

R I P L E Y

Episode 3

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Based on the Ripley Novels
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EPISODE 3

Close on Tom -

looking into the camera, speaking to us in Italian -

TOM

(subtitled)

My name is Tom Ripley. I'm American, but I live in Italy now. In Atrani, at my friend Dickie's house. We plan to do some traveling together. Paris. Berlin. Greece maybe. Oh, and we're going to Cortina for Christmas.

1 INT. DICKIE'S HOUSE - DAY

1

He's in the living room with Fausto, taking his Italian lesson, which today is conversation. Judging by how much better Tom's command of the language is, some weeks, at least, have passed -

TOM

(subtitled)

I'm not sure what kind of job I'll get here. Accounting maybe. That's what I did in New York. I'm good with numbers. Whatever happens, I'm not worried about it. Something always turns up. That's my philosophy. I won't be going back to New York anytime soon. Why would I, what's there? A lot of noise, and people pretending to be things they aren't.

FAUSTO

(subtitled)

That's good, Tommaso. You're doing very good.

The front door opens and in come Dickie and Marge from morning coffee at one of Atrani's cafes.

DICKIE
Are we interrupting?

FAUSTO
No, we just finished.

As Tom takes out his wallet to pay Fausto for the lesson, Dickie drops an unopened airmail envelope with a ship's wheel logo on the return address on the little tray on his desk.

DICKIE
Perfect, because we're going to Naples to find something important.

TOM
Another Caravaggio?

DICKIE
No.

2 EXT/INT. APPLIANCE SHOP - NAPLES - DAY

2

Why they dragged Tom along to look at refrigerators is beyond him. Perhaps to punish him.

It's a kind of hell watching Dickie and Marge move from fridge to fridge, opening the doors and peering inside at their metal racks, counting their ice trays as a salesman explains the various 'features' of each in Italian that Tom doesn't bother to follow.

To him, the white boxes all look the same: like squat upended coffins. Maybe they'll choose one big enough to fit Marge into.

3 EXT. CAFE - NAPLES - DAY

3

They've chosen none them - yet - but have come away with brochures which they read like they're literature while Tom sips at an espresso and tries to ignore them.

DICKIE
This one fits four ice trays.
This one only two.

MARGE
How many do we need?

DICKIE

I don't know. Four, I guess, is better than two. What do you think, Tom.

TOM

Excuse me?

DICKIE

You have an opinion on which?

TOM

Which refrigerator?

DICKIE

What are we talking about?

TOM

I wouldn't know which. I think I'd rather hang myself than buy a refrigerator.

DICKIE

And why is that.

TOM

Because - first it's a refrigerator, then it's 'We may as well stay put because it's so hard to move. And since we're staying put, we may as well get a sofa and some other stuff too big to move. And a mortgage.' And before you know it, you're old and haven't gone anywhere and you die. And it all started with counting ice trays.

They laugh.

MARGE

That's funny.

Not to Tom. More to Dickie -

TOM

I'm serious. It's a millstone.

DICKIE

Tom, without it, we spend hours every day buying food to replace the food that's gone bad. It's the opposite of what you're saying.

TOM

The opposite is freedom. A refrigerator isn't freedom.

DICKIE

So you have no opinion on which we should get.

TOM

I can't tell one from another, and prefer to keep it that way.

DICKIE

You'll love it once it's in the house. You'll make ice cubes, drop a couple in your drink, go out on the terrace with it and look out at the sea and say to yourself 'I'm so glad they bought it.'

Tom begs to differ but only does so with a shrug as he sips his coffee.

4 EXT. AMALFI COAST - DAY

4

The three of them are on the flatbed of a 3-wheeled Piaggio Ape, holding onto ropes encircling the fridge as the little truck they've hired careens around the curves and cliffs of the Amalfi Coast.

Dickie and Marge are buoyant, like it's a carnival ride. Tom is carsick and disgusted with the entire spectacle.

5 INT. DICKIE'S HOUSE - DAY

5

Tom doesn't help them push the refrigerator against a kitchen wall or plug it in. Ermelinda is there and is just as excited to hear the motor start up as Dickie and Marge are.

Dickie fills the ice trays with water and sets them in the freezer compartment of the fridge, then stands back with Marge to look at it like it's a piece of art.

And now what? Are they going to wait around for the 'magic' of the ice to happen? Tom isn't. He wanders out.

6 INT. POST OFFICE - ATRANI - DAY

6

Tom stands at the counter waiting for the postmaster to leaf through a stack of thin airmail envelopes. He hands Tom one with his name on it. The return address has the same ship's wheel logo Dickie's letter had.

TOM

Grazie, Matteo. Non c'è niente per Riccardo?

POSTMASTER

E' passato stamattina a ritirarla.

Dickie came in this morning. Tom points to the ship's wheel logo on Tom's envelope.

TOM

(subtitled)

Was it from this same address, do you know?

Tom can't be sure but thinks he detects a note of suspicion from the man.

POSTMASTER

(subtitled)

I don't know.

TOM

Va bene. Grazie.

Tom leaves with his letter. The postmaster watches after him.

7 INT. DICKIE'S HOUSE - DAY

7

Sitting in the living room, Tom slits the envelope with an actual letter opener - of course Dickie has one - and takes out a sheet of onionskin paper from it.

To be sure that's all that's in it he pulls at the flap of the envelope like jaws and peers in. There's nothing more inside. No money order.

That's disappointing, but it's only the beginning. He reads the letter -

MR. GREENLEAF V/0

Dear Tom -

8 EXT. OCEAN - DAY

8

A school of fish swims by, as tightly packed together as people were in the New York subway train Tom used to have to ride.

MR. GREENLEAF V/0

I know it was with the best intentions you reported that Richard was considering coming home.

A9 EXT. FISH MARKET - DAY

A9

The same kind of fish on ice, staring up with dead eyes as one is plucked from the others and set on a scale.

MR. GREENLEAF V/0

But in view of the fact you've been with him two months now and he shows no more sign of returning than before you went - I can only assume you have been unsuccessful.

B9 INT. MR. GREENLEAF'S OFFICE - NYC - DAY

B9

Mr. Greenleaf sits behind his desk, speaking directly to Tom, to us, to the camera -

MR. GREENLEAF

While Emily and I appreciate your efforts, you need not consider yourself obligated to us any further. I trust you have not inconvenienced yourself too greatly over these past several weeks.

(MORE)

MR. GREENLEAF (CONT'D)

Perhaps the trip despite the failure of its objective afforded you some pleasure at least.
Sincerely, H. Greenleaf.

9 INT. DICKIE'S HOUSE & MR. GREENLEAF'S OFFICE - INTERCUT 9

Tom stares at the signature like it's a knife, then up "at" Mr. Greenleaf, who calmly "regards" Tom back from behind his desk.

TOM

Obligated? Inconvenienced?

Mr. Greenleaf has more important things to do, like eat his lunch. He pulls a plate in front of him with a whole cooked fish on it, and, "ignoring" Tom, cuts into it and takes a bite.

TOM

Failure?

Mr. Greenleaf feels a stray fishbone lodge in his throat and topples off his chair onto the floor, choking on the fishbone.

And we're back with Tom, where we stay as it sinks in why no money order accompanied the letter - nor will any future one - because he has just been fired.

The spigot of money has just shut off, and that which he has will soon run out. Then what? How long will Dickie put up with him then?

He wanders into the kitchen like a sleepwalker. Mechanically opens the fridge door and stares into it like you do when you're thinking about something else.

He hates this refrigerator, and now knows the real reason why. It isn't because it's a millstone. It's what it says about Dickie's and Marge's relationship. It's an uptick in their domesticity that doesn't include him.

Suddenly he is struck with another thought, forming as an awful question:

Did Mr. Greenleaf say in his letter to Dickie what he now thinks of, and expressed to Tom?

The refrigerator motor vibrates the racks inside like a death rattle.

Tom shuts its door and hurries into the living room to the desk, but Dickie's mail tray is empty.

He checks the rest of the desk top for the letter the postmaster said Dickie picked up. It's not there. He checks the desk's top drawer. Just old postcards and other letters, not the new one.

Does Dickie have it on him? Unopened? Unread? He cares so little about his father he'd probably just think he misplaced the letter if Tom could somehow steal it.

10

INT. DICKIE'S HOUSE - DAY

10

Tom appears in the doorway of the studio, where Dickie - his back to Tom - works on a typically awful painting on the easel.

Tom glances to the sofa. Tossed onto it is Dickie's linen jacket.

TOM

That's nice.

The painting.

DICKIE

Oh, hey. Thanks.

Dickie's mood is so light, he probably hasn't read the letter yet, Tom surmises. He goes over to the sofa and sits on it. Dickie turns back to continue painting.

Tom glances at the jacket. Sees a crease in the fine fabric by the lapel that could be caused by the edges of an envelope.

DICKIE

I don't think I like this, but
I don't know what to do about it.

The painting.

DICKIE

Thoughts?

TOM

Maybe a little darker color in
the sky?

DICKIE

I'll try it.

Dickie starts adding some grey-blue to it, not that it
will matter.

Tom's hand parts the jacket's fabric by the buttonholes,
revealing the ship's wheel logo on the unopened envelope
in the breast pocket.

DICKIE

I think I need a break from it.

Dickie tosses the paintbrush into a coffee can of
turpentine and turns -

Tom's hand is back in his lap, without the letter.

TOM

You want a drink? Let's have a
drink - with ice cubes!

DICKIE

I think I'll go see Marge.

Dickie picks up the jacket and slips it on. Tom isn't
altogether successful hiding the dread he feels if Dickie
reads the letter.

DICKIE

You okay?

TOM

I'm fine. I just don't think you
should give up on the painting.

DICKIE

I'm not. I'll get back to it
later. See you.

And with that he's gone.

11 EXT. ATRANI - DAY

11

Tom has followed, and has been followed by, enough people in his life to be as good at it as any detective, keeping Dickie in view as he heads toward Marge's house.

But then Dickie slows. Tom slows. Dickie stops. Tom stops. And it's then he sees why Dickie stopped.

He's reading the letter from his father, and has just gotten to the part - which Tom is sure is there - about Tom being a parasite who takes advantage of people.

It's painful for Tom to watch, to imagine what disparaging words Mr. Greenleaf is using to describe him.

Dickie finishes reading the letter, but doesn't immediately continue on. Just refolds it and pockets it and stands there, thinking, reevaluating.

Finally, he moves.

12 EXT. MARGE'S HOUSE - DAY

12

Dickie and Marge, framed again in the window like a painting.

As Tom spies on them from outside the house, he wishes - as painful as it was before - they were in a romantic embrace.

They aren't. Dickie has the letter out again and is reading it aloud to Marge.

Tom can't hear any of it through the panes of window glass and low rumbling thunder rolling in from the sea, but he can imagine it.

And he can imagine what they're saying to each other once Dickie finishes reading and pocketing the letter:

TOM

And how do you propose I get rid of him? Throw him off the terrace? Push him in front of a bus? Drown him? He can barely swim, you know. He told me.

The pitch and timbre of Tom's voice is remarkably close to Dickie's. Less so, Marge's:

TOM
Just tell him to leave, Dickie.

It starts to rain.

13 EXT. DICKIE'S HOUSE - DAY

13

Tom stands in the rain on the terrace. He's been out here a while, staring blankly at the sea, at the horizon, drenched, destroyed.

He hears the front gate open and shut. Then the front door. Then -

DICKIE
Tom?

Tom glances over his shoulder to Dickie just inside the french doors.

DICKIE
What are you doing? You're soaking wet.

TOM
It feels good.

Dickie nods hesitantly. He may even be able to tell something has changed about Tom, but doesn't pursue it.

DICKIE
Fine. Come in and dry off.
Dinner at Le Sorelle.

Dickie's breezy mood confuses Tom. Is it possible Mr. Greenleaf didn't say anything negative about him? Or is Dickie a better actor than Tom gives him credit for?

TOM
Okay.

But he doesn't come in. Turns back to look at the sea. Dickie regards him a moment, then retreats inside.

14 EXT. LE SORELLE - NIGHT

14

The restaurant isn't crowded. Just Dickie, Tom and Marge, and a few diners at other tables. The waiter says something in Italian to Dickie as he picks up a couple of plates and leaves with them. To Tom -

DICKIE

Did you understand what he said?

TOM

Yes.

DICKIE

What.

TOM

He said if we want anything else we should order it now. They're closing the kitchen.

DICKIE

Very good, Tom.

TOM

Fausto's a good teacher.

DICKIE

Or you're a quick study. Or both.

Tom shrugs, glances off to a racket of plates being stacked, and in that moment, Marge shoots Dickie a look, which he nods to almost imperceptibly before announcing as if he just thought of it -

DICKIE

You know what we should do?
Go to San Remo for a couple days.

Tom glances back. Considers both of them a moment.

TOM

Where's that.

DICKIE

North. Just below Nice. The
Italian Riviera.

Dickie looks to Marge.

DICKIE

What do you think? You want to?
The three of us?

MARGE

When.

DICKIE

Now. Tomorrow.

Marge thinks about it, or rather pretends to think about it, Tom believes.

MARGE

I shouldn't. I should keep writing. I'm on a kind of streak.

It's all Tom can do not to roll his eyes.

DICKIE

Oh, come on.

MARGE

You two should go.

DICKIE

Right. The last time we did that you weren't at all happy about it.

MARGE

I wasn't happy because I thought something happened to you.

Dickie looks at Tom, who offers nothing, then back to Marge.

DICKIE

You sure you wouldn't mind.

MARGE

Why would I? I'm the one suggesting it.

Which makes no sense to Tom. Which makes him think they've rehearsed this. Which he becomes more sure of the longer they keep it up.

DICKIE

Only if you're sure.

MARGE

I'm sure.

Dickie glances back to Tom.

DICKIE

What do you think, Tom? You
wanna?

What Tom thinks is this is how they're going to get rid of him. Get him alone, far away from 'home' where Dickie can say, 'Ciao, ciao, Tom, get lost,' then return to live their idyllic life without him. But three can play this game -

TOM

I think it sounds great.

15 INT. DICKIE'S HOUSE - DAY

15

Dickie squats before a small safe bolted to the floor by his desk, working its combination - 4-0-4-0. There's a packed suitcase - Goyard - next to him.

He opens the safe. Inside are some documents, cash, and two booklets of Travelers Cheques. As he takes one of the check booklets out, he hollers loud enough for Tom to hear him upstairs -

DICKIE

You ready, Tom? You packed?

But Tom isn't upstairs. He's is right there, by the sofa, standing next to his own plain suitcase, with a clear view of the safe and its combination dial.

TOM

Yes.

Dickie glances over his shoulder at him, thinking nothing of it.

DICKIE

Oh, good.

He closes the safe and spins the dial.

16 INT. NAPLES TRAIN STATION - DAY 16

As Dickie stands at the ticket counter signing a Travelers Cheque, Tom waits with their two suitcases.

He regards the departures board and all the places he'll hopefully see someday - Rome, Venice, Paris, Berlin, Madrid, Lisbon.

Dickie hands him one of the two train tickets.

DICKIE
First Class. Why not.

They head off for the platforms.

17 INT. TRAIN - MOVING - AFTERNOON 17

It's a 14-hour ride that hugs Italy's western coast.

The view out the window of the private compartment is magnificent, but because Tom knows where it's leading to - to being chucked out of Eden - he hardly looks at it.

Dickie doesn't look at it at all. He's asleep sitting up, or pretending to be asleep.

Seated directly opposite him on the other velvet-upholstered bench seat, Tom considers Dickie's face, his closed eyelids, then glances down to the Rolex watch on his wrist, and the gold ring on his finger.

Would it fit Tom? He considers his own ring finger, which to the naked eye, at least, looks to him to be about the same circumference.

His eyes travel back up to Dickie's slumbering face and settle there. It's at once calm, handsome, and arrogant, and Tom decides he hates him.

Dickie's eyes open to find no one in the seat across from him. Where has Tom gone?

18 INT. TRAIN - MOVING - CORRIDOR/BETWEEN CARS - AFTERNOON 18

We're moving now down the narrow train corridor behind Dickie. Reaching the end of the First Class car he opens its door.

Between it and the next car is an open platform with waist-high safety scissor gates on either side, which is where Dickie finds Tom.

DICKIE

There you are. I was looking for you. What are you doing?

TOM

I'm wondering if I jumped, would you try to save me.

DICKIE

What?

Tom unlatches the metal gate and scissors it open.

DICKIE

Close it, it's not funny.

The landscape on either side opens up as the train begins to traverse a trestle bridge high above a rocky gorge.

TOM

You ready?

It's ridiculous, Dickie decides. Tom is just kidding, and so he plays along.

DICKIE

Sure. Okay. Do it.

But instead of jumping, Tom suddenly shoves Dickie backwards against the other low gate. He tumbles over it and disappears.

19

INT. TRAIN - MOVING - AFTERNOON

19

Except he isn't there. He's in the compartment, still asleep. His eyes open to see Tom across from him, idly looking at him, and it's unclear if his 'death' was his dream or Tom's imagination.

Tom smiles benignly. Dickie glances to the window.

DICKIE

I guess we'll be getting in soon.

Tom nods.

20 EXT. SAN REMO - NIGHT 20

A taxi delivers them to a piazza with a couple of alfresco cafes.

Dickie pays the driver and they head off with their luggage.

A21 EXT. SAN REMO HOTEL - NIGHT A21

They approach and enter a hotel on a street not far from the piazza.

21 INT. SAN REMO HOTEL - NIGHT 21

We approach a desk clerk who looks up at us, or rather at Tom and Dickie coming toward him, each with a suitcase in hand.

In Italian, subtitled -

DICKIE

Good evening. We'd like a double room.

SAN REMO CLERK

For how many days?

DICKIE

Two, I think.

SAN REMO CLERK

Your passports, please.

They present their passports. The clerk sets them aside, telling Dickie in Italian that they can pick them up in the morning, and swivels the big registration ledger so it faces him.

As Dickie jots down his name and Atrani address with his Montblanc pen, Tom watches, and the clerk seems to scrutinize *him*.

Dickie signs the ledger and swivels it back around. The clerk fetches from a pigeon hole on a wall of them, a skeleton key attached - as they always are in Italy - to some clumsy object - in this case a giant braided tassel.

SAN REMO CLERK

Terzo piano.

DICKIE

Grazie.

SAN REMO CLERK

Grazie a voi.

They climb the stairs, something that has never seemed sinister to Tom before, but does now, to him and to us.

22

INT. HOTEL ROOM - SAN REMO - NIGHT

22

As Dickie uses a smaller key on the braided tassel to unlock a lunchbox-sized room safe in the armoire -

DICKIE

There's a perfume Marge
likes you can't find in Naples.
Novella Something or Something
Novella.

Tom's blank look says, who cares.

DICKIE

I'll look for it tomorrow.

Great. When there's so much else to do in San Remo, they'll be schlepping around looking for perfume. Even when Marge isn't with them, she's with them.

DICKIE

You should put most of your cash
in here.

Tom fishes some lire from his wallet and hands it to Dickie who adds it to the safe along with his own and some Travelers Cheques, and locks it.

DICKIE

Let's get something to eat.

They leave the room. We stay behind and listen to their footsteps in the hall and stairs ...

EXT. SAN REMO - PROFUMERIA #1 - NEXT MORNING

To Tom, the streets of San Remo don't look that much different than Naples. Narrow, cobblestoned, lined with ancient stone buildings with mostly green shutters.

Dressed in similar linen trousers and jackets - Tom has even pushed the sleeves of his up like Dickie does - they come to an address the hotel concierge jotted down for Dickie on a slip of hotel notepad paper.

DICKIE

Here.

A little profumeria.

TOM

I'll wait out here.

Dickie goes in. Tom waits by the door. In a few moments Dickie is back, empty-handed.

DICKIE

They don't have it.

EXT. SAN REMO - PROFUMERIA #2 - DAY

Tom waits outside another little profumeria while Dickie talks with a saleslady inside.

In a moment, the door opens.

DICKIE

They don't have it.

EXT. SAN REMO - PROFUMERIA #3 - DAY

Tom waits outside a third shop, and his frustration is showing. Everything that was once charming to him is now is annoying, even the sound of the Vespa coming past.

Dickie comes out.

DICKIE

There's another place a few blocks up.

Tom just looks at him and Dickie reads it correctly: It says, Haven't we wasted enough time because of Marge?

DICKIE

I'll go there. You don't have to. Go to the beach. Get a coffee. I'll meet you by the jetty.

Tom almost groans at the inanity of this goose chase, but only says -

TOM

K.

26

EXT. SAN REMO - BEACH - DAY

26

Like the streets, there's hardly anyone on the beach. High season is long over. Winter is here.

But at least there's something for Tom to look at. A group of young men in Speedos not unlike the one Tom stupidly bought himself when he first arrived in Atrani.

They're acrobats, these fit young men, building a human pyramid on the sand.

ACROBAT

Pronti! Uno, due -

On 'tre,' hands grip the forearms of a lithe teenager, hoist him up onto shoulders and immediately grasp his muscled calves.

DICKIE

Found it!

It's Dickie coming toward Tom, holding a small square perfume bottle wrapped in tissue paper the way Italians wrap everything in tissue paper as if bags and boxes haven't been invented.

DICKIE

Acqua di Santa Maria Novella.

Tom nods, good, but couldn't care less. Gestures to the acrobats on the beach.

TOM

Look at this.

Dickie regards the acrobats, stacked like a rack of bowling pins on end. All that's missing is the head pin.

TOM

There he goes.

Hands grip the smallest teenager's hands and catapult him to the top, but Dickie watches Tom instead. These Speedo-clad men clearly fascinate him.

TOM

Bravo! Bravissimo!

The young man at the top of the pyramid smiles at Tom, then waves to him.

DICKIE

Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly
dance.

Tom looks at Dickie. He doesn't know the Wordsworth poem.

TOM

What?

DICKIE

They're daffodils, Tom.

TOM

What?

DICKIE

Fairies.

Tom is actually surprised that didn't occur to him, if indeed it's so, but tries not to show it.

TOM

So what if they are? It's still
impressive.

Dickie nods but says nothing more on the subject and Tom hates him for it.

DICKIE

I spent half our day looking for
this.

The perfume.

DICKIE

I'm sorry about that. You decide what we should do with the rest of it. Whatever you want.

Tom thinks about it, or about something else, perhaps what he was thinking about on the train.

DICKIE

You want to take a boat out?

There's nothing Tom would like less, and Dickie knows it, he's sure, having admitted his fear of water to him.

Like everyone else - beginning with Tom's Aunt Dottie - Dickie derives cruel pleasure from underscoring his shortcomings. But like with her, Tom won't give it to him:

TOM

Sure.

Dickie pockets the perfume as they cross to some boats on the beach by a jetty where a boatman sits next to a little wooden table in the sand.

Dickie speaks to the boatman in Italian about renting one. Tom pays no attention as they discuss which kind, for how long, the price and so on.

Dickie wants one of those with an outboard motor, just for an hour. Takes out his alligator skin wallet to pay the boatman in advance, and receives in return a flimsy orange receipt torn from a booklet of them, which he stuffs into a pocket.

Dickie helps the boatman drag the boat into the water just deep enough for the propeller to clear the rock bed beneath it.

The man climbs in and yanks at the cord to start the outboard motor. It only coughs on the first few tries.

He pulls the choke halfway out, yanks at the cord again without success, pulls it all the way out and finally the motor sputters to life.

He revs the throttle on the outboard's tiller bar until he's sure it won't die again, then eases the choke back partway.

BOATMAN

*Questa è l'aria e questo è
l'acceleratore.*

DICKIE

Lo so.

Dickie nods patiently at the man's final instructions. All the while, Tom has been somewhere else in his head.

The boatman hops out. Dickie climbs in and helps Tom in. The boat tips from side to side.

DICKIE

The middle, Tom. Sit in the middle.

Tom does as he's told, as a child does when told the simplest thing.

The boatman pushes the boat a little further out.

There's the usual perfunctory 'ciao-ciaos' which Tom doesn't partake in. He merely watches the boatman walk back to his little table and chair setup.

Dickie gives the throttle a little twist, guides the boat along the jetty, then gives it some more gas to take them out to sea.

From over a statue of Nero above the beach, the boat looks tiny and vulnerable against the vastness of the sea and cloudy sky.

27

EXT. OCEAN - DAY

27

We are under the water, under the hull, with the propeller's tri-blade spinning right in front of us.

It's an image we've seen before, under the RMS Queen Elizabeth, when that ship left New York Harbor, pushed by its huge propellers.

Like then, Tom watches the shoreline recede, but with none of the optimism he had for the future as he watched New York's skyline shrink. It hasn't been replaced with hopelessness, exactly, but rather closer to - just nothing.

DICKIE

You okay?

TOM

Yeah. Fine.

Tom works a little smile onto his face as he looks at Dickie's hand oscillating on the throttle. It looks to Tom like trying to hold onto the rope of a bronco.

TOM

Is it hard to steer?

DICKIE

No ... You want to try it?

TOM

No, thanks.

Tom turns on his bench to look at what's ahead. All there is to see through the spray off the bow spitting him in the face is what the Italian explorers saw as they left for the New World, vast ocean eventually meeting the horizon. He glances back to Dickie.

TOM

Where are we headed?

DICKIE

Does it matter?

Tom looks ahead again. For most people this would be exhilarating. But for him, the shifting sea- and landscape make him queasy, like he's on a rickety roller coaster.

TOM

Can you slow down?

DICKIE

Can I?

TOM

Will you?

DICKIE

We're not going fast. It just feels like it in a small boat.

Dickie gives it more gas to take them further out to sea at an even faster clip.

DICKIE

This is why you rent a motorboat
and not a rowboat.

TOM

To scare me?

DICKIE

To have fun.

Tom just stares at the teetering horizon, hoping it will flatten, and in so doing, will calm his impending nausea.

Finally taking Tom's distress seriously, Dickie throttles down.

Beneath the water, the propeller's spinning slows.

Above it, the outboard motor settles into a putt-putt idle. Dickie taps the kill switch and the boat drifts to a stop but for the natural rocking of the ocean currents.

DICKIE

Better?

Tom turns on the bench to face Dickie.

TOM

Yes, thank you.

And they sit there. Not talking. Just looking off at the sea around them and distant shoreline of San Remo. After several moments of the silence -

DICKIE

You remember Freddie?

How could Tom forget?

TOM

Yes.

DICKIE

I hope you won't mind terribly,
but I think just Marge and I are
going to spend Christmas with him
in Cortina.

Nothing from Tom. Here it comes - the 'Goodbye, Tom' talk he knew was the point of this trip.

DICKIE

I think she'd prefer it, and I feel since we've been spending so much time together - you and me - that I owe it to her. To do what she wants this time.

TOM

She'd prefer it.

DICKIE

I'm afraid so.

TOM

You're blaming her.

DICKIE

What?

TOM

She, not you, prefers it that way.

DICKIE

I don't really care. She does.

Tom nods, but knows that's not the case. It's Dickie even more than Marge who wants to get rid of him.

TOM

What am I going to do?

DICKIE

For Christmas?

TOM

Christmas, New Years, and - after that.

DICKIE

Actually, I wanted to talk to you about that, too. I think it's time you saw some more of Italy.

Nothing from Tom.

DICKIE

For your sake, I mean. You don't want to just stay in Atrani for months on end when there's so much else to see.

TOM

What did your father say?

DICKIE

What?

TOM

You got a letter from him. Did he mention me in it?

DICKIE

Why would he?

TOM

Because he told me in a letter that I'm - 'dismissed' - I guess the word is, though he didn't use it. The worst part was his tone. It was so - indifferent.

Dickie regards Tom for a long moment, and decides to come clean -

DICKIE

Here's what happened. You wrote to him - according to him - that you were close to convincing me to come home. I wrote to him that nothing could be further from my mind. So I guess he felt you were lying to him - and from there I guess felt like you were taking advantage of him.

Tom nods to himself.

DICKIE

In any case -

TOM

It's okay. I understand. The thing with him and the thing with Marge. I get it.

They regard each other.

DICKIE
You're taking this better than I
thought you would.

TOM
Why wouldn't I?

DICKIE
I don't know.

TOM
Maybe because all I've done
is offer you my friendship and
respect and asked nothing in
return?

There's a silence but for lap of water against the side
of the boat - an eerie, but not unpleasant sound to Tom -
and the caw of a distant seabird.

DICKIE
Tom.

TOM
What.

DICKIE
That's the issue?

TOM
What else would it be?

DICKIE
Do you want me to say it?

A long look between them before Tom shakes his head no.
He doesn't want Dickie to say it.

TOM
No. You're right. I'll leave.
It's time.

Dickie is relieved. It wasn't great, but it could've
gone much worse.

TOM
It's okay.

Tom looks away, off at San Remo, which, from here is
just a blur of chalky white and pink rectangles that are
houses and moving dots that must be people.

From this far out, he could strangle Dickie - or kiss him - and no one would see.

DICKIE

Okay. Let's head back.

Dickie turns his back to Tom to fiddle with the choke and pull at the outboard motor's starter cord -

Tom picks up the oar, stands with it and brings it down on the back of Dickie's head. It happens so fast Dickie isn't sure what happened -

DICKIE

Hey -

He stares uncomprehendingly at Tom who raises the oar again -

DICKIE

What are you -

The last word is clipped by the crack of the wooden oar striking Dickie's head again, the force slamming him against the gunwale.

DICKIE

Tom, for God's (sake) -

Tom imagined the first blow would knock Dickie out the way a punch knocks out an actor in a western movie saloon scene, but not even two whacks have done it.

He just watches as Dickie tries to regain his bearings like a drunk toppled off a barstool, his hand coming up to touch the side of his head and coming away with some of the blood seeping from the gash in it -

As Tom brings the oar down a third time -

We watch it - and more blows - from a great distance away. Then the long stillness that follows them. The small standing figure of Tom finally sits down.

Back on the boat, Dickie's body goes limp as his hands curl in on themselves like clams.

Tom sets the bloody oar down.

For the last several moments nothing existed for him beyond the gunwale. His life, and Dickie's, were confined to this one small space.

Now he looks beyond it - at the sea for any nearby boats - and to the distant shore where nothing seems to be happening out of the ordinary.

He looks down at Dickie -

At the blood draining from the head wounds, pooling on the planks of the bottom of the boat -

At the sprays of blood - castoff, police inspectors call it, if he's not mistaken - the comet tail patterns on the boat's sides, its benches, on Dickie's jacket on the side bench, and the casing of the silent outboard motor.

He glances back down at Dickie's right hand. At the ring he has so long coveted.

He lifts the hand and places it in his lap to slip the ring off, but it jams up against a scuffed knuckle.

As he tugs harder at it to no avail, Dickie's dead eyes "watch."

Can Tom cut the finger off? Is there anything in the boat sharp enough to use to cut it off, and if so, could he do it without passing out?

He has another idea.

He crawls over the body to the outboard motor. Feels around its parts for any oil or grease. His fingers come away with a little.

He crawls back to the bench and rubs his oil-slicked fingertips onto Dickie's knuckle, but it isn't enough to slide the ring over it.

He regards the pool of blood that haloes Dickie's head. That might work.

He dips Dickie's hand in the puddle and rolls it around, covering it with blood, sets it in his lap again and tugs at the ring. It slides off.

Tom reaches over the gunwale and very carefully rinses the blood off the ring in the sea water. Puts it in a pants pocket.

He unstraps Dickie's fine Rolex watch and is about to lean over the side of the boat again to rinse it in the water, but then thinks better of it and pockets it with the blood still on it.

He checks Dickie's is trouser pockets. Turns the first one inside out, and from it fall some lire coins, pinging onto the planks.

He inverts the other front pocket. The orange receipt and a keychain holding three keys fall out. He puts the keys in his own trouser pocket, flicks the receipt away, and leaves the coins where they fell.

He checks Dickie's castoff-bloodied jacket that's lying on the side bench. In one breast pocket Tom finds his alligator wallet.

From the other breast pocket he fishes out a half-empty pack of Nazionali cigarettes and Dickie's wonderful gold Dunhill lighter.

From a side jacket pocket he removes the Santa Maria Novella perfume Dickie bought for Marge. The bottle is unbroken, but the tissue paper is smudged with blood.

His first impulse is to toss it into the sea - as he would Marge herself if she were here - but instead peels off the tissue paper, crumples it, tosses it overboard, and stuffs the perfume into his own jacket pocket.

He sits there playing out in his mind possible next steps. Glances down at Dickie again, then to the silent outboard motor, then over his shoulder to -

The cement anchor and the thick rope that's attached to a metal ring at the prow instead of to the boat's broken cleat.

He looks at the sea. No other boat is particularly close, but some are in view. He should get further out before dumping the body overboard.

He clambers to the rear of the boat, stands over the outboard motor. The boatman on the dock, who didn't look like a particularly strong man, got it going without too much trouble, giving Tom hope.

He takes hold of the starter cord and pulls at it, but it's wound so tight it only comes halfway out.

He puts more effort into it, yanking the cord three times in quick succession, but nothing happens.

He remembers the choke the boatman mentioned to Dickie and messed with. But what is it? Where is it? And how does it work if he can find it?

Maybe it's this metal pin on the side of the housing. He pulls it halfway out and gives the cord another yank. Nothing. He pulls the choke all the way out and yanks the cord two more times, and it starts.

He takes hold of the tiller arm and gives its throttle a slight twist, and -

Under the boat, the propeller begins to spin, churning up the water.

He gives it more of a twist and guides the boat further out to sea, further from view of other boats.

His boat, too, from a distance, is just a mere speck against the horizon.

Back on the boat, he twists the throttle the other way and the boat slows to a stop, the motor idling.

He leaves it to crawl the length of the boat, over the body, to examine the knot that secures the anchor rope to the metal ring on the prow.

He tries to unknot it with his fingers, which he soon realizes is impossible. It was probably knotted years ago and has only tightened from the elements and countless cinchings by tourists throwing the anchor overboard.

If anything, his own struggling with it is only making it tighter still.

He'll have to cut it from the ring. But again, with what? The only thing on the boat that's sharp is the propeller and how on earth would he use that?

Dickie's lighter. Tom will burn the rope off. He retrieves it from his trouser pocket and flicks at its flint wheel.

It takes a few tries, but the wick finally lights, and Tom brings the little flame to the rope next to the knot. But the ocean breezes blow it out.

He flicks the flint wheel again, and this time cups the flame with his hands as he brings it against the rope.

But the rope is an inch and a half thick, which is bad enough. What's worse is that it's wet, probably to its core.

All he's accomplishing, he can see, is warming its outer layer. But perhaps that's something. At some point, that part will be dry and maybe then will catch fire.

If it works, it will take a while, but the whole effort will be for nothing if Dickie didn't recently fill the lighter with fluid.

Tom keeps the cupped flame against the rope. It refuses to catch fire, but he thinks he sees a wisp of smoke rise from it.

Then the lighter goes out.

He flicks at the flint wheel. Several times. Shakes the lighter. Tries again. Nothing.

He pockets it and digs at the couple of singed strands by the knot with his fingernails, but they refuse to part from the rest of the rope.

He gives up. Sits. Looks out to sea. Then to the outboard motor. And the hose running from it to a rusty gasoline can the size of large lunchbox under the tiller bench. And an identical auxiliary can next to it.

He crawls to the stern and drags the second can out to get at its cap, and, after some effort, manages to unscrew it.

He takes the lighter apart to get to the receptacle gauze, which, as he suspected, is dry.

He tips the can until the gasoline is nearly cresting the cap and carefully submerges the gauze in it, holding onto it with his fingertips.

He recaps the can, puts the now-gas-soaked gauze back in its receptacle, reassembles the lighter and returns with it to the prow.

He confidently flicks at the flint wheel and sets the flame back against the rope by the knot. Now he just has to wait for it to burn through.

But it doesn't.

The outer strands turn black but don't separate. The lighter exhausts the fuel he put in it and the knot is still there.

He stares at it. Then back at Dickie. Or rather, at his Ferragamo shoes. He clambers to them, pulls them from the feet, and from the feet, the socks.

He takes the socks to the tiller bench by the still-idling outboard. Uncaps the auxiliary gas can again and pours some on the socks.

He takes the lighter apart again, resoaks the gauze in the gas can, caps it, reassembles the lighter and returns to the prow with it and the Molotov cocktail socks he has made.

He wraps the socks around the rope next to the knot. Flicks the lighter to life and touches the flame to the socks, which ignite satisfactorily.

He sits. He's proud of himself for having thought of this solution to the problem, and watches the flaming socks burn at the knot with the satisfaction of someone who has built a nice hearth fire.

He even warms his hands over the flames.

Gradually, both of the gas-soaked socks burn out and fall away, and Tom examines the rope.

Progress has been made, but not much, and now the 'kindling' - Dickie's socks - is gone.

Desperate times call for desperate measures -

He returns to the stern, picks up the auxiliary gas can, takes it to the bow and pours gasoline directly onto the knot and rope and as much of the boat that gets in the way.

This will either work, or the boat will blow up ...

He sets the gas can aside. Crouches. Reaches to the gasoline-drenched rope with an outstretched hand with the lighter in it, and flicks it -

Before the flame even touches the rope there's a whoosh as the fumes bridging the gap ignite -

Tom jumps back lest he catch fire. But he does not.

Happy with his cleverness, he takes Dickie's Nazionali cigarettes from his own pocket, lights one and sits back smoking it as he watches the flames eat at the rope.

He's an expert at this now. Too bad he'll likely never have the need to display this particular form of professional knowhow again.

From far away, the boat is small against the vast ocean, and the figure in it smoking the cigarette even smaller.

Back on the boat, the flames gradually dwindle and die and Tom regards the result:

Enough rope strands have burned and parted for him to yank the rest free with his fingers.

Tom takes a last drag off the cigarette and flicks it into the ocean like you do after a job well done, then takes the now-free end of the rope and its coil to the stern of the boat.

He kneels and loops the rope a few times around Dickie's bare ankles.

Knowing nothing about knots - let alone nautical ones - he ties it like shoe laces, which isn't easy without having two free ends to work with.

He tugs at the knot and it seems to hold.

He moves to the other end of the rope, to the cement anchor it's knotted to through another rusty metal ring embedded in it.

It's heavy. Heavier than he thought it would be. It takes all the strength he's got left to drag it to the middle of the boat, lift it and drop it overboard -

As it sinks, the rope it's attached to uncoils fast - then snaps taut with great force at its other tethered end - Dickie's ankles -

The rope over the gunwale screeches as it runs along it toward the rear of the boat -

Catching Tom across the knees -

He stumbles back, grasping at the outboard motor's tiller which roars to life, propelling the boat suddenly forward and pitching Tom off the back of the boat -

He's in the water.

Then he's under the water.

Sinking.

Above, with its tiller pushed to the side, the boat begins a wide sweeping arc -

There's no sign of Tom who, as we know, doesn't know to swim -

The boat continues its circle, returning to the spot Tom fell in -

At that inopportune moment, Tom's head breaches, his mouth gasping for air, just in time for him to glimpse that the circling boat is upon him -

The prow strikes him in the head with a hollow thud. As he goes under, the propeller churns past, just missing its chance by an inch to chop off his ear.

Dazed and submerged, he half-expects to wake up - that this is another of his drowning nightmares - and almost lets himself sink to find out -

But to the muffled sound of the motor circling back on him, his flailing arms then claw at the water, trying to pull himself to the surface -

By the time he reaches it, gasping at air, the boat is coming directly at him again -

He sucks in a big breath and goes under intentionally, where he watches the hull and the propeller and the taut rope pass above him -

What he doesn't see is what's at the end of the rope - the cement anchor - that slams against his head.

He sinks further.

The collision with the anchor has almost knocked him out. He regains enough of his senses to grab at the water like climbing the rungs of a ladder and reaches the surface.

The boat is again coming at him, but this time he has thought of something that might save him.

He prepares by sucking in as much air as he can, and, as the boat is about to strike him again, he goes under -

As soon as the propeller passes over him, he looks for the submerged rope, sees it and grasps hold of it midway between the boat and the anchor -

All he has to do now - if he can before he runs out of air - is to shinny the rope -

Hand over hand - underwater - he 'climbs' it. As he nears its end and the surface, he's presented by another problem he failed to anticipate:

How to grab hold of the aft end of the boat without getting chewed to pieces by the propeller.

He carefully pulls himself forward on the rope through the churn of water created by the propeller, inches from his legs.

He grabs hold of the gunwale with one hand, lets his other hand go from the rope and slaps it down next to the first.

He hooks an elbow over the gunwale, and with his other hand gropes for the throttle on the outboard's tiller -

Unfortunately, with the motor angled as it is, it's on the other side of the boat out of reach.

He feels for other parts of the motor - for switches or levers or anything else not covered by the housing - but can find none that do anything.

The external gas tank that feeds the motor. That fuel line that connects them. Can he somehow find that as he hangs onto the side outside the boat?

His hand gropes around and finally locates it. As he yanks it free, gasoline spews from it into the boat, but cut off from its supply of fuel, the outboard coughs and dies.

Under the water, the propeller stills.

The boat slows. Glides to a stop. Bobs in the water.

It has been so long, Tom has forgotten what a motorless world sounds like. It's good. Quiet. Just the slap of water against hull he's clinging to, the calls of some distant seagulls, and his own breathing.

He tries to pull himself up into the boat, but has exerted so much energy reaching it, he has none left.

He rests, with the crook of his arm locking him to the gunwale.

Eventually, he tries again. Swings a leg out of the water to the rim of the boat and hooks the foot over it, then awkwardly hauls himself in, collapsing face up next to the body.

He stares up at the sky. From above, they look like two dead bodies lying in Dickie's pools of blood, their clothes stained with it.

Tom would like to stay like this for hours, but forces his numb limbs to work together in such a fashion as to get himself seated on the center bench.

But as he stares down at Dickie, he suddenly has an alarming thought.

What if all his thrashing in the water dislodged the ring from its nesting place in his trouser pocket? What if it's now at the bottom of the ocean?

He's relieved to discover it isn't. It's still in his pocket. He takes it out and turns it over in his hands, then returns it and checks his other pockets for -

Dickie's wallet, watch and cigarettes, all soaking wet. He puts the Rolex to his ear. Shakes it and puts it back to his ear. He can hear no ticking, but keeps it anyway, pocketing it. As for the wet cigarettes, he tosses them over the side.

So - where was he before he almost drowned in the Ligurian Sea? He can barely remember what led to it. He was - yes - in the process of trying to dispose of the body, throwing the anchor overboard.

He regards the rope that's still tied around Dickie's ankles. The clumsy knot he made held during the calamity of the runaway boat, so that's good.

Perhaps it will hold Dickie to the bottom of the ocean forever, or at least long enough for the fish to eat him.

First he needs to get him there.

The pull of the submerged anchor on Dickie's ankles has lodged them under the bench. To dislodge and move them along with the rest of Dickie, Tom has to stand, which rocks the boat.

He manages to drape the crooks of Dickie's knees over the edge, leaving the rest of him - the upper legs and torso and arms and head - by far the heavier parts - lying on the floor of the boat.

Tom tries to pull him up by an arm, but all that does is minimally raise one shoulder while, with both of their weight on one side, threatens to capsize the boat.

Tom lets go of the arm. It flops onto a plank like a dead fish.

He steadies the boat by returning to its center and kneels there to try to gather Dickie up from under the shoulders.

He lifts him and tries to walk him to the gunwale, but that, too, jeopardizes the integrity of the little boat's balance.

He lets go of Dickie, whose head drops back down onto the planks with an awful thud, and sits to restudy the problem.

Though his approach made sense - to him at least - it clearly isn't working. Perhaps this is one of those things that requires counterintuitive thinking.

He lifts the legs off the gunwale and drags them in an arc to rotate Dickie's body so that his head is closest to the side of the boat, then pushes at them like handles of a wheelbarrow you're dumping, hoping they will have enough weight once over the head to carry the rest of Dickie overboard -

But they don't, and boat is rocking even more perilously than it did the other way.

He drops the legs and sits again.

Who would have thought that killing someone would be so much easier than dropping them into the ocean?

The error in Tom's thinking finally dawns on him. In both instances, he was trying to get Dickie over the side of the boat, its most unstable part.

That's why you sit in the middle of little boats, why Dickie told Tom to sit there when they getting in it at the jetty.

Tom needs to utilize the front or back of the boat - the stern or bow or whatever you call them - not the sides.

He grips the rope-tied ankles again, pivoting Dickie's body in the center of the boat. It's tough with the pull of the anchor on them, but at least the effort isn't rocking the boat too much.

He sits Dickie up and folds him, as it were, by the waist, then gets behind him and gathers him up again under the arms.

But this time, he drags him in the seated position down the centerline beam toward the stablest part of the boat, the stern.

Yes, the outboard is in the way, but still, this is how it's done, Tom is now certain.

He sits Dickie on the aft bench and deals with the anchor line, pulling the rope along the side of the boat to the rear of it, which makes a creaking, almost screeching sound.

Under the water, the tethered cement anchor sways back and forth as it moves toward and then settles thirty odd feet beneath the outboard motor.

Onboard, Tom releases his grip on the rope. Now, the weight at the other end of it will help him rather than add to destabilization as it did before.

He positions Dickie so that he's sitting rear-facing. Gets behind him and again lifts from under his arms, and gives him a mighty heave -

The body doesn't topple into the sea as Tom hoped it would, but at least half of it makes it over, the rim of the end of the boat cutting across Dickie's waist as his head dangles just above the water.

And that's the heaviest part of the body, the top half, which Tom can feel as he takes hold of the roped ankles and lifts them, aided now by the weight of the submerged anchor.

He gives the legs a push and they - and the rest of Dickie - topple overboard with a satisfying kerplunk splash.

Tom leans over the motor to peer at the body sinking through the upper stratum of almost transparent water, down deeper into darker water, and finally disappearing.

Tom sits to rest on the stern bench. Surveys his surroundings again and this time sees a sailboat, far away but seemingly heading in his direction.

He regards all the blood in the boat, some of it mixing with sea water and turning pink, some of it on dry planks staining them deep red.

He looks back out at the sailboat, which is closer and still headed his way, looming larger - but then the wind shifts changing the boat's course - and in a few moments it's sailing away from him.

He relaxes. Regards the oar lying on the side bench - the murder weapon - and the clump of bloody hair clinging to its edge. He picks it up and almost tosses it overboard -

But realizes just in time he's bobbing in the middle of the ocean in a tiny boat with a motor he may not be able to restart, and so keeps the oar, setting it back down.

He yanks at the starter cord, but the outboard only gives a feeble cough. He plays with the choke and tries again. Nothing.

He stares at the bulbous motor. It started before; why isn't it starting now? He inspects it as if he knew what he was inspecting it for.

Finally, he remembers: to kill the motor when he was being dragged in the water by the boat, clinging to the rope, he grabbed and pulled a hose.

He sees it lying on the bottom of the boat - the fuel line that used to connect the motor to the rusty can from which gasoline drips.

He inspects the slender rubber hose. It's intact except for where it's meant to connect to the gas can. That end has been torn from its metal coupling. Torn by him.

Maybe that doesn't matter. Maybe he can simply stick the hose into the gas can and a pump or whatever on the motor will do the rest.

He tries it. And yanks at the starter cord.

Nothing.

He pulls the hose out and stares at it. Tries to reattach the coupling to it, but without any tools is not terribly successful.

He thinks. Looks at the motor again and sees that it has a gas cap as well on top, access to its own fuel tank or carburetor at least.

Tom twists the cap atop the outboard, which takes more effort than such a simple thing should, and gets it off.

He tries to peer down into the hole, but can't see anything.

He pats at the housing like it's a melon he's testing for ripeness at a grocery store.

He tries jostling the motor to try to hear if any liquid sloshes around inside, but can't tell.

He decides to assume it's empty, or non-existent, that the other cans are there for precisely this reason.

He picks it up the auxiliary can and jostles it. It seems to be about half full.

He carefully attempts to pour some of its gasoline into the outboard's carburetor, but it's an awkward operation that spills more gas on its housing than into the hole, but at least some goes in.

Mindful this may not be the solution to the motor problem, he preserves some of the gas in the rusty can and returns it back to its place under the bench.

He caps the motor's tank and girds himself for another session of cord pulling.

He stands. Takes hold of the cord and pulls it. Nothing. He yanks harder. Nothing. He plays with the choke. Pulls repeatedly at the cord with all he's got left, and the motor finally coughs to life -

Unfortunately, the throttle is where it was when Tom ripped the fuel line from the motor - full on - and the boat bucks forward, slamming Tom back against the outboard and almost into the ocean again -

He's folded over the stern like Dickie was just before Tom pushed him all the way in, with his head just above the waterline and the roaring propeller -

He struggles to pull himself back into the speeding boat and grabs the tiller arm, twisting at its end to throttle the motor down.

The boat slows as the motor returns to an idle.

Tom sits there, his hand still gripping the throttle to prevent it from doing that again, and considers what to do next, now that he finally has the opportunity to make a decision of any kind.

Where to go? He can't return the boat to the boatman with all this blood in it - which he regards now - that's for sure.

He has to get rid of the boat altogether.

But how? Where?

He surveys the distant coastline. While these rocky cliffs plunging into sea aren't as steep as Atrani's, they still leave little room for beaches except for San Remo itself, which Tom realizes now must be manmade, or at least manicured.

But he can't go there. He has to find a place along the more brutal coast to the south, somewhere more remote where there are no tourists, no locals, no one.

Handling the throttle respectfully, he gives it a little twist.

As the boat moves forward at a careful, manageable speed, Tom eases the tiller to one side, shifting the propeller beneath him to begin an arc he stays with until he's parallel to the shore, then eases the tiller back to its center position and motors away from San Remo.

As Tom's boat glides closer to the shoreline, he scans it for a deserted place he can land the boat, if that's what you call it.

But it all looks too treacherous - cliffs diving into the sea, under which God knows what rocky volcanic perils lie hidden.

Finally, he thinks he sees a cove that's remote enough and safe enough to navigate an approach: a gritty sand beach nestled between cliffs dotted with olive and pine and cypress trees misshapen and scarred by the marine elements.

Tom makes for the so-called beach in a line; no sense in trying to be clever; just get there.

But he hears a metallic grind, the propeller striking what must be a hiding reef, then hollow thuds as the keel drags against it.

Despite the grating noises - or because of them - Tom throttles full up, and the boat bucks closer to the spit of beach -

As it reaches it, the scraping sounds and that of the laboring motor reach a crescendo just before the little boat comes to a complete stop in about a foot of water.

He flips a lever to 'ferma' that cuts the motor, jumps from the boat like he's being chased and collapses on the beach, on its gravel.

He lies there for several moments, slowing his breathing, then sits up and stares at the beached whale he went to war with and was almost killed by.

From here, it just looks like what it is: a little boat with an outboard motor, rented to tourists to bring pleasure.

He looks to see if anyone could have seen him before, or can see him now.

Probably not. This beach is only about thirty feet wide, surrounded on three sides by the cliffs, which, looking at them now, he wonders if he will be able to scale.

He can worry about that later. One thing at a time. The whole point of this harrowing journey from the spot he dumped Dickie to here was to get rid of the boat, to - what is the word? Scuttle? Yes.

He empties his pockets. The ring, thank God, is still there, and Dickie's wallet, watch and lighter.

And Marge's perfume bottle, still unbroken.

He piles it all up on the gritty sand, climbs to his knees and walks down to the boat. Reaches in to pick up Dickie's jacket and sandals, and notices Dickie's Persol sunglasses on the planks.

Miraculously, they're unbroken. He takes them and the jacket and sandals back to the beach and drops them next to the other things.

He plucks the lighter from the sand and returns to the boat. Takes hold of the dock line and pulls at it to try to reverse the position of the beached boat 180-degrees.

The propeller embedded in the sand offers resistance, like a recalcitrant horse, but he eventually manages to pivot the hull, angling the bow so it's pointed out to sea.

He comes around to the stern, and pushes at the outboard like a motorist whose car is stuck in mud.

It's hard work - everything is harder than he thought it would be - but he eventually feels the propeller and hull clearing the grit beneath them.

The boat is floating. Good.

He leans over the gunwale to reach the rusty auxiliary gas can, and is pleased as he jostles it to hear some remaining liquid sloshing around in it.

He moves with the can along the side of the boat, waving it back and forth to splash the interior planks with gas, then pulls the hose from the other gas can and does the same, saving the last of it to soak the bloody oar.

He tosses them back in. Takes the lighter from his pocket and flicks at the flint wheel. Nothing. He tries again. Nothing.

He starts to disassemble the lighter, but then thinks better of it. If it fumbles from hands and falls in the water by the boat, he could be here forever waiting for it to dry out.

He pockets it. Drags the outboard backwards until he feels the propeller bury in some grit. With the boat now safely 'parked' and not going anywhere, he grabs one of the gas cans from it and walks back onto the beach.

He sits and takes the lighter apart. Removes the gauze from its chamber. Coaxes what little gasoline remains in the can onto it. Ekes out the last drops onto the wick and puts the parts of the lighter back together.

He returns to the boat. Tosses the gas can in. Shoulders the outboard to free it again from the sand.

Now, finally, he's ready. He flicks at the lighter's wheel. The flint sparks. The wick catches fire.

He has the urge to toss the flaming lighter into the boat for dramatic effect, but doesn't want to give it up. He wants to keep it. Not as a reminder of what happened to Dickie on this endless day, but as a memento of Dickie himself.

Tom leans into the boat and touches the flame to the murder weapon, the gasoline-soaked oar. It ignites. The flames travel along its length and jump to the bench it lies on, then to the sides of the boat.

It's not a raging inferno, but the boat is on fire, and Tom gives the stern a hard push to send it out to sea.

Without his own weight in it, the boat glides easily away from him. He stands there in the ankle-high water watching it burn with the pride of a job well done.

But as he watches, the height of the flames diminish, and before long, they're out. For all his efforts, the bobbing boat appears hardly any worse for wear.

Tom stares at his failure, ruing that he pushed the boat so far out, since now he has to go out there and retrieve it.

As he sloshes toward it, the water rises from his ankles to his knees, to his waist - and he's only halfway there. He keeps going until it reaches his neck. He stops.

The boat slowly pivots in the current to offer its prow - its dock line - to Tom. Since it remains just out of his reach, it's more like mocking him.

He wades on the tips of his sockless loafers toward it, feeling his feet lift from the irregular reef below, and makes a daring lunge for the prow ring, grabbing hold of it.

He fights to back-paddle to reach the reef shelf he just sacrificed, which isn't easy with the weight of the boat.

His feet find a slightly higher outcropping of coral and rocks, allowing him stand with most of his head once again above the surface.

Holding onto the prow ring, walking backwards, he pulls the hundreds of pounds of boat-and-motor burden, making intermittent progress until the waterline dips below his chest, then steady progress the rest of the way.

He reaches the beach and muscles the front of the boat onto it.

He takes a look inside it. There are a few charred spots, but basically the fire just burned the gasoline that fueled it. Even the oar, though partly blackened, is still in one piece.

He sits, gathers up his knees in his arms and stares at his adversary, which, positioned as it is with its prow - its face - facing him - seems to him like a living thing.

He looks from it to his surroundings, which he can almost take in with a single glance. Nothing but rocks basically.

Rocks.

Rocks are what he needs to scuttle the apparently incombustible boat.

He crosses the beach to the base of the wraparound cliff and tries to pick up one of the larger rocks there. Too heavy.

He tries a somewhat smaller one, about the size of a human head. It's heavy, too, but perhaps he can manage it if he really tries.

He struggles with it down to the boat and hoists it in. Returns to cliff for another. Carries it back and drops it in. And another. Another.

Killing someone and getting rid of the evidence of the crime can be - is, in this case - a long arduous process, and since Tom has to go through it, so do we.

He drops rock after rock after rock into the boat - covering the bottom of it two-high before he even thinks about testing it - and continuing until they are four layers deep, reaching to just below the gunwale.

He stops. Grabs the dock line to pivot the now-laden boat like a burdened pack mule by a rein.

The hull grinds against the grit. The weight of the rocks have sunk it deeper into it. But that's a good thing. More work for Tom, but still, it's good.

Once the boat is facing the sea, Tom shoulders the outboard motor again. He can hear its propeller blade scraping the reef, and then the wonderful silence when it's free of it.

With the boat gliding now, deeper in the water than before, all he has to do is attend it, like pushing a stroller.

The waterline climbs up his body again as he goes. When it reaches his neck, he stops, pulling back on the stern to halt its progress.

Though there's only five or so feet of water beneath it here, he can't risk going any further out. That's all he needs after all this - to drown alone in the waters of an unnamed cove on the western coast of Italy.

He rocks the boat from side to side and is pleased when some sea water spills over the now-lowered gunwale into the boat.

He puts more of his own weight to the task and is rewarded by some more water sloshing over the side.

He keeps at it, finding a tempo like the rhythmic pumping of your legs on a swing.

More water sloshes in, and with its added weight makes it easier to slosh even more in, covering the layers of rocks in the boat. Then it reaches the underside of the gunwale. Then its top. Then crests it.

Tom steps back to better appreciate the sight of the sinking boat, watches until it is out of sight, and hears the hollow echo of the keel settling on the rocky sea bed.

He makes the long wading-walk back to the shore, and, once there, looks back out to sea - where there's nothing to see - and for the first time all day, all week, all his life, feels a true sense of accomplishment.

No one explained to him how you kill somebody and dispose of the body and evidence - he figured it out. It wasn't elegant, but it's done.

The rocky cliffs forming the cove were perfect for providing the privacy needed to scuttle the boat unseen, but now, Tom realizes, he has to climb them.

They're steep and jagged and offer no easy way up. And burdened with the bundle of Dickie's things wrapped up in his bloodied jacket, the climb is even harder.

Tom eventually reaches a kind of ledge near the top of the cliffs and looks back down at the cove.

He doesn't like what he thinks he sees:

The vague outline of the boat resting beneath the water.

But would anyone else be able to make it out if they weren't looking for it? Will anyone be looking for it?

And if they were, would they look here? How would they even get to this vantage point unless they did exactly what he did, which they won't.

Tom convinces himself it's not a problem and continues to climb.

The sun is going down.

28

EXT. SAN REMO - NIGHT

28

While in the boat, Tom had no idea how far he'd motored to reach the cove. The trek back on foot to San Remo provides him with the answer - miles.

As he approaches the same piazza they arrived at, he tries to collect himself, to present the appearance of a tourist merely returning from a little stroll.

Carrying his bundle, he comes past the cafes where smartly-dressed Italians do what Italians do at this time - sit in their street-facing chairs watching other smartly-dressed Italians stroll by.

They even have a word for it that he learned from Fausto in Atrani -

Passeggiata. That very inexpensive form of entertainment that benefits both the 'performer' and 'audience.' The cafe patron gets to look at the outfits and figures of the people walking by, who get the pleasure of being looked at.

Of course, Tom doesn't want to be looked at, not now, and doesn't look at the 'audience,' though he knows they are looking at him.

Can they see the dark stains on his trousers and jacket and on the one he carries in arms? Probably not in this light.

He keeps on, trying to make his exhausted gait appear to be a casually languid one, but then slows even more when he sees -

A couple of cops ahead - polizia, or carabinieri or gendarmerie or whatever they call themselves - standing near a police car.

They're clearly not looking for him - or anyone - just smoking and chatting to each other as they endeavor to run out the hours of their shift.

As Tom approaches, he lifts his head at them with the kind of pleasant tourist smile you never bother with when passing cops in New York.

TOM

Ciao.

Nothing from them, not even a nod in response, but their eyes track Tom as he comes past them before returning to each other and their job of running out the clock.

29 INT. HOTEL - SAN REMO - NIGHT

29

Tom is well aware of his disheveled appearance as he enters the hotel lobby. If this were the States he could simply cross unnoticed to the stairs and from there go to his room.

But since this is Europe, which along with its long history of culture and strife, also, apparently, has one of stolen keys, he has to visit the desk clerk.

SAN REMO CLERK

Buonasera.

TOM

Buonasera. La trecentosei per favore.

The man takes the room key attached to the giant tassel, but doesn't immediately hand it to Tom, even though Tom's hand is outstretched for it.

He seems to be looking at Tom's wet clothes, and perhaps the dark stains on them.

Tom extends his hand a little further, and the man finally places the ridiculous tasseled key in it. Is there blood on his fingernails. Tom doesn't look.

TOM

Grazie.

SAN REMO CLERK

Prego.

As Tom heads away from the front desk and up the stairs he can only pray there isn't a big bloodstain on the back of his jacket. He should have checked.

30 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

30

Tom comes in. Closes the door behind him. Locks it. Peels off his jacket and drops it and Dickie's bundle of stuff on the terrazzo floor.

He collapses on the made bed. He needs to rest, but doesn't want to fall asleep, since there are things he has to do. He'll just lie here for a few minutes.

No, he can't risk it. He gets up. Goes over to the basin, fills it, wets his face and runs his hands through his hair, which feels stiff.

He dips his hands back in the water and it turns pink.

He cups some of it to splash on his hair, to rinse the blood from it, then dunks his head in it.

He reaches for a hand towel - one of those stiff-as-cardboard towels in every hotel in Italy, he will learn - but thinks better of it. He shouldn't get even watered-down blood on it.

He squeezes his hair instead, twisting it like a rag. Drains the basin. Refills it with clean water. Goes to his suitcase, takes from it his small ugly toiletry bag, and from it, his toothbrush.

He strips off his trousers, takes them and his jacket to the basin, and works at trying to get rid of the streaks of dried blood on them, dipping only those portions in the water and scrubbing at the stains with the toothbrush.

He rakes the bristles across a bar of soap, which leaves a streak of red on it. As he scrubs again at the clothes there's a knock on the door -

Tom freezes. Should he ignore whoever it is, or answer? Should he put on a robe? Did he bring a robe? Maybe if he does nothing, they'll go away.

He waits. Then, satisfied they're gone, turns back to his work, dragging the toothbrush bristles at the stains again.

A key turns in the lock and the door opens, revealing a maid, and for a moment they stare at each other like two deer caught in headlights -

The one deer in uniform, holding a pitcher and glass, presumably to place on the bedside table - the other deer naked but for underwear briefs, standing before a basin full of bloody water with a toothbrush clutched in its hoof.

MAID

Mi scusi signore. Torno più tardi.

She takes a step back with her pitcher and glass, closes the door and relocks it from the outside. Tom listens to her cart rattle on down the hall.

He wrings out his trousers and jacket and drapes them on a radiator to dry. Takes Dickie's jacket to the basin to work on removing its bloodstains. But as he unfolds it, he sees it's impossible -

More of it is stained than not. A professional dry cleaner wouldn't be able to get rid of all this blood.

He turns the jacket inside out. Rolls it up like a little sleeping bag with the sandals in it and puts the bundle in Dickie's suitcase.

He places Dickie's wallet, watch, lighter, Dopp kit, house keys, and Marge's bottle of perfume in his own suitcase.

He goes to the room safe in the armoire, opens it with the second key on the tassel, removes Dickie's Travelers Cheques and cash, and his own cash, and puts it all in his suitcase.

He rinses his toothbrush, wipes up around the basin, tosses the cardboard hand towel in his suitcase, then goes to the window, which like all the windows in all the rooms of the hotel, faces the sea.

He looks out to the concrete jetty. The boatman is still there, but no one else is. He's looking out at the ocean, looking for some sign of his one unreturned boat, no doubt.

Tom has to get out of here. Tonight. Now.

He checks to see how his jacket and trousers are doing on the radiator. They're not dry, but he can't wait any more. He puts the pants in his suitcase, takes out a dry pair, and sits on the edge of the bed to put them on.

He notices a small smudge of blood on the turned-down sheet, but doesn't have the time to try to do anything about it. He just has to hope the maid will think a guest had a bloody nose.

31 INT. HOTEL - SAN REMO - NIGHT

31

Dressed in his reasonably cleaned but still damp pants and jacket, Tom comes down the stairs to the lobby with the two suitcases, approaches the same desk clerk and sets the heavy tasseled key on the counter.

TOM

*Il conto, per favore. E i
passaporti.*

The clerk regards Tom curiously - or is it suspiciously - and switches to heavily-accented English.

SAN REMO CLERK

You wish to check out now?

TOM

Yes.

SAN REMO CLERK

You will be charged for the
night, sir.

TOM

That's okay. Va bene.

The clerk cocks his head like a dog who just doesn't understand its master's command, but obediently prepares the bill - with tonight's charge added to it.

He presents it to Tom, who regards the total the man is pointing to, takes out his wallet and lays out the cash like a wager in a poker game.

The clerk places the key in the Room 306 pigeon hole and removes the two passports from it.

SAN REMO CLERK

Your friend is with you?

TOM

Waiting for me at the train
station.

The man doesn't seem entirely convinced. Regards the two suitcases - but eventually sets both passports on the counter. Tom gathers them up, pockets them, picks up the suitcases and turns to leave. As he reaches the door -

SAN REMO CLERK

Signore.

Tom stops, glances back with concern.

SAN REMO CLERK

Faccia buon viaggio.

Somehow it sounds like a warning.

TOM

Grazie.

The clerk watches him go.

32 EXT. SAN REMO - HOTEL - NIGHT

32

Tom comes out of the hotel and heads off to where he knows there will be a taxi - the same place he and Dickie were dropped off when they arrived.

It's not as if he stole the Hope Diamond. Still, a missing boat will be reported. How soon, he couldn't know. He needs to get out of town.

Then he sees the boatman. He's talking to those two policemen by their police car.

They're between where he is and where he wants to go - the taxis.

There's only one way to get there. He has to walk past the cops and the boatman.

He does exactly that and climbs into a taxi with his luggage.

TOM

Alla stazione.

TAXI DRIVER

Va bene.

The taxi pulls away. Tom glances out the back window at the policemen and boatman receding.

33 INT. TAXI - MOVING - NIGHT

33

Sitting in the back seat, Tom begins to relax.

Thankfully, the driver isn't a talker. Tom doesn't feel like talking.

The flare of headlights of passing cars draws his attention forward and he sees the eyes of the driver in the rearview mirror looking back at him.

Tom glances away.

34 EXT. SAN REMO TRAIN STATION - NIGHT 34

The taxi pulls up to San Remo's small provincial train station. Tom pays the driver the amount on the meter and gets out.

35 INT. SAN REMO TRAIN STATION - NIGHT 35

He comes in with the suitcases to find the place as sleepy inside as it is out. Just two ticket counters, only one of them manned, no line.

A handful of people wait on benches with their luggage. A couple of them nap.

Tom regards the departure board. The list of destinations is not extensive at this hour, and there's only one he's interested in, the one at 21:30.

Tom takes a moment to calculate the 24-hour designation into am/pm. 9:30 he thinks it is. The clock above the board reads 9:10.

He carries the suitcases to the ticket counter.

TOM
Per Napoli. Il prossimo.

TICKET CLERK
Classe?

TOM
Prima.

Tom takes more cash from his wet wallet.

36

INT. TRAIN - NIGHT

36

He comes down the train's narrow corridor. Finds his assigned compartment. Slides its door open, goes in, shuts it behind him, drops the suitcases, sits.

He wishes the train would leave, but it just sits there.

Suddenly, startling him, a man outside the compartment slaps a wet mop at its windows, washing them.

Finally, someone out there yells '*Tutti a bordo!*' followed by metallic clangs of doors closing.

The train lurches forward, jostling Tom. He glances back to the window to watch the station slowly pass by it.

The train picks up speed. The outlines of buildings sweeping past the window are replaced first by stone walls, then by trees.

He begins to relax.

A loud rap on the compartment door, startling Tom again. Before he can answer it, it slides open revealing a big man in a uniform not unlike those cops in San Remo wore.

CAPOTRENO

Biglietto.

He's not a policeman; he's a conductor. Tom presents his ticket. The man pokes it with a hole-punch and hands it back.

CAPOTRENO

Buona notte.

The conductor closes the door. Tom relaxes. Finally, he can rest.

But suddenly, with the look of someone who forgot to turn off the stove before they left the house, he checks his pants pockets.

He pulls out the ring. Thank God he didn't leave it in the hotel room.

Lights on poles along the tracks flaring past his compartment window, flash across it. It's really the first chance he's had to inspect it closely.

It's beautiful and not just because it belonged to Dickie. It's a stunning piece of jewelry in its own right.

He tries it on. It's a bit loose but that's better than being too tight. You can size a ring down, he knows from having it done many times with stolen jewelry back in New York, easier than you can size one up.

He regards the patterns made by the passing lights on the walls of the compartment. Lets the rocking of the train comfort him as he tries to push this - the longest, most exhausting day of his life - to a recess of his mind.

He should take the ring off, he knows. The last thing he needs is to show up in Atrani having forgotten to do so, and have Marge see it.

But he wants to sleep with it on tonight.

He'll remember to take it off later.

He switches off the lamp.

Closes his eyes.