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THE ROCKFORD FILES

JOEY BLUE EYES

by

Walter Dallenbach

THE ROCKFORD FILES

JOEY BLUE EYES

CAST

JIM ROCKFORD

JOEY BLUE EYES
SWEET TOOTH LONDON
PAULETTE
BETH DAVENPORT
BURT STRIKER
LARRY MITCHELL
ANGEL MARTIN
ED BARROW
GANNON
BILL EVANS
WAITER
FULTON
TOBY (WINO)
FRED
SHEP
JAIL GUARD
BANK GUARD

DINERS
JAKE (DRIVER)
MECHANIC
HOTEL MANAGER
HELEN

SETS

INTERIORS:

JOEY'S APARTMENT/KITCHEN
"SLAMMER" RESTAURANT
STRIKER'S HOUSE/DEN
MOTEL ROOM
HOSPITAL ROOM
ROCKFORD'S CAR
STRIKER'S OFFICE
(X) BEER BAR
ROCKFORD'S TRAILER
HOLDING CELL
BEER BAR
GANNON'S CAR
MITCHELL'S LIVING ROOM
BARROW'S LIVING ROOM

EXTERIORS:

HIGH-RISE APARTMENT
"SLAMMER" RESTAURANT
AND FRONT
STREETS
MOTEL
MODERN OFFICE BUILDING
AL'S BODY SHOP
GOLF COURSE/REFRESHMENT STAND
ROOFTOP (X)
ALLEY
LITTER BOX
AMUSEMENT PARK
SIDEWALK COUNTER
FERRIS WHEEL
COUNTRY CLUB
PARKING AREA
BEER BAR
PHONE BOOTH
TACO STAND

THE ROCKFORD FILES

JOEY BLUE EYES

ACT ONE

FADE IN

1 EXT. HIGH-RISE APARTMENT - NIGHT 1

A black Cadillac pulls up. Two men, Sweet Tooth and Shep, brush past a lady and poodle and toward the lobby elevator.

2 INT. APARTMENT KITCHEN - NIGHT 2

An attractive, late 20ish woman, Paulette, preparing her dinner. The doorbell rings. Paulette checks the spaghetti, then moves through the living room. She opens the door only as wide as the chain lock.

PAULETTE

Who is it?

SWEET TOOTH

Joey here?

PAULETTE

No, I'm sorry. He should be at the restaurant.

(suspicious)

Who are you?

Bang! The door crashes open from Shep's kick; Paulette goes sprawling back as the men burst in. Gun drawn, Sweet Tooth quickly searches the apartment.

PAULETTE

(rising)

Who are you?

(shoved back
by Shep)

Are you nuts?!

Chewing his ever-present candy, Sweet Tooth gives her an evil eye -- angrily motioning Shep to secure the open door.

SWEET TOOTH

(picks up
ornate vase)

This worth much?

PAULETTE

Not what it's going to cost you.

CONTINUED

2 CONTINUED

2

SWEET TOOTH
Maybe you're right.

He smiles and throws the vase violently into the gold-veined mirror, and moves threateningly toward her!

CUT TO

3 EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT - RUNBY

3

Rockford's car pulls past camera.

4 INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR - NIGHT

4

Beth and Rockford are in the front seat. Rockford looks startled.

ROCKFORD
What was that again?

BETH
What?

ROCKFORD
What'd you just say?

BETH
I said, while we're eating dinner,
I'd like you to talk to my friend
Joey Blue Eyes, who owns the
restaurant, because he has a little
problem and I thought you might be
able to solve it.

ROCKFORD
That's what I thought you said.

BETH
Then your hearing's just fine, Jim.
Congratulations.

ROCKFORD
Joey Blue Eyes?
(a beat)
You don't suppose he's a hood, do
you?

BETH
A reformed hood, like you.
(a grin)
His real name is Joseph DiMenna.

CONTINUED

4 CONTINUED

4

ROCKFORD

Look, Beth...we're supposed to be on a date, right?

BETH

Right.

ROCKFORD

Then, what's with this charity case? I don't want to talk to your friend who has a problem. I've got problems of my own.

BETH

Well, Jim, that's just great... and if I do say so myself, just a little bit selfish.

ROCKFORD

I'm a selfish guy....

That stops the conversation cold.

BETH

Well, we have reservations, and we're going to keep them. If you don't want to talk to Joey, that's fine....

ROCKFORD

Deal.

BETH

Now, before we get there, let me tell you about the problem he has.

CUT TO

5 INT. "SLAMMER" RESTAURANT - NIGHT

5

This is a very nice restaurant with low lighting and red velvet wallpaper. Beth and Rockford are sitting in a booth, drinking wine from crystal goblets. A huge man in a white dinner jacket angles toward the table. This is Joey DiMenna (Joey Blue Eyes). He is two hundred and fifty pounds of well-conditioned muscle crammed into a white dinner jacket. His face is slightly flushed from being in the kitchen.

BETH

(noticing his approach)
Here he comes. Now, be nice.

CONTINUED

5 CONTINUED

5

ROCKFORD

(glancing
at Joey)

You kidding? It would take a
full-blooded jerk to smart off
to something that big....

She shoots him a stern look and Joey approaches the table and
leans down and gives her a kiss, then reaches over and without
waiting for an introduction sticks his hand out to Rockford.

JOEY

Hear you did time in Quenton.

Rockford shakes the hand.

ROCKFORD

Thank you. Nice to meet you, too.

Joey looks slightly puzzled and sits down.

JOEY

How's the dinner?

ROCKFORD

Just great. You have a nice
restaurant here.

JOEY

(to Beth)

Did you tell him?

BETH

Well, sort of. I told him you
had a problem, and I went into a
few details....

Joey looks at Rockford and smiles at him. Rockford smiles
back.

ROCKFORD

(trying to
duck it)

We all have problems, Mister
DiMenna...that's part of the
joy of life.

Joey looks over at Beth.

JOEY

What's he talking about?

CONTINUED

5 CONTINUED - 2

5

BETH

He's, uh -- just kidding....

JOEY

(to Rockford)

All my life I been taking care of myself and now this deal comes along and I'm up to my knees in air-tight clauses and holding companies that don't hold nothing. Beth says you can help and I figure 'okay' if he's a con, maybe we should parley.

(X)

(a beat)

If I want a comic, I go to an agent and I book one. I don't want a comic. I want a guy who can help me out of a jam.

Rockford looks at him and then smiles.

ROCKFORD

Listen, Mister DiMenna....

JOEY

Joey. Make it Joey....

ROCKFORD

Right. Listen, Joey...what I meant was I'm sort of semi-retired right now. Oh, I like to keep my hand in. Every now and then I'll run out and try to find a car to repo or something like that...but from what Beth told me, you have some very heavy corporate problems, possibly a nice juicy fraud case. And, well, con-to-con, I'd absolutely be at sea in a deal like that...

(a smile)

I don't even balance my own check book very well.

(a beat)

So, it's been nice to meet you and you serve a great steak.

CONTINUED

5 CONTINUED - 3

5

ROCKFORD (Cont'd)

(a beat)

I guess we might as well get the
bill and mosey along....

He looks over at Beth, who is fuming. He smiles at Joey, who
looks disgusted.

JOEY

You makin' fun of me, Mister?
Nobody gets away with that.

ROCKFORD

Look, I don't want any trouble.

JOEY

(to Beth)

This chicken-hearted creep is the
square John you said was gonna
help me?

ROCKFORD

Listen, Joey, be nice. Just 'cause
I don't want to get messed up
in ---

JOEY

Drift Mister...get outta my joint.

ROCKFORD

Now, just a minute....

BETH

Stop it.

JOEY

You heard me.

ROCKFORD

I'd like it better if you said
'please'....

JOEY

You're gonna rot waiting for it.

Rockford and Joey are both beginning to rise out of their
chairs and this is quickly becoming a dangerous situation.

BETH

Please...please, stop it.

CONTINUED

5 CONTINUED - 4

5

ROCKFORD

Tell this guy to back off.

BETH

(to Joey)

Please!

Joey and Rockford are now both on their feet. A Waiter moves quickly up to the table.

WAITER

Mister DiMenna, telephone....

JOEY

Later.

WAITER

It's the hospital, an emergency...
I think you better take it, sir.

ROCKFORD

Is that the way you duck the action,
Joey?

JOEY

If you wanta wait in the alley,
Slick, I'll be out in a few minutes.

ROCKFORD

I'm a spur-of-the-moment guy...I
don't wait in alleys.

Rockford takes Beth by the arm and leads her out of the restaurant. Joey DiMenna watches them for a beat, then turns to take the phone call.

6 EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

6

Rockford and Beth leave the restaurant. Beth is furious.

BETH

That was some great macho performance....

ROCKFORD

Look, Beth...we came here to eat
dinner. Your friend barges in
two hundred and fifty pounds of
gristle dressed up like Fred
Astaire and I'm supposed to roll
over and say 'please don't hurt
me'...

CONTINUED

6 CONTINUED

6

ROCKFORD (Cont'd)
...I'm sorry. I don't like him.
I don't want to work for him. And
that's my prerogative.

Beth spins on Rockford, fury in her eyes.

BETH
Good-bye. I'll walk.

ROCKFORD
Now, wait....

He grabs her by the arm.

BETH
Let go of my arm, please.

ROCKFORD
What was I supposed to do?

BETH
You don't have to act like some
kind of high school dropout who's
gonna go get in a fight behind the
gym....

ROCKFORD
Okay, I'm sorry...that was stupid.

BETH
You didn't give him a chance.

The doorman is looking at Beth and Rockford.

BETH
Taxi, please.

ROCKFORD
Listen, Beth, you're not taking a
taxi....

BETH
Tell Joey you're sorry.

ROCKFORD
Come on...why doesn't he tell me
he's sorry?

Off her look:

CONTINUED

6 CONTINUED - 2

ROCKFORD

Okay, I'll tell him....

On that, the door to the restaurant flies open and Joey DiMenna runs out. Rockford tries to speak to him but Joey runs past Rockford and on his way by he accidentally hits Rockford's shoulder, spinning him around. Rockford is almost knocked down. Joey jumps into his car and peels out, leaving them standing there. The doorman is dumbfounded.

ROCKFORD

But you gotta admit he's kinda hard to talk to....

CUT TO

7 INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR - NIGHT

7

Rockford is driving and Beth is silent beside him.

ROCKFORD

Okay, look...I'll talk to him.

BETH

Forget it.

ROCKFORD

Y'know something, Beth? It's not all my fault. He wasn't exactly charming.

BETH

Joey used to be a collector for the mob. He must've broken a lot of bones in his day. Then he got caught about ten years ago and he went to jail. When he got out he tried to go straight. I never saw a man try so hard...

(a beat)

You, of all people, must know how tough that is.

ROCKFORD

(not buying it)

Okay.

BETH

Five years ago, when he got out, he decided to go into the restaurant business. He bought a place and he made a go of it.

CONTINUED

7 CONTINUED

7

BETH (Cont'd)

He wanted to expand, so he took in a partner, a man named Striker. They signed a lot of contracts set up by Joe's lawyer, Larry Mitchell, who was working under the table for Striker.

(a beat)

They gave Joey forty-nine percent of the 'Slammer' restaurant and he was given full ownership of the supply companies. The idea was that in four years Joey would have the option to buy his partners out at a fixed price and own the whole restaurant. His option date is due in two days.

ROCKFORD

Only all of the assets he thought he had turn out to be nothing but paper....

BETH

That's right. Now they're about to franchise the 'Slammer' restaurants. It's worth a fortune, but Joey's partners have it rigged so he won't be able to exercise his option.

(X)
(X)

ROCKFORD

You can't sell any of the subsidiary companies for anything?

BETH

(X)

I tried to sell some of the subsidiary companies this afternoon to come up with the cash and found out that they are all deeply in debt. In fact, they're in debt to the restaurant itself...which he doesn't have controlling interest in. His partners are about to foreclose on him to collect the debts they forced on him.

ROCKFORD

So he's gonna lose the whole shebang. It sounds like he got fleeced pretty good.

BETH

If he appears to be a little brusque and angry, maybe you could find it in your heart to understand that he's in a lot of trouble and is about to lose his dream.

7

CONTINUED - 2

7

ROCKFORD

Okay, I forgive.

BETH

Will you do me a favor?

ROCKFORD

Depends.

BETH

Will you talk to Paulette?

ROCKFORD

Who's Paulette?

BETH

Joey's daughter. We're friends.
We went to college together.

ROCKFORD

(a smile)

Okay, now it makes more sense...
you're doing it for Paulette, not
that overstuffed gorilla.

(X)

BETH

(pissed)

Jim!

ROCKFORD

(quickly)

I'll meet her.

8

INT. DEN - STRIKER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

8

Burt Striker lies back in his contour chair...flicking TV channels with his remote control as he talks on the phone. A tape recorder is attached to the phone; the phone voice of Metchell comes over the speaker attachment. Intercut with Larry Mitchell in his living room. Mitchell is a small middle-aged legal shark with glasses.

MITCHELL'S VOICE

I know the law firm; they're pretty heavy. But I don't know who she is...or why she's involved with Joey's case.

STRIKER

He's got a new lawyer, that's all. Probably doesn't trust you, Mitchell. Can't say as I blame him.

CONTINUED

8 CONTINUED

8

MITCHELL'S VOICE

So what should I tell her?

STRIKER

Just what I pay you for...nothing.

MITCHELL'S VOICE

That's a point I've been meaning to bring up, Mister Striker. I think my retainer should be higher.

Striker flicks off the TV.

STRIKER

We have a contract with you, Mitchell.

MITCHELL'S VOICE

So did Joey. Say...another thousand a month?

Striker looks to his tape recorder...smiles into the phone.

STRIKER

You blackmailing me, Larry?

MITCHELL'S VOICE

If you want to call it that.

STRIKER

(pats tape recorder)

I'll take care of you, Larry. You can depend on it.

9 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

9

Helen, a hooker, munches a Popsicle as she lounges against the wall. A car pulls to the curb. Smiling, Helen saunters over; Joey leans out the window.

JOEY

You seen Sweet Tooth?

10 EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

10

The manager, Cliff, is pulling a Coke from the outdoors machine. He sees a car pull into the parking lot. Joey gets out and heads for Room 14...knocks...then crashes inside. Cliff heads for the phone.

11

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

11

Joey, in an awesome fury, hurls Shep against the wall; Sweet Tooth tries to get past. Joey belts him into a corner. Shep staggers at Joey...a big mistake as Joey levels him. Lamps and furniture fly and crash. Sweet Tooth dives for his gun; Joey gets there first...choking Sweet Tooth and pointing the gun into his face.

SWEET TOOTH

Don't...no...

(hammer is cocked)

Joey, I swear. I didn't mean....

JOEY

You mess with me, you're takin' chances. You mess with my daughter...you're dead.

SWEET TOOTH

It was Shep...not me! It was an accident....

Joey's ear picks up the sound of police sirens; he lowers the gun...then throws it under the bed.

JOEY

So was this.

He punches Sweet Tooth as hard as he can.

12

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

12

Beth is embracing a bruised, bandaged Paulette. Rockford stands to one side.

BETH

I just got word from my service when I got home. Thank God you're all right.

(X)

PAULETTE

I'm fine, really. You're Mister Rockford?

ROCKFORD

Jim.

BETH

Does Joey know?

(X)

PAULETTE

He's already been...and gone.

CONTINUED

12 CONTINUED

ROCKFORD

Where to?

PAULETTE

I don't know. I mentioned a name I heard...of one of the men who beat me up...Sweet Tooth...and Dad took off out of here like a train.

BETH

Who were they? Who's Sweet Tooth?

- PAULETTE

I haven't the slightest. Beth, you've got to do something; Dad can't afford any more trouble.

(with hope)

Did you talk to Mitchell?

ROCKFORD

That's Joey's lawyer, isn't it? The one who sucked him into the deal?

Beth nods...then turns to Paulette with a helpless shrug.

BETH

He's also on Striker's payroll; \$36,000 a year. So I hit him with a threat of 'conflict of interest;' told him we'd take him to the Bar Association.

PAULETTE

What happened?

BETH

He laughed. It seems the law firm has the contract with Striker Industries...not Mitchell personally.

PAULETTE

(sinks back)

Pursuant to...pursuant to; just more of that fine print wallpaper you people play with.

(apologizing)

I didn't mean you, Beth.

BETH

I know.

CONTINUED

PAULETTE

(to Rockford)

So what do we do now?

ROCKFORD

You need a C.P.A., not a P.I.

BETH

We've tried that. Their books are pure fiction...but by the time I could get them into court, Joey would already have forfeited his option and would be out with nothing.

PAULETTE

(to Rockford)

Do you have any ideas, Mister Rockford?

BETH

(nailing him)

Jim doesn't want to help, Paulette.

PAULETTE

Oh no...why?

BETH

He doesn't like your father.

ROCKFORD

Listen, I didn't say that.

BETH

Oh...I'm sorry. I thought that was it.

PAULETTE

Please help him, Mister Rockford. He needs somebody. He needs a friend.

ROCKFORD

Well...I'm sort of ---

BETH

Yes....

He looks at Paulette then at Beth. It is a very awkward moment for him. Hold for a beat and the phone rings and she reaches to pick it up. She listens for a beat.

CONTINUED

12 CONTINUED - 3

12

PAULETTE

(into phone)

Oh no...when...okay.

She hangs up and looks at them both.

PAULETTE

You've got to help him...he's
back in jail.

(X)

13 INT. HOLDING CELL - DAY - CLOSEUP

13

of Joey's face as he sits, restively, at the table...suffering
Beth's recriminations. Rockford, nervous about jails, paces
the cell.

JOEY

What'ya expect me to do?! Kiss
him?! He beat up on Paulette. Ah,
you wouldn't understand.

BETH

Not assault and battery I don't.
And more than that; you promised
you'd stay cool.

JOEY

Not when it comes to family!
(tries to calm)
Sweet Tooth knows better. At least
he does now.
(looks at
Rockford, pacing)
You gotta do that?

ROCKFORD

Old habits.

(a beat)

How'd you get into Sweet Tooth for
fifty grand?

JOEY

He's a shark! Who else I got
collateral with?!

ROCKFORD

I didn't ask that! Why? You into
book...or what?

JOEY

(to Beth)

I told you about it. I needed that
to pay off Striker on the first
option...to pay off...to pay off...
to have the right to buy my own
place back.

CONTINUED

BETH

You didn't mention where you got the money.

JOEY

I wasn't important, was it!?
(anxious)
Am I gettin' out of here or not?

BETH

(nodding)
It's in the works. You're just lucky he wouldn't sign the complaint.

JOEY

I'll bet he wouldn't. Come on, let's shake this place.

ROCKFORD

You in a hurry to get back and beat up on Sweet Tooth again?

Joey reacts violently...slamming his fist into the wall.

JOEY

If it would help, damn right! Right over the side!

BETH

(frightened
by his anger)
Joey...it's going to work out....

JOEY

(slams wall
again)
I know that story!

ROCKFORD

And everybody knows yours, too; and it doesn't begin...'once upon a time', and the way you're going it isn't going to end 'they all lived happily ever after'.

Joey seethes. Joey looks at Rockford for a long moment.

CONTINUED

JOEY

Whatta you doing here, anyway?
You just come around to stick the
needle in? What's your story,
Rockford?

Rockford looks at Joey for a long moment.

ROCKFORD

Okay, Joey...I'll give it to you.
(a beat)

I think you're nothing but a skull
crusher who slings hash on the
side. You got a problem, you figure
the best way out is to lay some-
body up.

BETH

Jim...stop it.

ROCKFORD

No, let me finish, Beth. I never
wanted in on this and if I'm gonna
go along, I gotta tell Mister Blue
Eyes how it's gonna play.

(back to Joey)

I got my own style in these kinda
things and it doesn't include
hospitalization. I like to do
things with finesse. If you want
me to help you, then you gotta put
away your brass knucks and do it
my way.

There is a long moment and finally Joey Blue Eyes smiles.

JOEY

You got a lotta guts. Most people
don't talk to me that way.

Rockford doesn't say anything.

BETH

Shake hands....

ROCKFORD

If I work for you I get paid two
hundred a day plus expenses

CONTINUED

13 CONTINUED - 3

ROCKFORD (Cont'd)
starting from last night.

After a beat, Joey sticks out his hand to shake. Rockford is a beat slower, and finally they shake. A Guard approaches and unlocks the door.

GUARD
Okay, you're free to go. You can pick up your personal effects at Property in the main building.

Joey gets up and looks at Rockford.

JOEY
Okay, Rockford. You call it... where do we go?

ROCKFORD
First I want you to put your hands in your pockets and keep them there.

JOEY
And then?

ROCKFORD
And then we go and see Sweet Tooth London.

Hold on Beth's worried expression as we:

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN

14 EXT. SIDEWALK COUNTER - AMUSEMENT PARK - NIGHT

14

Sweet Tooth, wearing bruises and bandages, eats a taco. Shep, also wearing battle scars, lounges alongside. This is a small amusement park -- a Ferris wheel spins in the b.g.

SWEET TOOTH

It don't matter, dummy; he'll get his someday. But always...business first.

SHEP

I could take care of him.

Shep glances up and spots Joey and Rockford. His macho look changes quickly. Sweet Tooth follows his gaze.

SWEET TOOTH

Now hold on, Joey, it's all fine. I dropped the charges, you know that.

ROCKFORD

Prizes come in crackerjack boxes.

JOEY

We wanta talk to ya.

(X)

Sweet Tooth notices Rockford for the first time...then his attention goes back to Joey.

ROCKFORD

Hold it, Joey. I'd like to talk to him alone. Why don't you wait for me here.

(X)

Joey glares...slumps, arms folded, against the building wall. Shep moves to protect Sweet Tooth.

ROCKFORD

Him too.

Rockford and Sweet Tooth move off.

(X)

ROCKFORD

I'm Jim Taggart. Joey's lawyer. I got a deal for you.

(X)

CONTINUED

14 CONTINUED

14

Sweet Tooth gains confidence; he motions Shep to get lost. Shep shuffles to a wall...safely away from Joey.

SWEET TOOTH
(moving to Ferris
wheel)
This private enough?

(X)

15 EXT. FERRIS WHEEL - NIGHT

15

Rockford and Sweet Tooth get on and ride.

SWEET TOOTH
There ain't any deal I can see.
(points outside)
He's into me for a bundle of
fifty; I gone far enough not
nailing him for five to ten.

ROCKFORD
Yeah, that was real big of you.
'Course, it had nothing to do with
the fact he can't pay you back if
he's in jail.

SWEET TOOTH
So talk. I got work.

ROCKFORD
I want you to lend Joey another
two hundred thousand.

Sweet Tooth looks...then starts to laugh.

SWEET TOOTH
You're a funny man!

ROCKFORD
Joey owes you fifty grand. If
he loses that restaurant, you're
left eating it.

SWEET TOOTH
Maybe.

ROCKFORD
And maybe...just maybe you loan
him the money...he gets back con-
trol of the restaurant...and the
profits...and he pays you back.

CONTINUED

15 CONTINUED

SWEET TOOTH

I don't play horses with heart conditions, pal.

ROCKFORD

He goes broke...you got the short end of nothing.

SWEET TOOTH

(rising)

Uh-uh. not me. But the people I gotta answer to: they don't want to hear about shakedowns they ain't shakin'. So you tell Joey ...for me and for them. He don't get it up by Friday...he's gone. And so's his daughter.

The Ferris wheel comes down and they get off.

CUT TO

16 EXT. MODERN OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

16

Rockford's car pulls to the curb.

17 INT. CAR

17

Angel, chewing some candy, slouches in his seat. Rockford kills the engine.

ROCKFORD

Who's pushing you into anything? You're the one said he could do it.

ANGEL

I said it 'cause you're always comin' on like you were in a fox-hole with me in Anzio. I'm always owing you a favor 'cause you saved my life.

ROCKFORD

I don't even want you to consider that. I did what I had to do... for a friend.

ANGEL

But you figure it! Only time my life needs saving is when I get mixed up with you. And why am I the guy goin' into the pit to begin with? Comes to con, you're the champ!

CONTINUED

17 CONTINUED

17

ROCKFORD

You're right there...but you got experience. You've been a book.

ANGEL

(indignant)

Numbers, Jimmy...numbers! Guys into bookin', that's a whole different thing! That ain't respectable!

ROCKFORD

Okay, okay...sorry about that. But you got the right attitude that's the important thing.

ANGEL

Attitude my ear! Why don't you just go in there and give Striker some of that grease!

ROCKFORD

If I could...believe me, Angel, I would. But I need a free hand ...just in case it doesn't work.

ANGEL

Now that's fantastic! Never mind your hand...how about my head?!

ROCKFORD

Angel, buddy, this is Wall Street, not Main Street. Worse that could happen to you is they stab you with a pen.

ANGEL

You sure?

Jim nods...gives Angel a reassuring smile; points to candy.

ROCKFORD

Just keep chewing.

ANGEL

And what if this Striker doesn't buy it?

ROCKFORD

Then you say thank you and offer him a line on the Dow-Jones. But don't mention my name.

CONTINUED

17 CONTINUED - 2

17

ANGEL

Right behind me, huh, Lieutenant?

Angel shakes his head...climbs out of the car.

18 EXT. BUILDING

18

Angel emerges...straightens his shoulders...and strides into the office building. He passes a plainclothes guard, Gannon, standing near the entrance. They barely notice each other.

19 ANGLE TO CAR

19

Rockford watches Angel...then pulls his car forward into a loading zone. He pushes his stereo player...sits back to wait.

20 INT. STRIKER'S OFFICE

20

Burt Striker sits behind his large executive desk. Ed Barrow, his comptroller, paces nervously.

Striker smiles...pushes the intercom button.

STRIKER

Muriel...send Mister London in.

They sit back...as the door opens and Angel enters. (Striker activates a tape recorder in his desk drawer.)

STRIKER

Mister London? Nice to see you.
This is Mister Barrow.

ANGEL

(shakes hands)

It's a pleasure.

Angel sits...trying to match Striker's cool.

STRIKER

You're an associate of Joey DiMenna's, I understand.

ANGEL

I wouldn't give him the time to die.

(they react)

But he owes me \$50,000. Which he gave to you.

CONTINUED

20

CONTINUED

STRIKER

Really. What business are you in,
Mister London?

ANGEL

I'm a banker. Twenty percent per
week.

Striker understands; pulls a cigar out...offers one to Angel.

STRIKER

A shylock, you mean.

ANGEL

We all do business like we can,
don't we?

(looks around)

And I admire your style.

BARROW

Mister London, you said when you
phoned for this appointment....

ANGEL

(interrupting)

...that I could save you a lot of
money...I can.

ANGEL

Joey's into me for fifty thousand...
plus interest...my money -- which
he paid to you for the first option
on his restaurant.

(they stare
at him)

He told me the whole setup...

(sits back)

...under pressure, I admit.

Striker sits back...waiting. Barrow jumps in, nervously.

BARROW

Let's make one thing clear. Where
Mister DiMenna got his money to
payoff the option is not of any
concern to the corporation. There
is no legal....

ANGEL

(interrupting)

Don't waste my time with that
whole bit! I got accountants
and lawyers, too.

CONTINUED

20 CONTINUED - 2

20

ANGEL (Cont'd)

(turns to
Striker)

Joey gave me a quick story. He told me he needs fifty grand to beat off the wolves; normally he's a tuna, so I give it.

(slowly)

Fif-ty thou-sand. And now what'ya think? He don't pay back; he comes back. Says he needs two hundred more; if I don't cough, he chokes. And so do I.

Angel sits back. Barrow is totally confused. Striker understands.

STRIKER

So you want two hundred thousand dollars from me. Your interest rates have gone up.

ANGEL

Times are rough.

BARROW

Two hundred thousand for what?!

ANGEL

So I don't lay the same zeroes off on Joey. If I give him the two hundred thou he wants...he pays off ...you're out.

(X)

(to Striker)

How much those new 'franchise' restaurants worth to you; Joey tells me there's at least eight million wrapped into it already.

(smiles)

Say, I'll bet you got a piece of the construction jobs, too. You give me a present of two hundred G's, and I'll get lost.

STRIKER

I'm prepared to make you a counter-offer. Zero.

Angel half-crumple; his performance has failed. He tries to recover.

CONTINUED

ANGEL

Maybe I didn't make my point clear enough....

STRIKER

It's terribly clear, but I'm not interested. Good day, Mister London.

He guides Angel toward the door...patting him on the back. Angel pulls back from the "friendly" hand.

Angel leaves. Striker closes the door...then heads back toward his desk.

BARROW

Burt, I don't like this. If they lend Joey the money, he'll pay us off and we're out.

STRIKER

It's a bluff -- and there are too many 'ifs.' If they were that smart; if they even had it to begin with...
(shakes head)

I'm surprised he didn't ask me to validate his parking ticket.

(thinks)

Still...it wouldn't hurt to make sure.

(dials phone)

This is Mister Striker. Gannon around? Get him; hurry up.

He waits on phone. Barrow is fearful.

BARROW

I didn't mean that way; that's just not good business. It's not smart.

STRIKER

(cold)

Just stick to your books. I'll run the company.

(into phone)

Gannon? Something I want you to do.

He is on his C.C. unit; acknowledges orders received. He looks toward the glass entrance doors...then waves a waiting sedan to pull in front.

22 ANOTHER ANGLE 22

Angel hurries out through the glass doors; Gannon is suddenly at his side, menacing and whispering. The bulging pocket convinces Angel; he is escorted toward the sedan at the curb.

23 INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR 23

watching in the mirror...two car-lengths ahead of the sedan. He suddenly starts the engine...shifts to reverse...and careens backward.

24 EXT. CURB - POINT OF VIEW 24

The rear door of the sedan beckons Angel...when Rockford's car violently crashes into the sedan. Angel and Gannon are both thrown to the ground; Angel reacts first and races to the safety of Rockford's car. Rockford burns rubber.

25 ANGLE TO SEDAN 25

Jake, the driver, leaps out...raising gun. Gannon waves him down; they both jump into the car and give chase.

26 INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR 26

Rockford watches the rear-view mirror; Angel is still in shock.

ROCKFORD

What happened?

ANGEL

Tell me, tell me!

(looks back)

Thought you said these were creampuffs!

ROCKFORD

Nobody's perfect, Angel.

Rockford abruptly accelerates and skids around a corner, throwing Angel against the door.

27 CAR CHASE - SERIES OF SHOTS 27
thru thru
30 30
Gannon's car stays close as Rockford weaves and veers through the city streets. Suddenly, Rockford turns sharply (X)
...then sharply again through an open materials yard. Gannon has to back up to pursue.

31 EXT. MATERIALS YARD - REAR EXIT 31

A man drops his precarious load as Rockford screeches past. Bouncing back onto a city street, Rockford takes another sharp right...then shrieks into Al's Body Shop and into the garage.

32 INT. BODY SHOP 32

Al, as messy as his tiny office, reacts in shock as Rockford's car roars into the pit area.

ROCKFORD

Hey, pal...quick -- put it up
on the hoist --

(a beat)

Here's twenty....

Rockford hands him a bill. Confused, Al responds, putting the car with Rockford and Angel inside up on the hoist.

33 EXT. CITY STREET - DAY 33

as Gannon's car hits a dead end and turns around and heads back.

34 INT. GANNON'S CAR - DAY 34

as Gannon and Jake look for Rockford's car.

35 POINT OF VIEW - AL'S BODY SHOP - MOVING 35

They pull past, looking in the pit area. Rockford's car is on the top of the rack but isn't visible because it is up higher than the door. Only the wheels and undercarriage can be seen by Gannon and Jake. They roll on past.

36 INT. ROCKFORD'S CAR - ATOP THE RACK - DAY 36

Angel is shitting and Rockford lets out a sigh.

ANGEL

You got me in some trouble, Jimmy.

ROCKFORD

Aw, Angel...it's not too bad.

ANGEL

You got me in some trouble, Jimmy,
and I ain't listening to no, 'Aw,
Angels' or anything like that.

CONTINUED

36 CONTINUED

ANGEL (Cont'd)

What I'm doing, Jimmy, is I'm telling ya you gotta get me out. Those guys was looking to dust me...and I'm telling ya --

(a beat for emphasis)

-- I don't wanta be dusted. Ya hear me, Jimmy? I'd hate to die just yet...I'd really hate it....

Rockford looks at him and nods his head.

ROCKFORD

I'll look into it....

ANGEL

I'd sure appreciate it, Jimmy. Now, let's get outta here.

Rockford leans down and calls out to Al.

ROCKFORD

Okay, we're through now, thank you.

(X)

CUT TO

37

INT. JOEY AND PAULETTE'S APARTMENT - EVENING

37

Paulette is at her desk...busily signing invoices and checks. Joey and Rockford alternately sit and pace.

JOEY

(screaming)

So I'm cool!!

PAULETTE

(concentrating)

Turn up the heat, will ya, Pop?

Joey moves obediently to the thermostat, controlling his temper, he turns back to Rockford.

JOEY

Look, Rockford, I was hopin' to make it just as polite as you and Beth. But so far, nobody's hittin' like Joe DiMaggio.

ROCKFORD

We haven't turned it around yet, that's all.

CONTINUED

37

CONTINUED

37

Paulette looks up from a check; lowers her reading glasses.

PAULETTE

And day after tomorrow's Friday.
(to Joey)
You gave Dominic another raise?

JOEY

(apologizing)
He's a good kid. He's gettin'
married!

(X)

ROCKFORD

Look, this is all very nice....

PAULETTE

(overlapping)
People have to be paid, even if
we're not around.

Joey, equally frustrated, lays it on Rockford's door.

JOEY

You want to talk about layin'
down? Seems to me I've paid you for
a lot of time that ain't gone no-
where! All we got from your tap-
dancin' so far is a promise from
Sweet Tooth and Striker to pipe
us!

ROCKFORD

(angry)
And I got a friend now who's in
your spotlight....

PAULETTE

Your friend Angel? -- I'm sorry
that had to happen.

ROCKFORD

(still angry;
to Joey)
And the only reason is because I
made the mistake of picking up
on your case!

JOEY

So tell him to rabbit! And you
too!

ROCKFORD

Point me to the right hole! You're
the expert!

CONTINUED

37

CONTINUED - 2

Enraged, Joey charges him; Rockford jumps aside...turns, ready to fight.

ROCKFORD

Come on...come on!

Joey lunges...Rockford cocks his fist -- then both men suddenly freeze as Paulette's scream fills the room. In a rage of her own, she scatters papers...books...everything...stomping around the room.

PAULETTE

(in Italian)

Do it by God, do it!

(English)

Kill each other! I want to see it! Do it!

Papers flutter in the air; both men cover before her awesome tantrum.

PAULETTE

That'll show them, won't it?!

Make them happy! Make me happy!

She sweeps a table clean...knocking a picture of Mrs. DiMenna flying into a corner. Paulette abruptly slumps onto the couch.

PAULETTE

(quieter)

Just leave me alone. I don't want any more.

(almost crying)

What's the difference? Who cares?

Rockford and Joey...stunned apologetic...begin picking up the scattered debris and papers. Joey picks up the portrait of his wife...returns it to the table. He tentatively reaches to touch Paulette; she pulls away.

JOEY

It's my fault; I know. You tell me...just like your mama...but I don't know how to listen.

(tries to joke)

Remember? She'd say...

(points to ears)

...only thing that ever went in my ears was knuckles.

Paulette half-cries, half-laughs; Joey rises, looking at Rockford.

CONTINUED

37

CONTINUED - 3

JOEY

I'm sorry, Rockford. You didn't ask in; and you tried.

ROCKFORD

(apologizing)

Not enough, I guess.

More mad at himself than anything else, Joey almost slams his fist into the wall...pulls back.

JOEY

It never is, is it?!

(to himself)

They break your backs. Then they tell you you're not tryin' hard enough. Should stand up straighter with your broken back!

(to Rockford, firmer)

But I was askin' for no specials. I made mistakes...I paid for my county shoes. Total of nine years, startin' at fourteen. Dumb, right?

Paulette looks up from the couch.

PAULETTE

It's all so dumb. Playing by rules that don't mean what they say.

ROCKFORD

That's where we've been going wrong, you know, maybe. We've been giving them nothing but words; only thing they care about is what's written on the bottom line.

Paulette and Joey are hardly listening as she hugs him; they forgive each other for the tantrums.

ROCKFORD

You told me, Paulette. The restaurant...all the contracts, everything. They're all in your name, right?

JOEY

You know how it works. In prison they teach you how to make license plates; when they let you out, they won't let you have one.

CONTINUED

37

CONTINUED - 4

She is straightening up; she adjusts her mother's portrait to its normal angle on the table.

PAULETTE

He's got a felony record. You want a liquor license, owner of name's gotta be clean.

(smiles
at Joey)

So I'm the real boss. Right, Pop?

- JOEY

The one and only.

(points to
picture)

But not like your mama.

PAULETTE

Don't worry. We'll get by.

(turns)

Thank you for your help, Jim. I'm sorry we both got a little....

ROCKFORD

Emotional?

(smiles)

There is a long moment while Rockford thinks.

ROCKFORD

We've got to get him; out of his fancy office and down into the streets.

JOEY

(surprised)

You mean we should hit him?

ROCKFORD

Enough to hurt him; make him hit back.

PAULETTE

Jim...?!

ROCKFORD

Not real muscle. But I gotta admit...what I got in mind...not exactly what you might call up-and-up. But it might get the restaurant back....

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN

38 EXT. GOLF COURSE - 18TH GREEN REFRESHMENT STAND - DAY

38

Striker sits at a table with a polished banker-type, Bill Evans, and Barrow.

EVANS

There won't be any problem, Burt, believe me. Soon as you have clear title on the restaurant, we'll give you every extension on those loans possible.

STRIKER

Well, you can look for me when you open your doors at ten o'clock tomorrow.

(claps him
on shoulder)

Want you to know I appreciate your efforts. You people are going to get a lot of our business.

(points to drink)

You want another?

Evans suddenly looks back...sees Rockford walking toward the refreshment stand.

EVANS

Better not. I'm running late.
Thanks for the game.

Evans heads off...nodding at Rockford. Rockford turns and smiles at Striker.

ROCKFORD

How's your backswing, Burt?

Striker thinks maybe he should know Rockford.

STRIKER

Too fast. How you doing?

ROCKFORD

(sitting down)
You probably don't remember me.

STRIKER

Sure, I...do.

CONTINUED

38 CONTINUED

38

ROCKFORD

You never met me before.

(extends hand)

I'm Jim Taggart. I called your office for an appointment. They told me you were out here.

Striker is unsure of all this; he tentatively shakes hands.

STRIKER

What is it you're selling, Mister Taggart?

ROCKFORD

My company, Burt...in a manner of speaking. Now you got to understand, we're not on the exchange or anything; but when it comes to cash flow, we're in a lot better shape than yours. I believe you know one of our people. Sweet Tooth London?

STRIKER

(rising)

I've met him.

ROCKFORD

(a smile)

You tried to kill him.

Striker, standing, tries to dismiss Rockford. Barrows, who has been standing nearby, moves away.

STRIKER

(to Barrows)

Don't leave....

STRIKER

Mister Taggart, I run a very legitimate business...so if you don't mind....

ROCKFORD

So do we. Matter of fact, I'm an accountant.

(threatening)

And I know all your facts and figures. Including the banks breathing down your neck.

CONTINUED

38

CONTINUED - 2

ROCKFORD (Cont'd)

That was Bill Evans, wasn't it?
Vice president of Home National?

Striker scowls at Rockford.

ROCKFORD

And I also know if you don't walk
into his bank tomorrow with lock-
and-stock on Joey's restaurant,
they're going to wipe you out.

STRIKER

If you want to embarrass me, I
guess you can. But what I told
your Mister London still stands.
Nothing's changed.

ROCKFORD

Oh, but it has. You see, we've
kidnapped Paulette DiMenna.

Rockford drinks his milk. Striker stares.

STRIKER

I'm afraid you've been misled....

ROCKFORD

Apparently so...into thinking you
were as smart as you think you are.
So I'll do it by the numbers.
Paulette DiMenna signs the checks;
all power of attorney is vested in
her. Now if she turns up missing?
And there's just a hint of foul
play?

(leans back)

Well, I don't have to tell you how
slow the legal system can be. To
protect the innocent, of course.
Could be months...years...before
the courts give you clear title.
I'm wasting your time, I guess.
I'm sure the banks...Mister Evans
...they'll be patient with you....

STRIKER

You kidnap this girl...then you
want me to pay the ransom?!

CONTINUED

38

CONTINUED - 3

STRIKER (Cont'd)

What do you think's going to happen when I bring in the police?

ROCKFORD

They're going to believe you, of course. Just like the banks. After all, you have no interest in the girl.

(rises)

You've got a big pie to slice... All we want is our \$50,000 investment...plus interest. \$250,000.

STRIKER

(sullen; cold)

Thought he said \$200,000.

ROCKFORD

(looks at watch)

Time is money. Make that 255. By midnight. I can reach you at your office?

Striker stares. Rockford gives him a slap on the back.

ROCKFORD

I appreciate that!

Rockford leaves. Striker and Barrow are left standing alone as Rockford hikes off across the grass toward the parking lot.

BARROW

If he's kidnapped the girl, then he can pull it off. We can't close our financing without the papers signed.

Striker is watching Rockford depart and finally he smiles slightly and turns to Barrow.

STRIKER

You don't seriously believe him, do you?

Barrow looks startled.

BARROW

But he said....

CONTINUED

38 CONTINUED - 4

38

STRIKER

(thinking
about it)

(X)

Joey knows we can't complete our deal without Paulette, so he and Mister Taggart cook up this phony kidnapping together...they stash Paulette in a motel somewhere and then Mister Taggart comes out here and lays this ham sandwich on me ...and I'm supposed to lay the two hundred and fifty grand on them.

BARROW

You mean it's a con?

STRIKER

Gotta be....

There is a long moment.

STRIKER

Get up to the club house and get hold of Gannon. He's probably having lunch in the grill. Tell him to get on Taggart's tail right now before he gets away. Taggart is going to lead us to that motel room eventually. When he does, we'll simply step in and borrow Paulette long enough to sign off the restaurant.

Barrow heads away at a jog as we:

CUT TO

39 EXT. COUNTRY CLUB - PARKING AREA - DAY

39

as Rockford gets into his car and starts it up. He pulls away. As he does, the camera hinges and we see Gannon coming out of one of the side doors of the country club. He runs toward his car, jumps in, and takes off.

40 EXT. CITY STREET - DAY - RUNBY

40

as first Rockford's car -- then Gannon's -- heads past camera.

