Fadda cars slow, stop.

CUT TO:

32 INT. FADDA CAR (STOPPED) - CONTINUOUS 32

Josto has gone from pissed to panicked. A panic he covers
with rage.

JOSTO

So you were just gonna sneak him in
so he can -- what -- measure the
drapes? This is my town.

DONATELLO

(blood pressure rising, in
Italian)
No you are upset.

JOSTO

He's not even American. I'm the
boss. This is my world. My crew.

Beat. Donatello stares at him. It is a death stare.

CLOSE UP ON JOSTO

Realizing his mistake, his testicles retract.

33 EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. KANSAS CITY, MO - CONTINUOUS 33

The CROSSING GUARD shepherds a large group of kids across the street.

ANGLE ON ANTOON DUMINI

Driver of the lead car, waiting. Time is passing. (We've stopped at this crosswalk twice now. It's clear SOMETHING IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN.)

CUT TO:

34 INT. FADDA FOLLOW CAR (STOPPED) - SAME TIME 34

In the follow car, We see Satchel in the backseat, playing with two toy cars. Beside him, Rabbi Milligan looks around. *What's taking so long?*

He turns, looks around -- worried they're too exposed.

He sees --

ANGLE ON THE STREETS

From Milligan's POV. HAPPY PARENTS reunite with their kids.

In the DISTANCE we see TWO BOYS playing with a BB GUN.

We PAN RIGHT and find --

A BUS STOP

TWO AFRICAN AMERICAN MEN (20s)

stand under the shelter, waiting. One of them glances over at Milligan's car.

CLOSE UP ON MILLIGAN

This could be an ambush.

ANGLE ON CONSTANT CALAMITA

In the front seat of THE LEAD CAR.

CONSTANT CALAMITA
Come on already.

He reaches over, HONKS THE HORN.

CONSTANT CALAMITA (CONT'D)
(yells)
Andiamo!

The crossing guard jumps, shoots him a dirty look.

ANGLE ON JOSTO

in the backseat. He knows he overstepped.

JOSTO
Pop. I didn't mean --

But he stops, seeing how worked up his father is getting.

CLOSE UP ON DONATELLO

His eyes glare, spittle forming in the corners of his mouth.

DONATELLO
(his teeth grinding)
You ... you ...

CUT TO:

35 INT. FADDA FOLLOW CAR (STOPPED) - SAME TIME

35

In the follow car, we are --

CLOSE ON SATCHEL

as he brings his toy cars together in a violent collision,
making crashing sounds with his mouth.

IN FRONT

Milligan checks the bus stop again.

ANGLE ON THE BUS STOP

The two men are gone. In the background we see the boys still
horsing around with the BB GUN.

Shit. MILLIGAN turns, looking for the TWO MEN.

EXTREME CLOSE UP ON DONATELLO

in the backseat of the other car. His face has turned red. We thought he was furious, but now we see something is wrong. His hand goes up to his chest.

JOSTO

Registers that something's wrong. He leans over.

JOSTO

Pop?

It's clear Donatello is in pain. Josto helps him loosen his coat, reaches over and rolls down his window.

CLOSE UP ON THE TOY CARS

colliding. *Crash.*

ANGLE ON CONSTANT CALIMATA

in the front seat of the LEAD CAR. He sees --

THE TWO AFRICAN-AMERICAN MEN

from the bus stop. They step into the street in front of the car.

CLOSE UP ON CALAMITA

Is this a hit?

CLOSE UP ON THE TWO MEN

Time slows down as one of them REACHES INTO HIS JACKET.

CONSTANT CALAMITA

Shit.

He OPENS HIS DOOR and steps out. Quietly he PULLS HIS GUN and stands in the door jam watching, ready.

THE TOY CARS

Collide. *Crash.*

CLOSE UP ON THE TWO MEN

in the crosswalk, as the one man's HAND comes out of his pocket with a pack of cigarettes. He says something and the other man laughs.

Time resumes its normal speed.

They finish crossing the street.

ANGLE ON CALAMITA

Relieved. He sits back into the car, lays his gun on the seat, turns to the back.

CONSTANT CALAMITA (CONT'D)

False alarm.

Then he sees DONATELLO. Who is rigid, his right hand on his heart.

CONSTANT CALAMITA (CONT'D)

Boss?

Donatello clutches his heart, groaning.

JOSTO

Pop. Say something! Pop!

A long beat then --

Donatello lets out a tremendous fart. The other men recoil. It goes on a while and comes with real violence. But this does the trick. The fart done, Donatello begins to breathe normally.

DONATELLO

(in Italian)

Holy shit.

ANGLE ON JOSTO

Relief turns to disgust.

JOSTO

(*what a stink*)

Jesus, Pop.

ANGLE ON DONATELLO

We are PROFILE. Out the window past him we see the TWO BOYS with their BB GUN. One boy pulls it away from the other and then --

With a faint *phut* --

A BB comes through the open passenger window and HITS DONATELLO in the NECK.

His hand snaps up, as if he has been bitten. For a beat it seems he'll be okay. Then BLOOD BEGINS TO FLOW, pouring out from between his fingers.

He has been hit in the JUGULAR.

Donatello turns towards his son. Josto and Calamita see the blood.

JOSTO (CONT'D)
(in Italian)
What the fuck?

Calamita turns in time to see --

ANGLE ON THE BOYS

They see they've hit someone and RUN AWAY.

JOSTO

hits the driver's seat.

JOSTO (CONT'D)
Go!

ANTOON DUMINI FLOORS IT.

CUT TO:

36 EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. KANSAS CITY, MO - CONTINUOUS 36

The lead car lunges into the crosswalk, sending the crossing guard leaping out of the way.

ANGLE ON THE FOLLOW CAR

As they see the lead car peel out.

RABBI MILLIGAN
Stay with 'em.

CUT TO:

37 INT. FADDA CAR (TRAVELING) - CONTINUOUS 37

In the backseat, Donatello is writhing in pain. Josto holds him.

JOSTO
Pop, pop, pop.
(yells)
Faster.
(in Italian)
He's dying!

OVERHEAD ANGLE ON THE STREET

As the two cars SPEED PAST underneath.

MATCH CUT TO:

38 EXT. SIDEWALK. KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY

38

We are looking down as LOY'S CAR pulls up to the curb. LOY CANNON and OPAL RACKLEY get out, approach *The Winckle Savings and Loan Bank*. It's an upscale bank in an upscale part of downtown.

ANGLE ON LOY

as he approaches the front door. But instead of walking through it, he veers toward a smaller door a mere four feet away. A SIGN above it reads "COLORED ENTRANCE."

Loy goes through the smaller door. Opal right behind him.

CUT TO:

39 INT. WINCKLE SAVINGS AND LOAN. KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY 39

Loy comes in through the side entrance with Opal. An OLD SECURITY GUARD by the MAIN DOOR eyes them suspiciously.

Loy looks around, sees --

ANGLE ON DOCTOR SENATOR

In the waiting area. The older man beckons.

LOY

turns to Opal.

LOY CANNON

Stay here.

He walks over to the waiting area.

DOCTOR SENATOR

I thought you were gonna be late.

LOY CANNON

Never early. Never late. Always right on time.

DOCTOR SENATOR

Are you ready?

LOY CANNON

A man is always ready for things to go his way.

CUT TO:

A40 EXT. ST. THECLA'S PRIVATE HOSPITAL. KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY A40

The FADDA CARS pull in fast. Josto and Calamita jump out, help Donatello from the backseat. He's bleeding heavily, weak.

40 INT. ST. THECLA'S PRIVATE HOSPITAL. KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY 40

An upscale teaching hospital. It's a quiet afternoon in the EMERGENCY ROOM. There are a COUPLE OF PATIENTS checking in at the main desk. The doors burst open. Constant Calamita comes through holding up Donatello Fadda, whose shirt is now soaked with blood.

Josto follows behind. Milligan follows with Satchel and the other men.

JOSTO

(calling)

Doctor. We need a doctor.

Calamita sits Donatello in a WHEELCHAIR as NURSE TAPLEY approaches.

NURSE TAPLEY

Sir, there's a line.

JOSTO

He's cut. Call the doctor.

NURSE TAPLEY

You need to check in properly.

JOSTO

Get the fucking doctor.

NURSE TAPLEY

Sir, there's no need for that tone.

Rabbi Milligan steps forward.

RABBI MILLIGAN

Darlin', you best find the doctor
or this man's going to die right
here in yer lobby. And then you'll
have us to deal with.

Beat. She hurries off. Josto kneels next to Donatello, who
clutches the armrests of the wheelchair, in pain.

JOSTO

(in Italian)

Don't worry, dad. The doctor is
almost here.

In the distance we see Nurse Tapley talking to a MAN in a
suit and TWO SECURITY GUARDS.

The man is Hospital Administrator DR. DAVID HARVARD, an old-
school patrician. He approaches with TWO SECURITY GUARDS.

DR. HARVARD

Gentlemen. We don't want any
trouble.

CONSTANT CALAMITA

Are you the doctor?

DR. HARVARD

I am the hospital administrator,
Dr. Harvard.

JOSTO

Are you kidding?

(to Calamita)

Is he kidding?

(yells)

Can I get a fucking doctor?

DR. HARVARD

Is that a gunshot?

CONSTANT CALAMITA

It's a pellet. From a kid's gun.

Harvard looks at him with disdain -- *yeah, right.*

DR. HARVARD

Gentlemen, this is a private
hospital. We serve only a certain
class of people.

JOSTO

A certain class of people.

Donatello gasps in pain, clutches Josto's arm.

DR. HARVARD

Respectable. American. Now St. Bartholemew is a few miles away. That's the public hospital -- for your kind of people. I recommend you take your business there.

Josto turns to Calamita.

JOSTO

Hurt this guy.

Calamita steps forward. Harvard steps back.

DR. HARVARD

Now hold on. You should know we've called the police, and they're on their way. If you don't want to answer a lot of questions about your -- *pellet gun injury* -- I propose you go to St. Bartholemew's. Immediately.

ANGLE ON JOSTO AND HIS MEN

As POLICE SIRENS begin to cut through the silence.

CONSTANT CALAMITA

Boss.

JOSTO

Get him in the car. Keep the pressure on.

The men head out with Donatello. Josto smiles at Harvard.

JOSTO (CONT'D)

You and me are gonna dance again later.

He walks out.

CUT TO:

41 INT. FADDA CAR (TRAVELING) - DAY

41

The men RACE to St. Bartholemew's across town. Josto sits in the back, brooding.

CLOSE UP ON DONATELLO

Looking bad. He fights for air. We PUSH IN --

CUT TO:

42

INT. BANK PRESIDENT'S OFFICE. KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY

42

Loy and Doctor Senator sit across from CLAYTON WINCKLE, a heavyset country club WASP wearing a suit with suspenders.

WINCKLE

You boys find the place okay?

LOY CANNON

(*what?*)

It's the third largest bank in the state. We found it fine.

WINCKLE

Well, any friend of the alderman is a friend of mine. He tells me you're a banker yourself. In your community.

LOY CANNON

We make personal and small business loans. This is my associate, Doctor Senator.

WINCKLE

You're a doctor?

DOCTOR SENATOR

No, sir. My name is Doctor. Doctor Senator. It was my mother's idea.

WINCKLE

And what was her name?

DOCTOR SENATOR

Ma'am.

WINCKLE

Her name was Ma'am?

LOY CANNON

Doc here runs operations for the entire midwest region. He was the first black man to get a P.H.D in economics.

DOCTOR SENATOR
From Howard University.

WINCKLE
That's the negro school.

Beat. Loy studies him.

LOY CANNON
Let's cut to the chase, Wink. Can I
call you Wink? We're here cause I
have an idea.

WINCKLE
An idea.

LOY CANNON
I'm something of a futurist, you
understand. Which means I don't
just see how to make money today --
I have a premonition about the
wealth of tomorrow. See, at my bank
we extend a lot of credit. And
unlike this fine establishment, we
don't always ask for commensurate
collateral. And what I've learned
is that the average Joe wants one
thing. To *seem* rich.

DOCTOR SENATOR
Not to be rich.

LOY CANNON
No. To look rich. It's about face.

DOCTOR SENATOR
Picture it's Saturday night. You're
going out with your best girl.

LOY CANNON
You promised her lobster. But
there's a problem.

DOCTOR SENATOR

You've only got two dollars to your name.

LOY CANNON

But you're not afraid, because you've got this.

He pulls a small metal rectangle out of his pocket, holds it up.

ANGLE ON CLAYTON

who leans forward, squints at it.

WINCKLE

Is that -- what is that?

LOY CANNON

I call it -- a "credit card."

DOCTOR SENATOR

Accepted by stores and fine dining establishments around the country.

LOY CANNON

Can't afford the meal today? Buy it on credit and pay for it tomorrow. Plus interest. That's the key.

(beat)

We've already got about a hundred businesses signed up in colored communities around the state.

He hands the metal card to Clayton.

WINCKLE

It's heavy.

DOCTOR SENATOR

That's a prototype. The real card could be manufactured from a lighter material.

LOY CANNON

For example, there are a lot of exciting things happening these days in plastics.

WINCKLE

And you're saying the bank -- what are you saying?

LOY CANNON

What you hold in your hand is something I call a "financial instrument." It is a product your bank would offer to customers.

The PNEUMATIC TUBE next to Clayton shudders to life and a capsule appears. Clayton opens it, pulls out a piece of paper, reads it as the two men try to continue their pitch.

DOCTOR SENATOR

Think of it as an open line of credit. Paid back weekly.

LOY CANNON

Or monthly.

Clayton writes a note on the paper, stuffs it back in the capsule and shoots it back up the pneumatic tube. He turns to them.

WINCKLE

I don't understand. If you've got your own bank, what do you need us for?

LOY CANNON

(beat)

Simple. I've got a customer base, but what I need help with is convincing white businesses to take the card as a means of payment, so we can expand into your community. Then go national.

(here's the pitch)

My thinking was -- a partnership -- sixty-forty.

Beat. Clayton absorbs that, assuming -- of course -- that he gets sixty.

DOCTOR SENATOR

The key is the interest. Say you buy a ten dollar meal. Well, if you don't pay that back on time, that's ten or fifteen percent extra that gets tacked on.

LOY CANNON

Free money for the bank, every time a customer welches.

WINCKLE

I thought you said people would
pay.

DOCTOR SENATOR

They'll try to pay.

LOY CANNON

Most of them.

DOCTOR SENATOR

But they've got bills. The kids need orthodonture. So chances are -- a few times a year -- they're gonna push paying you back a few more weeks.

LOY CANNON

Creating more interest. And therefore more *profit* for the bank. Your bank.

ANGLE ON CLAYTON

We PUSH INTO a CLOSE UP. It is a revolutionary financial idea worth trillions of dollars. In this moment greatness has been thrust upon him, and all Clayton Winckle III has to do is say *yes*.

WINCKLE

(beat)

No.

LOY CANNON

No? Man, I'm offering you a million dollar idea.

DOCTOR SENATOR

A billion dollar idea.

WINCKLE

I'll give you this. You boys have got a hell of an imagination. But the people I see day in day out -- hard working people, family men -- well, they're just not gonna spend money they don't have.

LOY CANNON

Mr. Winckle.

WINCKLE

And charging them high rates of interest, preying on them when times get tough -- well, that's just not what banking's all about.

He hands Loy his card back, stands.

WINCKLE (CONT'D)

But thanks for thinkin' of us here at Winckle Savings and Loan, voted number one in customer services for the larger Kansas City metro area three years running.

He holds up two lollipops.

WINCKLE (CONT'D)

You fellas have a crackerjack day.

Beat. Dismissed, Loy looks at Doctor Senator. They can't believe he passed this up, but at the same time they're not surprised.

They leave without taking their lollipops. Beat. Clayton unwraps one, puts it in his mouth.

WINCKLE (CONT'D)

A "credit card." What'll they think of next.

CUT TO:

43 INT. LOBBY. WINCKLE SAVINGS AND LOAN - MOMENTS LATER

43

Loy and Doctor Senator head for the exit. Opal Rackley is waiting.

OPAL RACKLEY

How'd it go?

Loy is fuming.

LOY CANNON

Just get the damn car.

Loy storms past Opal, and heads for the MAIN DOOR until --

The SECURITY GUARD steps in his path.

SECURITY GUARD

Not so fast, son.

LOY CANNON

Do I look like your son?

The Guard points to a sign that reads: COLORED EXIT.

SECURITY GUARD

Read the sign.

Loy glances at the sign -- then he takes a moment, composes himself.

LOY CANNON
(to the guard)
What's your name, old timer?

SECURITY GUARD
Horace Klue.

LOY CANNON
Look, Horace -- help me figure something out. A logic problem. You understand logic, right?

SECURITY GUARD
Course.

LOY CANNON
I just come from a meeting with the president of your bank.

SECURITY GUARD
Okay.

LOY CANNON
Well, if the president of your bank is showing me the respect of having a sit-down, don't you think I should have the respect of walking out the front door? That's just logic.

CLOSE UP ON HORACE

He thinks about that.

SECURITY GUARD
How's this fer logic -- *Colored man. Colored exit.*

ANGLE ON LOY

You can't beat the system.

CUT TO:

44 INT. HALLWAY. ST. BARTHOLEMEW'S HOSPITAL. KANSAS CITY, MO - DAY 44

The PUBLIC HOSPITAL. Through the glass of the hallway window we see Donatello resting in a private room, sedated.

Josto stands outside with DOCTOR SANJIT (40s), an INDIAN-AMERICAN. We see Paolo and Calamita in the distance.

DOCTOR SANJIT

We got the pellet out, but he's
lost a lot of blood.

JOSTO

I wanna talk to a real doctor.

DOCTOR SANJIT

I assure you, I am as real a doctor
as you can get.

Beat. Josto looks in at his father.

JOSTO

Is he gonna die?

DOCTOR SANJIT

I'd like to keep him here a few
days. As I said, he lost a lot of
blood. What matters is he rests.

Beat. Josto nods. The doctor leaves. We sit with Josto a
moment. He turns to look through the glass. Constant Calamita
approaches.

JOSTO

I want two guys on watch all night.

CONSTANT CALAMITA

I'll take care of it myself.

JOSTO

Send everyone else home.

CONSTANT CALAMITA

What about yer mama?

JOSTO

Tell Maxia. She'll talk to ma and
the others. They can come in the
morning -- if he makes it.

Calamita moves away. Josto studies his father, standing in
the middle of the hall. A NURSE approaches, pushing a cart.
We recognize her as ORAETTA MAYFLOWER.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER

Excuse me, young fella.

Oraetta is delivering meals to the patients.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER (CONT'D)

Chuck wagon coming through.

JOSTO

Huh? Oh, sorry.

Josto steps aside.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER

No need for sorry. What with you worryin' and grievin'.

She pushes the cart past him. Josto watches her, then an idea hits him.

JOSTO

Hey --

He steps closer, speaking quietly.

JOSTO (CONT'D)

You got any bennies? Zoomers? A little chicken powder?

(off her face)

You know, speed? Somethin to pick me up. I've had a world class day.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER

Well, sir. Those types of narcotics -- when prescribed as a medical remedy, say as a mood elevator or to strengthen the concentration -- can be quite effective, but ingesting them without the written prescription of a certified physician -- well, that's not something I can help you with.

Beat. He thinks about that.

JOSTO

What if I share?

CUT TO:

45 INT. STORE ROOM. ST. BARTHOLEMEW'S HOSPITAL - DAY

45

Josto snorts a crushed up pill from the back of his hand. His head snaps back.

JOSTO

There it goes.

He offers the rest to Oraetta, who licks her finger, touches the powder, and rubs it on her gums.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER

When using illicit substances, it is important to avoid the obvious physical tells -- redness of the eyes, inflamed epidermal tissue, say around the proboscis.

JOSTO

You got a funny way of talkin'.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER

I'm from Minnesota, land of a thousand lakes.

JOSTO

No, I mean you use big words.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER

I have found in my thirty-six years on God's green Earth that it is absolutely critical to be precise in yer use of language so as to avoid instances of misreckoning.

She dabs the rest of the speed, rubs her gums.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER (CONT'D)

Well, I should return to my ministrations.

She goes to the door. All at once, Josto is afraid to be left alone.

JOSTO

They shot him. *Mio Padre*.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER

Who did?

JOSTO

I don't know. Children, I think. That's not what matters.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER

Tell me what matters.

She opens the door.

JOSTO

He's in a lot of pain. I don't like seeing him like this. Will you take care of him?

CLOSE UP ON ORAETTA

These words mean something to her. The question he's asking.
She softens.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER

I shall attend to him faithfully
until the Lord arrives.

She exits.

CUT TO:

46 INT. KITCHEN. SMUTNY HOUSE & MORTUARY. KANSAS CITY, MO - 46
NIGHT

It is dinnertime in the SMUTNY HOUSE. Ethelrida enters as her
mother, Dibrell, serves food to her father, Thurman.

DIBRELL

I was about to ring the bell again.

Ethelrida sits.

ETHELRIDA

Sorry. Miss French started us on
reverse fractions.

She puts her napkin in her lap. Thurman reaches out for
hands. They bow their heads.

THURMAN

*Come, Lord Jesus, be our Guest, and
let Thy gifts to us be blessed.
Amen.*

DIBRELL/ETHELRIDA

Amen.

They eat.

THURMAN

Zebron says we might be getting the
American Pathology Conference right
here in Kansas City next year.
Maybe they want me to present my
paper on *simulating a life-like
glimmer in the human eye.*

ETHELRIDA

Who were those men earlier?

DIBRELL

The which?

ETHELRIDA

After the funeral. You sent me to my room.

THURMAN

Sorry about the exchange with the Nurse Mayflower before. She's a bit of an eccentric. Progressive in her way, I suppose. By all measure though, a fine woman. Works at St. Bartholemew's.

ETHELRIDA

You mentioned.
(to Dibrell)
Ma, who were those men?

DIBRELL

Well, Ethelrida -- not all things in this house are for your understanding. Your father and I do deserve some privacy.

But Ethelrida won't be deterred. She turns to her father.

ETHELRIDA

Dad?

Thurman eats absently, avoiding the question.

THURMAN

We see a lot of cadavers from St. Barts here, as you know. In fact, Ms. Mayflower just moved in across the street, in her words *so as to be closer to both locations*. I suppose she feels a Christian obligation to say farewell to the patients she couldn't save.

Ethelrida pushes her plate away.

ETHELRIDA

(to both parents)
I'm not a kid, you know.

THURMAN

Well, dear -- technically --

Ethelrida stands.

ETHELRIDA

I know there's something afoot. I hear the whispering late at night. I'm part of this family, you know.

DIBRELL

Girl, you best sit down and finish your meal. I know I didn't raise a child who would throw such histrionics at my dinner table, under my roof.

THURMAN

What your mother's tryin to say --

DIBRELL

Don't "what your mother's tryin to say" her. She hears me. And if she don't -- she damn well hears my tone.

(beat, glaring)

Sit. Down.

Beat. Ethelrida faces them defiantly, then soften, sits.

DIBRELL (CONT'D)

That's better. Believe me, if there's something your father and I want you to know -- you're gonna know it. Now pass the peas.

Ethelrida does. They eat in silence.

CUT TO:

A47 EXT. CANNON HOSUE. KANSAS CITY - NIGHT

A47

A large corner house in an African American neighborhood. Loy climbs the stairs. Opal is behind him.

LOY CANNON

I'll send Lemuel out with a plate.

He goes inside. Opal takes up a position, on guard duty.

B47 INT. LIVING ROOM. CANNON HOUSE. KANSAS CITY - NIGHT

B47

Loy enters. His kids, FLORINE (8) and PESSIMINDLE (11) are on the floor doing a jigsaw puzzle with his wife BUEL CANNON and Zero Fadda. Buel's mother, NARCISSA RIVERS, is there as well.

Lemuel is nearby practicing his trumpet.

FLORINE
(sees him)
Daddy!

She and Pessimindle get up, run over to him. Loy accepts the hug.

BUEL
Give yer daddy some room now. He's had a tough day.

LOY CANNON
How do you know what kinds day I had?

Buel gets up, comes over.

BUEL
Cause you got a face and I been looking at it every day for twenty six years.

LOY CANNON
(to Lemuel)
Boy, get a plate together and bring it out to Opal.

Lemuel puts down his horn, goes to the kitchen, as Buel walks to the sideboard, pours Loy a drink.

BUEL
Lemuel says you saw Satchel.

LOY CANNON
(takes a drink)
Skinny.

BUEL
I don't wanna hear that.

LOY CANNON
And I don't wanna say it, but this ain't a fairy tale.
(re: Zero)
How's he doin?

BUEL
He ate a loaf of bread for lunch. I called him Satchel twice.

LOY CANNON
We're gonna get him back.

BUEL

When?

LOY CANNON

As soon as I see their throats.

He turns to the kids.

LOY CANNON (CONT'D)

Now who made dinner, you? You?

The girls laugh. He tickles them.

47 INT. FADDA ROOM. ST. BARTHOLEMEW'S HOSPITAL. KANSAS CITY, MO - 47
NIGHT

Antoon Dumini sits in a chair by Donatello's bed. He's reading the funnies in the newspaper; *Andy Capp*, etc.

He takes out a FLASK, sips from it.

We PAN across him to see Donatello in bed, sedated, his breathing ragged. We MOVE AROUND the bed until we are looking

--

OVER DONATELLO

-- past Dumini. We can see into THE OPPOSITE ROOM. It's dark inside, but the street light outside casts a silhouette.

We see A FIGURE attending to the sleeping patient. The figure is backlit, just a dark shape. Something about the way it hovers over the patient -- like a vampire -- is unsettling.

We hear a sound, PAN TO see A DOCTOR approaching down the hall. He reaches the opposite room, goes in. As he does we see the FIGURE IS GONE.

ANGLE ON DUMINI

He is asleep now in the chair. A SHADOW falls over him as --

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER

enters the room. She brings a breezy attitude, speaking quietly.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER

Okay, my lovely. No need to fret.
Mama's here.

She goes to his bedside, looks down on Donatello.

ANGLE ON DONATELLO

He's wearing a PINKY RING with a jewel on his left hand. She lifts his hand, studies it. He wakes, sees her leaning over him.

DONATELLO

(in Italian)

Where am I? Who are you?

He struggles to sit up. Pain from his neck stops him. He winces, then sees the IV line in his arm, realizes where he is.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER

Does it hurt, my lovely? This
earthly realm.

DONATELLO

(in Italian)

What hospital is this?

What hospital is this?

Donatello looks over, sees Antoon Dumini asleep in the chair.

DONATELLO (CONT'D)

Dumini.

Antoon shifts but doesn't wake.

DONATELLO (CONT'D)
(to Oraetta in Italian)
The doctor.
(in English)
Get the doctor.

ANGLE ON ORAETTA

She pulls a NEEDLE from her smock, pushes some fluid through it to clear the air.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER
(in Italian)
The doctor said you should rest.
Sleep.

Donatello is surprised.

DONATELLO
You speak Italiano?

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER
Y español. Und deutsch. Enough to
becalm my wards and settle my
patients. I'm a people person,
dontcha know.

She raises the needle to his IV line.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER (CONT'D)
Now rest up, old timer, for the
Lord won't want ya if yer ornery.

DONATELLO
My son.

He tries to sit up, but he is still light headed from blood loss.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER
Such a sweet boy, and concerned fer
you. He sees the pain yer in. The
tribulations you've endured.

She injects the IV line, pushing the fluid in.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER (CONT'D)
But don't worry. It won't be much
longer now.

She depresses the plunger until all the fluid is gone.

ANGLE ON DONATELLO

as his breathing becomes rapid, then starts to slow. He realizes something is wrong, reaches for the IV line in his arm.

ORAETTA

slaps his hand.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER (CONT'D)

Stop that.

Donatello glares at her, as a profound wooziness hits him.

DONATELLO

(in Italian)

Murderess.

(calls weakly)

Dumini. Dumini.

But Antoon Dumini is sleeping the sleep of drunks. Oraetta puts a hand on his head, and slowly pushes Donatello down onto his back.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER

Shhhhhh. It won't be much longer.

CLOSE UP ON DONATELLO

Color drains from his face as the poison weakens him. He gasps, sputters, growing weaker.

ORAETTA

leans over him, peering into his eyes, watching for the sight of death approaching. We realize she is humming.

Then --

Oraetta Mayflower LAYS DOWN on the bed next to the old man, rests her head on his chest, begins to sing quietly.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER (CONT'D)

*I was standing by my window -- and
it was a cold and -- cloudy day --*

CLOSE UP ON DONATELLO

The Lion of Sardinia -- as he dies weakly, like a lamb. This is not the end anyone expected for him.

ANGLE ON DONATELLO'S HAND

It twitches, goes still. Oraetta's hand comes into frame. She slips the ring from his finger, singling gently.

ANGLE ON ORAETTA

as she studies her trophy, singing gently.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER (CONT'D)
*-- when I saw that -- hearse come
rolling -- for to carry my mother
away.*

We PAN OFF HER to see Antoon Dumini, still sleeping.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER (V.O.)
*Will the circle -- be unbroken --
by and by lord -- by and by --*

CUT TO:

48 EXT. SMUTNY HOUSE & MORTUARY. KANSAS CITY, MO - NIGHT

48

A WIDE SHOT of the Smutny Home and Mortuary. It's the middle of the night. Only a hall light is on.

ORAETTA MAYFLOWER (V.O.)
*There's a better -- home awaitin --
in the sky, Lord, in the sky.*

The front door opens. Ethelrida comes out on the porch. She sits on the porch swing. It's a clear, Fall night.

Ethelrida likes to come out here sometimes when the day is over. When all the forces of oppression and suppression are asleep. When possibilities can burble to the surface of such troubled waters.

It's cold enough that she can see her breath, and so she lifts her fingers to her lips like she's taking a puff on a cigarette, exhales -- feeling sophisticated.

ANGLE ON THE STREET

A BUS pulls in. The doors open.

CLOSE UP ON ETHELRIDA

looking to see who will get off.

ANGLE ON THE BUS

For a beat the OPEN DOORS create a dark hole. And then Oraetta Mayflower steps down. She has a scarf tied around her head, and, as the bus pulls away, she adjusts it in the wind. She appears to be talking quietly to herself, but we don't hear her words.

Watching her --

ETHELRIDA

has the sudden instinct to get out of sight. She ducks back into the shadows.

As she watches, Oraetta crosses the street and approaches an apartment building. She digs around for her keys, goes inside.

ANGLE ON ETHELRIDA

She's not sure why she's watching, but something about this neighbor just feels wrong.

ANGLE ON THE APARTMENT BUILDING

As a SECOND FLOOR LIGHT goes on. We see Oraetta inside her apartment, taking off her coat.

CLOSE UP ON ETHELRIDA

She studies the window, then THURMAN comes to the door.

THURMAN

Hon? Is that you?

He steps out onto the porch, clutching his bathrobe against the cold.

THURMAN (CONT'D)

Jeez -- it's freezin out here. Why dontcha come inside?

ETHELDIRA

What's gonna happen to me, dad? In the world.

THURMAN

Oh, hon. It's gonna be okay. There's a place fer all of us on this Earth. We just have to find it. Now come on in.

Ethelrida stands, goes to the door.

ETHELDIRA

Who were those guys? In the kitchen.

THURMAN

Well -- we're just havin some money trouble right now, yer mom and me. Not a lot. And please don't tell her I said. She a very proud woman.

ETHELDIRA

Are we gonna lose the house?

He hugs her.

THURMAN

No. Nothin' like that. Just a bad city inspection. Some renovations to do. But we got it covered.

Thurman pats her head.

THURMAN (CONT'D)

Want me to read to you? Help ya fall back asleep.

ETHELRIDA

Dad, I'm sixteen.

THURMAN

Doesn't mean you don't need a bedtime story from time to time. Whatdya say? *Wizard of Oz*?

Ethelrida nods. *That would be nice.*

She goes inside. Thurman follows. The front door closes. Beat. The hall light turns off.

Then the CAMERA PANS away, back to the street and PUSHES TOWARDS the Apartment Building. We cross the street, focused on the first floor, then start to RISE --

And as we reach the second story we see Oraetta Mayflower at her window, looking out. We get the feeling she has seen everything from the moment she stepped off the bus.

We PUSH INTO A CLOSE UP

Oraetta's lips are moving, but we can't hear what she says.

END OF EPISODE 401