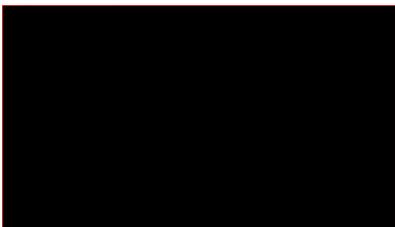


The Left Turn

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INT. RALPH'S APARTMENT- NIGHT

A stereotypical male apartment; very nice electronics, but it is not decorated in the slightest; no pictures on the walls, very cold.

The doorbell rings. RALPH, tall and dark, gets up from his leather LazyBoy and goes to the door. He opens it to see a MIDDLE-EASTERN MAN with a large briefcase and a fancy frozen coffee drink. Ralph gestures for him to come in and they make their way to the coffee table.

RALPH

Where's my Pastrami Polish Boy?

MIDDLE-EASTERN MAN

They closed down Fertelli's.

RALPH

Oh my God! This is the worst thing that could happen. That was the best sandwich in the world.

MIDDLE-EASTERN MAN

No more sandwich shop. Starbucks now.

The Middle-Eastern man places the briefcase on the coffee table. Ralph goes to the cabinet under the sink and pulls out another duffel bag.

RALPH

Starbucks is what's wrong with this country. They're like the Walmart of coffee. They take the little guy and they just squeeze him and squeeze him until there's nothing left but overpriced coffee beans.

(re: Middle-Eastern man's drink)

What the fuck is that even supposed to be?

MIDDLE-EASTERN MAN

Venti non-fat caramel Frappuccino with whipped cream. Take a sip.

RALPH

No, when I want a cup of coffee, I want a cup of coffee. Not an ice cream sundae.

MIDDLE-EASTERN MAN
Just try it. It's good.

Ralph takes a sip.

RALPH
Damn, that is good. Are you going
to drink the rest of that?

The Middle-Eastern man takes the duffel bag from Ralph.

MIDDLE-EASTERN MAN
Yes. See you next month.

The Middle-eastern man turns around and exits. Ralph turns off the television and flips on "Sweet Emotion" by Aerosmith. He takes out a three beam scale, measuring cups, baggies and a knife. He opens the briefcase. It is filled with cocaine.

Ralph raises the knife and cuts into one of the blocks of coke when the door is kicked open and four GUNMEN (20s) burst into the room, immediately surrounding Ralph.

GUNMAN #1
Get on the fucking ground!

RALPH
You stupid cowboys.

GUNMAN #1
Shut the fuck up!

RALPH
Do you know who this belongs to?
Do you know who the fuck I am?

GUNMAN #1
Some dead guy.

Gunman #1 shoots Ralph in the head with a shotgun. Ralph falls to the ground dead. Gunman #1 closes the briefcase and picks it up. The three other gunmen follow their leader out of the apartment.

INT. DONUT SHOP- THE NEXT MORNING

The shop is empty aside from BENNY BONNEMA (white, dark hair, skinny, 30s) pouring gasoline throughout the inside of the store. His partner, THE RUSSIAN (late 30s, 6'4", massive), stands and watches as he prepares a Molotov cocktail.

BENNY
I can't believe they rolled Ralph.

THE RUSSIAN
Da.

BENNY
I liked Ralph.

THE RUSSIAN
They got Kadakian's entire re-up.
20 kilos.

BENNY
Fuck. Why didn't we roll Ralph?

THE RUSSIAN
Kadakian is offering 100k to kill
the cowboys and get the coke back.

BENNY
That's the kind of jobs we should
be doing. Instead, we're doing a
five grand burn job on a fucking
donut shop. Why are we even doing
this?

THE RUSSIAN
Because donut maker won't sell
property to Pascalli.

Benny picks up a donut out of the display case and takes a
bite.

BENNY
I know that. I mean why are WE
doing this bullshit job? We're the
best contract killers in Brooklyn
and we're killing fucking
bearclaws.

Benny throws the donut onto the ground.

THE RUSSIAN
That is cruller.

Benny shoots him a look.

THE RUSSIAN (CONT'D)
Why couldn't we take Cleveland job?

BENNY

Cuz I fucking hate Cleveland. And I'm tired of having to drive eight hours to make any real money. We're independent contractors. We should be contracting independently, not waiting around for whatever scraps Pascalli feels like throwing our way.

THE RUSSIAN

Then we take the Kadakian job.

The Russian pulls a cigarette out of a pack and starts to dig in his pockets for a lighter. Benny takes the cigarette from his mouth and throws it on the ground.

BENNY

That's just stupid.

THE RUSSIAN

Why?

Benny throws his empty gasoline canister across the room.

BENNY

What is this, your first day? Kadakian hates us! Right off the top of my head, I can think three of his guys- four of his guys- that we've clipped.

THE RUSSIAN

Kadakian wants us for this job.

BENNY

Says who?

Benny takes a hammer out of his pocket and begins to smash the sprinklers off the ceiling.

THE RUSSIAN

Kadakian.

Benny stops what he's doing and turns around.

BENNY

Okay, first of all, you lead off with that. "Leader of the Armenian Mafia wants us for a \$100,000 job." That's your headline. Second of all, NO!

THE RUSSIAN

Why not?

BENNY

Kadakian is the head of the rival family. We work for Pascalli.

Benny goes back to destroying the sprinklers.

THE RUSSIAN

I thought we were independent contractors.

BENNY

Yeah, but it's an unwritten rule. You don't work for both families.

THE RUSSIAN

It's a gray area.

BENNY

I don't want to get shot in the fucking face over a gray area. Plus, Pascalli is probably the one who rolled Ralph in the first place.

THE RUSSIAN

Kadakian says it's not Pascalli.

BENNY

(Sarcastic)

Oh! Well if Kadakian says so-

Benny destroys the last of the sprinklers.

THE RUSSIAN

We ask Pascalli. If Pascalli says he didn't do job, we do job.

Benny grabs a pink donut box and puts a couple of bearclaws in it.

BENNY

Even if Pascalli didn't do it, he might kill us for working for Kadakian regardless.

THE RUSSIAN

I am not afraid of Pascalli. If Pascalli make move on me, I take gun away from him and I shove it up his big fat Italian ass.

The Russian shoves a cloth into the Molotov cocktail.

BENNY

Okay, but they would kill me!

THE RUSSIAN

Are you contract killer or faggot?

BENNY

I'm not a fucking faggot, and I'm tired of you calling me that every time I don't want to take a bullshit job.

THE RUSSIAN

Job is not bullshit. It is easy. Kadakian knows who did it. He has address. All we have to do is get the coke back and make an example. We don't even have to dispose of the bodies. Tomorrow morning, we have one hundred thousand dollars.

BENNY

A hundred thousand spacebucks...by tomorrow!?

THE RUSSIAN

What is a "spacebuck"?

BENNY

Never mind.

As they stand at the exit, Benny grabs the Molotov cocktail from The Russian, lights it, and throws it into the room as the two walk out the door. The entire shop bursts into flames.

INT. PASCALLI'S BAR- LATER THAT MORNING

Benny and The Russian walk in to the bar. Most of the chairs are still on the tables. This place isn't even close to opening.

SALVATORE PASCALLI sits at a booth in the back of the bar drinking a glass of wine. His four cronies, FREDDY, BILLY, GINO, and NICKY sit with him. Four BODYGUARDS provide protection. Benny and The Russian make their way to Pascalli's booth. Benny grabs a chair and sits down.

THE RUSSIAN

(To Gino)

Get up.

Gino gets up and grabs a chair to sit in. The Russian sits down in Gino's spot.

PASCALLI

How'd it go?

THE RUSSIAN

It burned.

Benny tosses a small pink box on the table. Pascalli opens the box.

PASCALLI

I asked you for a bearclaw, Benny.
This is a fucking crueller.

THE RUSSIAN

(To Benny)

I told you.

(To Pascalli)

Where is payment?

PASCALLI

Relax, you just sat down. Do you
want a drink first?

THE RUSSIAN

Money first.

PASCALLI

Fine. Here.

Pascalli pulls out a thick envelope and places it on the table. The Russian grabs the envelope and places it in his jacket pocket.

THE RUSSIAN

(To Billy)

Stoli. Double.

Billy gets up and heads to the bar.

BENNY

No, I'm fine, thanks.

(Pause)

So, Sal, what's up? Any news?

PASCALLI

Bartoli told me to tell you to forget Jimmy Spiezioli. He already got hit.

BENNY

What? Who'd he use?

PASCALLI

The Black Phantom.

BENNY

God damnit. We've been looking for Spiezioli for three weeks.

THE RUSSIAN

That negro owes me \$20,000.

BENNY

He's taken all the contracts. Where the fuck did this guy even come from?

Billy comes back with the drink for The Russian and puts it down.

NICKY

Nobody knows anything about him.

BENNY

What do you mean, nobody knows?

NICKY

Forget it, Dutch, he's a fucking ghost. He's a superhero like Batman or some shit.

FREDDY

I heard he's a Navy Seal.

THE RUSSIAN

If that Batman wants to come after me, I will show him my Kryptonite.

Everyone stares at The Russian.

THE RUSSIAN (CONT'D)

What?

BENNY

That's Superman. It's Superman who gets killed by Kryptonite.

Everyone laughs.

FREDDY

I don't know what you guys did in Russia-

The Russian grabs the back of Freddy's head and slams it onto the table giving him a bloody nose. The Russian holds Freddy's head down on the table.

THE RUSSIAN

In Russia, when a man laughs in another man's face, we cut his fucking tongue out.

PASCALLI

Benny, what the fuck?

BENNY

Vlad, it's a fucking comic book, man.

The Russian lets Freddy up.

FREDDY

Oh fuck, he broke my nose.

Freddy gets up and walks away.

BENNY

Did you hear about Ralph?

PASCALLI

Of course I heard about Ralph.

BENNY

Was that you?

PASCALLI

I wish it was, I wish it was. That's a pretty big score, even for me.

BENNY

Who was it?

PASCALLI

I dunno. Word is it's just a bunch of young punks trying to make a name for themselves. I would love to meet the guys who made a fool out of Kadakian.

BENNY

Me too.

INT. AUTO SHOP- LATER THAT DAY

Benny and The Russian arrive at an auto shop. Various MECHANICS work on cars.

BENNY

Are you sure we're in the right place?

THE RUSSIAN

Da.

Two big Armenian Henchmen come up to Benny and The Russian. ZAKAR is significantly larger than HARUT.

ZAKAR

We've been expecting you.

The two Armenian Henchman walk toward the back of the auto shop. Benny and The Russian follow them through a small door-

INT. KADAKIAN'S OFFICE- CONTINUOUS

-into a huge room exquisitely decorated with designer knockoffs.

BENNY

Nice place.

ZAKAR

Do you have any weapons on you?

BENNY

You better believe it, pal.

ZAKAR

Hand them over, my friend.

THE RUSSIAN

Or else what?

Just as the egos reach a boiling point, KADAKIAN enters and yells something in Armenian. Zakar & Harut immediately leave.

BENNY
(to The Russian)
What did he say?

THE RUSSIAN
He said you have kind eyes...How
the fuck should I know?

Kadakian sits down behind his huge mahogany desk. He gestures toward two chairs.

KADAKIAN
Sit.

Benny and The Russian sit down.

KADAKIAN (CONT'D)
So, you're going to take the job.

BENNY
Hold on. Why us?

KADAKIAN
I'm not going to sugarcoat it. I
fucking hate you. But at the end
of the day, it's just business. I
can't afford to lose this shipment.
I want the best. You are the best.

BENNY
How do we know that we're going to
get our hundred grand?

KADAKIAN
Because if I don't pay, your friend
will kill me.

Kadakian gestures toward The Russian.

THE RUSSIAN
Is true.

BENNY
If we do this job, we didn't do
this job. We were never even here.

KADAKIAN
No problem.

EXT. AUTO SHOP- CONTINUOUS

Benny and The Russian walk out of the Armenian's office and to their car.

BENNY
So we're really going to do this?

THE RUSSIAN
We're really going to do this.

INT. PUSSYCAT FACTORY- THAT AFTERNOON

A dark strip club where KATYA, early 20s, Ukrainian, beautiful, stands in front of a greasy, overweight, PATRON beginning her lap dance.

Benny, holding a plate and some toothpicks from the buffet, sits down next to the Patron.

KATYA
What do you want, Benny?

BENNY
The same thing as this guy.

Katya shoots Benny a look.

BENNY (CONT'D)
But that's not why I'm here.

KATYA
Why are you here?

Benny takes a bite of food off his plate and chews.

BENNY
Well, it's not the buffet. This stuff tastes like shit.

PATRON
(To Benny)
Look, asshole-

The Russian appears on the other side of Katya and the Patron.

PATRON (CONT'D)
(Changing his tone)
Excuse me, but Katya and me-

BENNY

-Katya and I.

PATRON

Katya and I are in the middle of a song here.

KATYA

(To Patron)

Don't worry about them, baby.

(To Benny)

I'm working Benny, go home.

Katya straddles the Patron's and runs her fingers through his hair. She finally removes her bra.

BENNY

It's about money, Katya. And I'm not talking about Tuesday, day-shift, strip club money. I'm talking about real money.

Katya shoves the Patron's face in her breasts, forcing him to motorboat her.

KATYA

Keep talking.

BENNY

Five thousand dollars.

KATYA

Who do I have to fuck?

BENNY

Nobody. It's a diversion job. Five, Ten minutes, tops.

PATRON

Could you guys talk about this after my song?

KATYA

Shut up.

Katya grabs the Patron by the tie and pulls his face into her ass.

KATYA (CONT'D)

(To Benny)

When?

BENNY

Tonight.

The song changes and Katya suddenly stops dancing.

KATYA

Song is over.

THE RUSSIAN

(To the Patron)

Tip her.

Not happy about it, The Patron gives Katya more money and walks away. Katya sits down across from Benny and The Russian and lights up a cigarette.

KATYA

Is it going to get messy?

BENNY

Oh, it's gonna get real messy.

KATYA

I want ten thousand.

BENNY

Ten thousand? You're not even doing anything!

KATYA

Do it without me then. Ten or I'm out.

Benny looks to The Russian.

THE RUSSIAN

You'll do it for seven.

Katya takes another drag off her cigarette.

KATYA

Agreed. But I don't want to be there when you start killing everybody.

BENNY

Agreed.

INT. BENNY'S CAR- THAT NIGHT

Benny and Katya sit outside of a house in Brooklyn.

KATYA

So I'm just going to appear on the
doorstep like some badly written
porno.

BENNY

When you got a shitload of blow,
what is the one thing you want to
do?

KATYA

I want to fuck.

From inside the car, we see two FILIPINO HOOKERS walk up to
the house and get stopped by The Russian.

BENNY

Exactly.

Benny looks out the window of the car.

FILIPINO HOOKER #1

(To The Russian)

What do you mean the party's
cancelled?

The Russian hands each of the hookers a stack of bills. The
hookers turn around and walk in the other direction.

INT. BROOKLYN HOUSE- CONTINUOUS

The four Gunmen from the first scene sit around the living
room. Lines of coke all over the table; guns scattered
throughout the room.

GUNMAN #2

I don't want to do it, I've done it
three times already.

GUNMAN #4

Just do it.

GUNMAN #2

Okay.

(Getting into character)

You stupid cowboys. Do you know
who this belongs to? Do you know
who the fuck I am?

Gunman #1 smoking a cigarette ala Clint Eastwood picks up a
nerf gun.

GUNMAN #1
Some dead guy.

Gunman #1 fires the nerf gun at Gunman #2 "killing" him in this overacted reenactment of the first scene. The other two gunmen laugh hysterically while giving a standing ovation.

The doorbell rings.

GUNMAN #2
Fuck. They're here. Put the guns away. And clean up some of that coke.

GUNMAN #1
Dude, it's hookers. They've seen coke before.

GUNMAN #2
Look at the coffee table. It looks like a Motley Crue concert in here.

The Gunmen hide the guns under the couch. Gunman #3 tries to clean up the coke, but doesn't do a very good job. Gunman #2 opens the door to reveal Katya.

GUNMAN #2 (CONT'D)
Hey, come on in.

GUNMAN #4
Hey, we ordered two girls, and they're supposed to be Filipino.

KATYA
Filipino girls couldn't make it. Ukrainian girls can fuck like four girls.

GUNMAN #3
Damn bitch, that's all you had to say.

Katya walks up to Gunman #3 and puts her hand over his face. She moves it down so a single finger shushes his lips and then pushes him on to a chair. Katya pulls a boombox out of her bag and turns it on.

"Honey Bee" by Tom Petty plays as Katya begins to strip and seduces each of the Gunmen. She gets down to her g-string.

GUNMAN #4
I love the Ukraine!

GUNMAN #3
So how're we gonna work this?

GUNMAN #4
I got first.

GUNMAN #1
This isn't like shotgun rules.

GUNMAN #4
Why not?

The song ends and "Thug Love" by Bone Thugs and Harmony featuring Tupac begins.

GUNMAN #2
(Aside)
Tupac? This is a weird choice for a stripper song.

GUNMAN #1
Because having to sit in the back of a Hyundai Excel and going last in a four on one are two completely different things. We rock, paper, scissors that shit.

On the first gunshot in the song, Benny shoots down the front door with a Pistol and hits the stereo, bringing the music to a sudden halt. Gunman #4 makes a move to go out the back door. The Russian comes from the back and cocks a shotgun.

BENNY
Hey guys. We're gonna need that coke back.

The Gunmen freeze and look at one another wondering what the next move is. Katya immediately starts grabbing her clothes.

GUNMAN #1
(To the other Gunmen)
Don't say nothing. He's not going to kill us.

Benny shoots Gunman #1 point blank. Blood splatters all over Katya.

BENNY
Why would you even think that?

GUNMAN #3
Oh shit! Ricky!

KATYA

Jesus Christ, Benny. You said you were going to wait. This top cost \$300.

BENNY

I'm sorry, but if I don't shoot this guy, they're not going to take me seriously.

KATYA

You are such an asshole.

Katya storms out the door.

BENNY

(after her)

I told you it was going to get messy.

The Russian forces the three remaining Gunmen onto the couch and makes them place their hands on the coffee table.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Where's the coke?

GUNMAN #3

Me?

BENNY

Well, I'm not talking to Ricky!

Gunman #2 sits on the end of the couch and notices a Samurai sword not too far from him. He sneaks his hand over in an attempt to grab it.

The Russian notices and hits Gunman #2 in the face with his shotgun. Then, The Russian grabs the Samurai sword and cuts off Gunman #4's hands. He screams in agony. Blood spurts everywhere.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Oh gross!

(To the Gunmen)

I can't stress how important it is to keep your hands on the table.

GUNMAN #4

I did keep my hands on the table.

(To The Russian)

Why did you cut my hands off?

THE RUSSIAN

Shut up.

BENNY

Yeah, why did you cut HIS hands off?

THE RUSSIAN

What the fuck do you care?

BENNY

I don't care, it's just...weird.

(Pause, then to Gunman #3)

You, Sideburns, please just tell us where the coke is.

SIDEBURNS

If I tell you. You're just gonna kill me.

BENNY

Come on, Sideburns. Cocaine. Where?

SIDEBURNS

It's not here. We can take you to it.

Benny shoots Sideburns in the head, killing him.

GUNMAN #2

Why'd you kill him?

BENNY

One, I don't believe him. And two, if the coke is somewhere else, I don't need three of you to take me there. I just need one.

(To Gunman #4)

And I just had my car reupholstered, so that leaves you shit out of luck.

GUNMAN #4

My hands man, my fucking hands.

BENNY

(To Gunmen #2)

Look, I approach everything very logically.

(MORE)

BENNY (CONT'D)

However, you, Head Wound, and especially you, Stumpy, know first hand that The Russian is a bit of a wild card.

STUMPY

(To The Russian)

My hands man, why'd you cut off my fucking hands?

THE RUSSIAN

I've had enough of this asshole.

The Russian raises the Samurai sword to Stumpy, ready to strike.

STUMPY

Freezer! Freezer! It's in the freezer!

The Russian stops mid-strike, goes to the freezer and opens it.

THE RUSSIAN

It's here.

BENNY

Thank you, Stumpy.

Benny shoots Stumpy in the head and turns the gun to head wound.

GUNMAN #2

Ralph wasn't my idea. I just went along!

BENNY

I don't care.

Gunman #2's head explodes and blood goes everywhere. Benny is covered in blood. He looks at The Russian who lowers his weapon.

BENNY (CONT'D)

I thought we weren't going to use the shotgun.

THE RUSSIAN

I forgot.

BENNY

You forgot? I look like a fucking Tarantino film over here.

THE RUSSIAN

I'm sorry.

BENNY

How am I gonna walk out like this?

Benny goes to the mirror and wipes off his face. He goes to the closet and grabs one of the gunmen's jackets and puts it on over his jacket.

BENNY (CONT'D)

We have a plan for a reason.

THE RUSSIAN

I said I was sorry, what do you want me to do? Suck your dick?

BENNY

You need to work on your apologies.

They exit the house.

INT. KADAKIAN'S OFFICE- THE NEXT MORNING

Benny and The Russian sit across from Kadakian.

KADAKIAN

How did it go?

Benny pulls out the coke. There is blood on the bag.

BENNY

It was messy.

KADAKIAN

Good.

Kadakian takes out a thick envelope. The Russian takes it as the two get up to leave.

BENNY

It was a pleasure working with you.

KADAKIAN

The pleasure was all mine.

BENNY

And remember, we were never here.

KADAKIAN

Of course.

Benny and The Russian exit.

KADAKIAN (CONT'D)

(to O.S.)

Zakar, get that fat wop on the phone.

EXT. AUTO SHOP- CONTINUOUS

Benny and The Russian walk out of the auto shop carrying their envelope full of cash.

THE RUSSIAN

What do you want to do now?

BENNY

Well, we have to give Katya her money anyway...

INT. PUSSYCAT FACTORY- LATER

MONTAGE:

Benny and The Russian take a shot. The Russian takes it with ease and Benny struggles. The Russian laughs at Benny and Benny hits The Russian on the shoulder. The Russian takes the rest of Benny's shot.

Benny and The Russian hand Katya an envelope. She half-smiles and then Benny takes out a few extra hundreds and hands them to her. Katya kisses Benny on the mouth. Benny is taken happily off-guard, but then points to The Russian and Katya kisses The Russian on the cheek.

Benny and The Russian drink cocktails in front of the stage and tip the DANCERS. An extremely beautiful STRIPPER saunters over to Benny and grabs him by the hand. Smiling he follows her...

Back in the VIP room, the Stripper gives Benny a lap dance. He shows off a twenty dollar bill and then shoves it down his pants. The Stripper shakes her head. Benny then pulls out a fifty dollar bill and shoves it down his pants. The Stripper goes after the fifty.

END MONTAGE.

INT. PUSSYCAT FACTORY BATHROOM- CONTINUOUS

Benny walks in to the bathroom and passes a LARGE BLACK MAN standing at the sink. Benny goes into a stall and does his business. When he comes out, the man is still at the sink.

As Benny washes his hands, the black man catches Benny's eye in the mirror.

BENNY

Yo, Lawrence Taylor, what the fuck
are you looking at?

Lawrence Taylor continues to stare at him in the reflection. Benny shakes his hands dry and walks out of the bathroom.

INT. PUSSYCAT FACTORY- CONTINUOUS

We follow Benny back to the bar where The Russian waits with a couple of dancers.

BENNY

So where's that shot?

The Russian pours two more for the dancers. The four clink glasses and down the shots.

ALL

Woohoo!

BENNY

I'm the baddest mother-fucker in
the world!

A little time cut to:

Our guys have been here awhile. Benny is completely exhausted. The Stripper sits next to Benny resting her head on his shoulder. The Russian, zoned out, drinks Vodka straight from the bottle. The MANAGER walks up.

MANAGER

I love you guys, but you've been
here for fourteen hours. Please,
please, get the fuck outta here.

EXT. PUSSYCAT FACTORY- DAWN

Benny and The Russian walk out of the club. As the door closes, they start to head toward the car.

BENNY

You in the mood for waffles? I
could really go for some waffles.

Suddenly, The Russian is SHOT IN THE NECK! Grasping his neck with one hand The Russian grabs the door. Bullets fly and The Russian is unable to get back inside the club. He can only use the door for cover. Benny dives behind the door to shield himself from getting shot as well.

Benny, with his back against the wall, grabs his gun.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Did he get you...oh, he got you.
Who the fuck was that?

EXT. NEARBY ROOFTOP- SAME TIME

The same large black man from the bathroom (who we now realize is THE BLACK PHANTOM) shoots at the open door with a scope rifle. The bullets do not penetrate the door. The man drops the rifle and picks up a higher caliber machine gun.

EXT. PUSSYCAT FACTORY- SAME TIME

Back to Benny and The Russian behind the door.

THE RUSSIAN

Is it bad?

BENNY

It's not good.
(Thinking for a second)
Quick! Give me the money. I'm
going to take off that way.
Whatever you do, don't let go of
that door.

THE RUSSIAN

What about me?

BENNY

No offense dude, but you're shot in the fucking neck. You're clearly dead. Come on, give me the money.

The Russian takes his hand off of his neck wound and grabs his gun. Blood spurts out.

THE RUSSIAN

If you take the money, I'll shoot you in your fucking neck.

BENNY

Would you listen to yourself? You are being so selfish right now.

The machine guns rip through the door killing The Russian. Benny reaches in The Russian's jacket to get the money and another hail of gunfire flies through the door. Bullets whiz by him. Benny ducks against the wall again.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Shit shit shit!

Benny can see the envelope of money in The Russian's jacket. Benny again moves toward The Russian's body to go for the money, but another blast of machine gun bullets sprays through the door and Benny goes for cover again.

BENNY (CONT'D)

God damnit!

Benny takes off running along the building. The Russian's limp body loses it's grip on the door.

EXT. NEARBY ROOFTOP- SAME TIME

We see the door close through the scope on The Black Phantom's gun. There is only one body lying dead outside the club. Running for his life, Benny slips around the corner and into the alley.

The Black Phantom takes out a handgun, cocks it, and runs down the fire escape and after Benny.

EXT. STREET- CONTINUOUS

Benny runs frantically. Looking behind him, sees The Black Phantom running after him. Buildings line the street. To his left, Benny sees a small alley and runs down it.

At the end of the alley is a railing overlooking the train tracks. A bullet hits the railing inches from Benny. He looks back to see The Black Phantom more than a hundred yards away, running toward him, gun pointed.

Benny climbs onto the other side of the railing and tries to make his way to a fire escape on one of the nearby buildings. Another bullet hits the railing startling Benny. He falls and lands on a moving train as it emerges out of the tunnel underneath the street. Realizing he's not dead, Benny begins to laugh.

The Black Phantom comes to the edge of the railing. As the train moves, Benny's gets smaller.

BENNY
Fuck you, Phantom!

Benny flips The Phantom off, knowing he's safe. Suddenly, his middle finger is shot off. That must have been 200 yards! Benny grasps his hand in pain and the train speeds forward and The Black Phantom is no longer in sight.

BENNY (CONT'D)
Oh God! My fucking finger!

INT. BATHROOM- LATER

Benny, hand in pocket, stumbles into a dirty bathroom.

BENNY
It's not that bad, it's not that bad, it's not that-

Benny takes his hand out of his pocket to see that his middle finger is completely severed at the knuckle.

BENNY (CONT'D)
-Oh fuck!

Writhing in agony, he grabs paper towels and begins to bandage what's left of his finger.

INT. KADAKIAN'S OFFICE- LATER

Kadakian works behind his desk. Voices can be heard outside the door.

ZAKAR (O.S.)
You can't go in there!

BENNY (O.S.)

Fuck you!

Benny storms into Kadakian's office followed by Zakar.

ZAKAR

Give me your weapon!

BENNY

My weapon stays right here.

(To Kadakian)

You hear me, you slippery Armenian
fuck!

Zakar looks to Kadakian who shakes his head. Zakar punches
Benny in the face and grabs his gun.

KADAKIAN

Leave us.

Zakar exits.

KADAKIAN (CONT'D)

Have a seat.

Benny stands.

BENNY

What the hell happened?

KADAKIAN

Pascalli found out you did the job.

BENNY

What? How?

KADAKIAN

I told him.

BENNY

Why the fuck did you do that?

KADAKIAN

I needed my drugs and I needed
Pascalli's two best hitmen dead.
So why not kill two birds with one
stone?

BENNY

We're independent contractors.

KADAKIAN

Tell that to Pascalli.

BENNY

How did you know he was going to kill us over moonlighting? It's fucked up, but it's not necessarily a murdering offense. Why is he so pissed that he sent The Black-fucking-Phantom after us?

KADAKIAN

Because those "cowboys" that robbed me were working for Pascalli.

BENNY

Oh shit.

(Pause)

You knew that the whole time? Damn, that was a good play.

KADAKIAN

It gets better.

(Pause)

One of the cowboys was Pascalli's nephew.

BENNY

He wouldn't happen to be-

KADAKIAN

-the one who's hands you cut off.

BENNY

Shit.

KADAKIAN

I figured Pascalli would come after you. You guys are good. Odds you would come out: 50/50. You live, I pay you two hundred thousand to kill Pascalli. And that deal is still on the table.

BENNY

Now that the Russian is dead, how the fuck am I supposed to do that?

KADAKIAN

Not my problem.

Kadakian goes back to his work. This is Benny's cue to leave.

EXT. AUTO SHOP- CONTINUOUS

Benny takes out his cell phone and dials as he walks.

BENNY

Katya, thank God! You gotta get the fuck out of town.

INT. KATYA'S APARTMENT- SAME TIME

Katya sits nervously on her couch in a run-down apartment.

KATYA

Benny, where are you?

INTERCUT BETWEEN BENNY AND KATYA

BENNY

I'm around. The Armenian job is burnt. Pascalli's pissed; he hired this black mercenary that killed Vlad and shot my fucking finger off. If he knows about me and Vlad, he probably knows about you too, which means you gotta get out of town pronto.

KATYA

Why don't you come over here and get me?

BENNY

Get you? Are you listening to anything I'm saying right now? You're place is hot! Like Vida Guerra's ass hot. I show up there and it will probably get us both killed.

KATYA

Just tell me where you are and I'll meet you.

BENNY

No, no, you're not meeting me anywhere. Listen.

(MORE)

BENNY (CONT'D)

In ten minutes, I'm not going to be
anywhere near here!

Benny approaches the subway station.

BENNY (CONT'D)

I'll call you in a few days. Get
your shit and get out of there
right now.

KATYA

I can't.

BENNY

Why not?

KATYA

Because the black man is sitting
across from me right now.

Pull out to reveal The Black Phantom sitting across from
Katya, pointing a gun at her. Benny puts the phone down.

BENNY

Oh fuck!

KATYA

Benny, are you still there?

He's starting to lose it. He puts the phone back to his ear.

BENNY

Yeah. Yeah. I'm here.

KATYA

He's going to kill me, isn't he?

BENNY

Yeah...I'm sorry.

KATYA

Me too. Goodbye, Benny.

BENNY

Goodbye, Katya.

As Benny hangs up the phone, we hear a gunshot.

INT. BENNY'S CAR- LATER

Benny drives down a deserted road outside of the city. The
phone rings. Benny picks up his cell.

BENNY

Ricardo.

INT. SPANISH HARLEM APARTMENT- SAME TIME

RICARDO REYES lounges on a couch.

RICARDO

Holy shit, Benny, I thought you were dead.

INTERCUT BETWEEN BENNY AND RICARDO

BENNY

Not yet.

RICARDO

I heard Pascalli put The Black Phantom on your ass.

BENNY

Yup.

RICARDO

Heard he killed The Russian.

BENNY

Yup.

RICARDO

You're fucked.

BENNY

Yup. What do you know about The Black Phantom?

RICARDO

Same as everybody else, nothing.

BENNY

What's his name?

RICARDO

Black Phantom.

BENNY

No, what's the name on his birth certificate. I can't run "Black Phantom" through vital statistics.

RICARDO
Nobody knows.

BENNY
Not even a first name?

RICARDO
Not even a middle initial. He's a ghost.

BENNY
Do you know where he's from? Where he did time? Anything?

RICARDO
I heard he's from down south and he's a really good shot.

Benny looks down at his missing finger.

BENNY
Yeah, I heard that too.

RICARDO
You going after him?

BENNY
Well, down south doesn't really give me a whole lot to go after.

RICARDO
You still in the city?

Benny passes a sign that says, "You are now leaving New York".

BENNY
Not anymore.

RICARDO
What are you gonna do?

BENNY
I don't know. My options are pretty much shot. I'm gonna lay low for awhile, I'm thinking about even going straight.

Ricardo laughs.

RICARDO

"Benny the Brain" go straight?
Bro, you wouldn't last one week as
a civilian.

BENNY

What are you talking about? I have
a ton of other skills.

RICARDO

You're a contract killer, Benny.
What do you think you're gonna move
to Peoria, get a white picket fence
and a dog, sell insurance and then
come home at night to watch
American Idol? You'd be bored out
of your mind.

BENNY

I could do it, man. I don't need
all this "shoot 'em up" shit. I
could walk away from this. And to
be honest with you, I don't really
mind Ryan Seacrest.

RICARDO

Not one week.

Benny hangs up the phone and keeps driving.

INT. SMALL TOWN DINER- LATER THAT WEEK

Insert: Five Days, Eight Hours and Twenty-three minutes
later.

Benny, bored out of his mind, sits at a booth alone. He
smokes a cigarette and drinks a cup of coffee.

DINER PATRON #1 (O.S.)

There are no great ones left.
They're extinct. Nobody cares
about hard work or precision
anymore. It's no longer the best
of the best, it's just the best of
what's left.

DINER PATRON #2 (O.S.)

Well who were the great ones?

DINER PATRON #1 (O.S.)
 Who were the great ones? Who were
 the great ones? I'll tell you who
 the great ones were. Kelly
 Clarkson, Clay Aiken, Jennifer
 Hudson, Ruben Studdard. Now we're
 just stuck with a bunch of broke-
 down Bo Bices.

BENNY
 (To an O.S. Waitress)
 Check please.

DINER PATRON #1 (O.S.)
 And if I ever see that Sanjaya on
 the street, I will punch him in the
 face!

Benny rolls his eyes.

EXT. BENNY'S CAR- CONTINUOUS

Benny's car speeds down the same rural road as before. He
 passes a sign that says "Welcome to New York".

INT. ADULT VIDEO STORE- THE NEXT AFTERNOON

Freddy from Pascalli's office holds a basket full of porn and
 walks to the check-out counter where the ADULT VIDEO STORE
 CLERK waits.

FREDDY
 Hey, Howard.

ADULT VIDEO STORE CLERK
 Hey, Freddy. Happy Tuesday.

FREDDY
 What's new?

ADULT VIDEO STORE CLERK
 My kid's playing Danny Zuko in the
 school play.

FREDDY
 Bobby got the part?

ADULT VIDEO STORE CLERK
They almost gave it to that kid,
Tyler Schumaker, but Bobby beat him
out in the dance audition.

FREDDY
Good. That Schumaker kid's a real
asshole. Hey, you guys got
anything with Fiona Cheeks?

ADULT VIDEO STORE CLERK
Let me see.

The Adult Video Store Clerk looks at the new returns behind
him.

ADULT VIDEO STORE CLERK (CONT'D)
We got this one, but it's pretty
filthy, man.

Freddy looks at the cover.

FREDDY
Uh, I'm just gonna buy this one.

ADULT VIDEO STORE CLERK
That will be \$54.19.

Freddy hands him the money and heads for door.

ADULT VIDEO STORE CLERK (CONT'D)
Have a good night.

FREDDY
You know I will.

They both laugh as Freddy exits.

EXT. ADULT VIDEO STORE- CONTINUOUS

Freddy walks to his car and puts the key in the door.
Suddenly, he's clubbed in the back of the head. Freddy is
knocked unconscious.

INT. FREDDY'S APARTMENT- A FEW HOURS LATER

Freddy groggily comes to and realizes he's tied to a chair in
his own apartment. He looks around and his gaze falls to one
place.

FREDDY

Benny.

BENNY

Hey, Freddy.

FREDDY

How did you find me?

BENNY

You go to Sloppy Joe's every Tuesday. How could I not find you?

Benny looks through the porn.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Gross. Gross. Too many black guys. Gross. Not enough black guys. Fiona Cheeks? I'm gonna hang onto this one.

FREDDY

What do you want?

BENNY

Information.

FREDDY

Fuck you.

Benny reaches over to the table and picks up a sledgehammer.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

What are you doing with that sledgehammer?

BENNY

Fuck you.

Benny smashes Freddy's foot with the sledgehammer. Freddy screams out in pain.

FREDDY

That's my fucking foot, you asshole!

BENNY

Black Phantom. Go.

FREDDY

I don't know nothing about The Black Phantom.

BENNY

Wrong answer.

Benny smashes Freddy's other foot with the sledgehammer. Freddy screams out in agony and begins to whimper.

FREDDY

Benny, Benny, please. I don't know nothing about The Black Phantom. You can hit me with that thing as many times as you want.

BENNY

I don't want to hit you. This thing's heavy as shit! Give me a name, Freddy.

FREDDY

I don't know his name.

Benny gets ready to swing the sledgehammer towards Freddy's knee.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

No. Stop. Stop. I don't know his name. Nobody does.

BENNY

Bullshit.

Benny smashes Freddy's knee. Freddy wails.

FREDDY

Fuck. God damnit, Benny.

BENNY

You are making this so much harder than it needs to be. All I'm asking for is a name.

FREDDY

Pascalli doesn't even know his name! Think about it, Benny. Why the fuck would I protect The Phantom?

BENNY

That's a good question. Why would you protect him? See now I think we're starting to get on the right track.

FREDDY

Can I have a cigarette, Benny?

Benny pulls out a pack of cigarettes, puts one in Freddy's mouth and lights it for him. Benny takes the cigarette from Freddy's mouth so he can exhale and then puts it back in.

BENNY

All right. Just tell me everything you do know about him. Now think real hard, because if you say, "I don't know anything," that makes me want to pick up the hammer again.

FREDDY

Okay. He's a black guy. Wears a lot of dark colors. Not much of a talker.

Again, Benny takes the cigarette from Freddy's mouth and then puts it back in after Freddy inhales.

BENNY

Okay, Freddy. I'm not going to hit you with the sledgehammer, because this was my fault. I want you to tell me things that will help me find him. An address.

Freddy shakes his head.

BENNY (CONT'D)

An accomplice.

Freddy shakes his head.

BENNY (CONT'D)

A city.

FREDDY

(excited)

Charlotte. Charlotte! Pascalli says he's from Charlotte. He's here now, but that's where he got his start. And if he's from Charlotte, he probably worked for-

FREDDY

-Joey Black.

BENNY

Joey Black.

Benny helps Freddy smoke again.

BENNY

Thank you, Freddy.

The cigarette is almost down to the filter. Benny walks behind Freddy and takes the cigarette from his mouth.

BENNY (CONT'D)

You done with this?

Benny takes out his gun and shoots Freddy in the head.

EXT. BENNY'S CAR- LATER

Benny's car passes a sign reading, "Charlotte 30 miles".

INT. NIGHTCLUB- LATE AT NIGHT

JOEY BLACK, a younger African American man, sits at a table in the empty club. Chairs are sit atop tables and the place is cleaned up from the night's activities. A huge pile of cash sits in front of Joey as he counts it. He then picks up his phone and dials.

JOEY BLACK

(into the phone)

Clarence...Clarence!...you short, nigga...\$200...I don't give a fuck if it's 3:00 in the morning. I want my \$200...Yeah, well it's only \$200 when you ain't the one coming outta pocket...I ain't concerned about the forty-eight hundred you gave me, I want to talk about the two hundred you didn't give me...You need to have my money by 8:00am or I'm gonna start charging you points. 8:00am, Clarence, 8:00am.

Joey hangs up the phone.

BENNY (O.S.)

You run a tight ship, Joey. I like that.

JOEY BLACK

Who the fuck are you and what the fuck are you doing in my club? We closed, bitch.

Joey reaches into his pocket, but before he can, Benny pulls his hand out of his pocket with a revolver at the end of it.

BENNY

Ah, ah. I run a tight ship too, Joey. Put those hands on the table while I get that gun.

Joey puts his hands on the table as Benny walks over and gets Joey's gun out of his pocket.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Give me your left hand behind your back, and then the right.

Joey cooperates and puts his hands behind his back.

JOEY BLACK

Ah, you a dumb motha-fucker. You gonna rob me? I thought you was smart for a second. I'm going to sic every nigga in Charlotte on your dumb cracker-ass.

BENNY

I don't live in Charlotte. I live in New York.

JOEY BLACK

Oh, you one of them greasy Italian guinea motha-fuckers. You gonna sell a shipment to me and then jack your own fucking shipment.

BENNY

I'm not Italian. I'm Dutch.

Joey stares at him in disbelief. A moment of clarity as Joey Black realizes he's in much greater danger than he initially thought.

JOEY BLACK

Benny Bonnema.

Benny reaches into his jacket pocket and pulls out a pack of cigarettes.

He takes out two, gives one to Joey and lights it for him much like he did for Freddy. Joey Black takes a long drag.

JOEY BLACK (CONT'D)

What do you want?

BENNY

I want The Black Phantom.

JOEY BLACK

I can't give you what I don't have.

BENNY

I need an address, Joey. I need a phone number. I need a name.

JOEY BLACK

I don't got any of that shit, man.

BENNY

Joey, Joey, Joey. It's not looking good man.

Benny takes the cigarette out of Joey's mouth and flicks it across the room. Benny takes out a can of gasoline and starts pouring it on Joey Black.

JOEY BLACK

What the fuck, man? What the fuck? Don't pour that shit on me! Stop, man, stop!

BENNY

You need to stop protecting him. Stop worrying about who's going to kill you later and start focusing on who's going to kill you now.

JOEY BLACK

I told you, I don't have any of that shit!

BENNY

Bullshit. He did jobs for you! How the fuck did you call him.

JOEY BLACK

He calls me, man.

BENNY

From what number?

JOEY BLACK

It's a different number. He changes it every two weeks.

BENNY

Does he have a kid? Does he have a wife? What are their names? You better give me something, Joey.

JOEY BLACK

He's got a wife, but I never met her. And he's got a kid. I met the kid. I met the kid a bunch of times.

BENNY

Okay, good. What's the kid's name?

JOEY BLACK

I don't know, we just called him Lil' Phan.

Benny puts his head in his hands out of frustration.

JOEY BLACK (CONT'D)

But the kid's like a prodigy or some shit. He's real good on the fuckin' piano. He's like a little Mozart or some shit.

BENNY

Keep talking.

JOEY BLACK

He would come in here and play the piano sometimes on the weekends. And, and, The Phantom was always complaining that Charlotte was too small and he needed to move somewhere the kid could get a break. He would always say that, man. Always talking about that kid being the next Ray Charles or some shit.

BENNY

And that's why he moved to New York. Well that's God damn adorable. You got a picture of the kid? Anything on YouTube I can look at?

JOEY BLACK

Nah, man. Phantom never let us film nothing. He was real crazy about that shit. But I got a recording. It's a CD.

BENNY

Where?

JOEY BLACK

It's in the cabinet. Right over there.

Joey Black gestures toward a cabinet. Benny walks over and opens it.

JOEY BLACK (CONT'D)

It's behind the Folgers.

Benny pulls out a CD in a jewel case. "Lil' Phan's Hot Single" is scrawled in permanent marker across the front. Benny puts the CD in the CD player and turns it on. Beautiful piano music fills the room.

BENNY

Not bad.

JOEY BLACK

I told you, man. The kid's fucking hot.

BENNY

This a cover?

JOEY BLACK

Nah, the kid wrote this shit himself. And he's only like eleven years old.

Benny holds up the lighter.

BENNY

Is there anything else you can give me, Joey?

JOEY BLACK

No man, I told you, I told you everything I know. Don't burn me, man. Don't burn me, Benny!

Benny puts the lighter back into his pocket.

BENNY

Okay.

JOEY BLACK

Oh, thank God you believe me.
Thank you, Jesus. Thank you,
Jesus.

BENNY

A man doused in gasoline can always
be trusted.

Benny leaves.

INT. MANHATTAN MUSIC ACADEMY AUDITORIUM- NIGHT

A TEACHER takes the stage in the filled auditorium.

TEACHER

And for our next performance,
Manhattan Music Academy proudly
presents a new grade six transfer
student, Garrett Richards, playing
his original piece, Ballantyne
Sonata.

Applause as an eleven year old black boy, GARRETT, takes the stage and sits at the grand piano. He places his hands on the keys, getting ready to play.

INT. NEW JERSEY MUSIC SHOP- NIGHT

Guitars line the walls. Strategically placed used pianos and drum sets stand throughout the floor. A black man, WILLIE, 50s, heavyset, sits behind the counter of the empty store. It's almost closing time. The bell jingles as Benny walks into the store.

WILLIE

Benny Bonnema.

BENNY

Mississippi Willie.

WILLIE

What are you doing in Jersey? I
thought you were dead.

BENNY
Not yet. I want you to listen to
something for me.

INT. MANHATTAN MUSIC ACADEMY AUDITORIUM- NIGHT

Garrett begins to play the same song we heard on the CD.

INT. NEW JERSEY MUSIC SHOP- NIGHT

The song picks up right where we left it as it plays on the
CD player.

WILLIE
That's good. That's some good
keywork.

BENNY
You ever heard anything like that
before?

WILLIE
No man, but that's good. That's
real good.

INT. MANHATTAN MUSIC ACADEMY AUDITORIUM- NIGHT

Garrett continues the song.

INT. NEW JERSEY MUSIC SHOP- NIGHT

Benny and Willie listen as the song continues.

BENNY
Now if this was your kid, and you
could send him to any music school
in the city, which one would it be?

WILLIE
Is money an object?

BENNY
Money is not an object.

INT. MANHATTAN MUSIC ACADEMY AUDITORIUM- NIGHT

The song becomes more and more intense as it nears the end.

INT. NEW JERSEY MUSIC SHOP- NIGHT

The same place in the song.

WILLIE

There's a school in Harlem that I'm
partial to, and there's also a
couple of good ones in the village.
But if money was no object, I would
have to send him to the Manhattan
Music Academy.

INT. MANHATTAN MUSIC ACADEMY AUDITORIUM- NIGHT

The song ends and everyone in audiences bursts into applause.

TEACHER

Wasn't that something? That was
Garrett Richards.

The crowd continues to clap. The camera turns toward the audience and we see The Black Phantom and his wife, ALICIA, applauding loudly. They smile and kiss. The camera pans over different hands clapping across the row to the end where we see a hand missing a middle finger clapping.

INT. BLACK PHANTOM'S HOUSE- ABOUT MIDNIGHT

The Black Phantom enters the kitchen wearing a wife beater and some pajama bottoms. For a guy in his late thirties, he's incredibly ripped.

He opens the refrigerator, drinks some orange juice right from the carton and then puts it back in the refrigerator. We hear a gun cock from the living room. The Black Phantom freezes and turns to see Benny sitting on the couch in the living room in the dark.

BENNY

Hey man, why don't you have a seat
and stay awhile.

Benny motions to the recliner across from him. The Black Phantom, hands up, looks to the breadbox in the kitchen.

BENNY (CONT'D)

The .38's not in the breadbox. I also got the Tech9 in the hatbox and the Desert Eagle taped to the back of the television. I got all three.

Benny motions once again for the Phantom to sit in the recliner. The Black Phantom moves over and takes a seat. Benny takes out a cigarette for himself and offers one to the Phantom.

BENNY (CONT'D)

(Re: his finger)

Excellent shot by the way. That shot, from that model gun, from that distance, do you have any idea how many people in the world could have made that shot, statistically speaking?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I dunno, a hundred?

BENNY

Eleven. Eleven people in the world could have made that shot. You want a cigarette?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I'd prefer it if you didn't smoke in here.

BENNY

Yeah, well I'd prefer it if I had ten fucking fingers. Take one.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

My wife would kill me.

BENNY

I think, given the circumstances, she wouldn't mind.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

You don't have to live with her.

Benny laughs.

BENNY

You know, for a mass murderer, you're pretty witty.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
 Let's cut the shit, I know you
 didn't come here to compliment me.
 Are you going to kill me or not?

Benny lights up his cigarette and starts smoking.

BENNY
 Since I'm the one with the gun, how
 'bout I ask the questions.
 (Pause)
 I hacked into your military service
 record. Are you as good as they
 say you are?

THE BLACK PHANTOM
 No. I'm much much better.

BENNY
 Good. Pascalli wants me dead. I
 had one way out, and you killed
 him.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
 So you want the money I got for The
 Russian's contract?

BENNY
 No. That was a clean contract.
 You earned that money fair and
 square. That's your money. You
 and me-

THE BLACK PHANTOM
 -you and I-

Benny smiles.

BENNY
 You and I are going to take down
 the Pascalli family.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
 (sarcastic)
 Oh! So the two of us are going to
 take down the entire Italian mafia!

BENNY
 (laughing)
 Italian mafia? Oh man! You watch
 too much television in Charlotte,
 Phantom.

(MORE)

BENNY (CONT'D)

The Lucky Luciano, Carlo Gambino, John Gotti days are over, man. Pascalli's got like eight fucking guys. He's a glorified crew at best.

Benny looks around for something to ash into. There are no ashtrays or dishes around. The house is immaculate. He grabs a framed picture of the family smiling and knocks it down to use as an ashtray. The Phantom stares at the picture.

BENNY (CONT'D)

What do you think?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I think I'll have one of those cigarettes now.

Benny lights another cigarette in his mouth and gives it to the Phantom. The Phantom inhales deeply.

THE BLACK PHANTOM (CONT'D)

What do you get out of it?

BENNY

My safety.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

And?

BENNY

And I get two hundred thousand from Kadakian when the job's over.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

And I assume we're not sharing that.

BENNY

Nope. So what do you think?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I think you're a really smart guy and if you're gonna use me to take down Pascalli, you're going to have to put a gun in my hand. And if I have a gun, what is going to stop me from turning that gun on you and eradicating myself from this situation?

BENNY

Well, this is the part of the plan that you're really, really not gonna like.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Continue.

BENNY

You're going to have to use your family as collateral.

The Phantom is taken aback by the audacity of this statement.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

No deal.

BENNY

You don't have another option.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

There is one.

The Phantom reaches for the picture frame to ash out his cigarette.

BENNY

What's that?

The Phantom picks up the picture frame and throws it like a ninja star right into Benny's hand knocking the gun halfway across the room. Benny jumps up and chases after the gun.

The Phantom reclines the LazyBoy and reaches underneath the chair.

Benny fumbles for the gun and we hear the hammer of the revolver cock back.

Reveal the Phantom holding a .44 Magnum revolver pointed directly at Benny.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

We're going with Plan B, bitch.

Benny looks at him with terror in his eyes and raises his hands.

BENNY

Don't shoot, don't shoot.

The Phantom pulls the trigger. *Click*. Nothing. He pulls the trigger back again. *Click*. Nothing. Benny smiles.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Did I say I got all three? I meant four.

Benny flicks his wrist to reveal another handgun hidden in his sleeve.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Mother fucker.

BENNY

Oh my God, you should have seen the look on your face.

(Imitating The Phantom)

"We're going with Plan B, bitch."

(Laughing)

That was priceless. Sorry. Sorry. One thing you gotta know about me, I have a pretty dark sense of humor. You just tried to kill me, and I don't even care. But it does illustrate my point that I'm definitely going to need collateral.

Just then, we hear a door open and footsteps coming down the hallway. Alicia walks sleepy-eyed in to the living room.

ALICIA

What the hell's going on in here? Are you smoking?

BENNY

Please tell me she knows what you do or else this is going to be a whole thing.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

She knows.

BENNY

Thank God. Alright, you two, sit on the couch.

The Phantom and Alicia move to the couch and Benny takes a seat in the recliner. Benny picks up his other gun and puts it in his side.

ALICIA

Honey, why is there a gun pointed at me in my living room.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I'm going to give you the short short version.

BENNY

Spaceballs. Nice.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I took a contract on him, he got away-

ALICIA

Why did he get away?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Baby, I love you. But not now. As I was saying, he got away, and if I don't do this job for him, he's going to kill me.

ALICIA

Just do the job.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

If you'll let me finish, he's going to need you and Garrett as collateral.

ALICIA

What do you mean, as collateral?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Answer the woman, Benny.

BENNY

I got this chamber. It's really a safe, but I call it a chamber so it doesn't sound as awful. I use it for kidnappings, ransoms, etc. It pumps out oxygen for up to thirty-six hours which will give us plenty of time to get killed. But if we don't, we kill Pascalli, get my money and open in the safe. In that order.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

No way. Just kill me and get the fuck out of my house.

Alicia shoots him a look.

THE BLACK PHANTOM (CONT'D)

There's no other way. We do like this, then you and Garrett are safe.

Benny raises his hand, his look showing he's going to give some really bad news.

BENNY

She's seen my face. She shows up at my hearing with that cute kid, there goes my shot at parole right there. Good news is, as long as the kid doesn't wake up, he's cool. So you might want to hurry up and make a decision.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Can you give us a minute?

BENNY

As long as I can still see you.

The Phantom and Alicia go over to the corner and begin to whisper.

ALICIA

Before you answer me, I don't want to hear any of your narcissistic, macho, tough-guy bullshit, because this is about our son. Can you do that for me?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Yeah.

ALICIA

This Pascalli guy, can you get him?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Yeah.

ALICIA

Promise me. Say the words.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
I can get him. I promise.

ALICIA
Then get that mother-fucker.

INT. GARRETT'S BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

The Black Phantom opens the door and walks quietly into the room where Garrett sleeps. He sits down on the edge of the bed and rubs Garrett's back, and slowly waking him up.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
Hey, G. Time to get up.

Garrett stirs away and rubs his eyes.

GARRETT
Daddy, what time is it?

THE BLACK PHANTOM
What time is it? What, you gotta go to work in the morning?

GARRETT
No Daddy, I don't have a job.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
So listen, your dad's gotta do something.

GARRETT
Do you have to go on another one of your top secret CIA missions?

THE BLACK PHANTOM
Yeah. I need you to be a really brave boy for me and take care of your Mama. Can you do that?

GARRETT
What do you need me to do?

THE BLACK PHANTOM
Well this mission, is like no other mission Daddy's ever been on.

GARRETT
Is it dangerous?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Yeah.

GARRETT

Cool!

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Yeah. And this time I actually need your help.

GARRETT

Do I get a gun?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

No. Look, this time, the bad guys are after your mom, and I have to go kill the bad guys before they find her.

GARRETT

Is it because she can be a real bitch sometimes?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

What? Who'd did you hear that from?

GARRETT

I heard you say that to Uncle Darrell on the phone last week.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Yeah, but you can't tell her that though, this is very important. You got it?

GARRETT

Got it.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

So you guys are going to go to a secret hideout with Agent Benny, while Daddy kills all the bad guys. And after they're all dead, I'll come and get you.

Garrett looks over and sees Benny standing in the doorway.

GARRETT

Is Agent Benny a white guy?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Yeah.

GARRETT

But you told me never to trust white people.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I know what I said, Garrett, just trust me, okay?

GARRETT

Okay.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I just want you to know that I love you, and I know I'm not perfect, but no matter what happens, you're the most important thing in my life.

GARRETT

Are you scared?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

A little bit.

GARRETT

Don't be scared, Daddy. You'll come back. You always come back.

The Black Phantom hands Garrett a child-sized backpack.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Here, I packed a bag for you. Go wait in the living room, I need to talk to your mom.

Garrett grabs his bag and walks out of his bedroom passing his mother who walks in and hugs the Phantom.

THE BLACK PHANTOM (CONT'D)

God, that was hard. I'm so sorry.

ALICIA

Don't do that, I knew what I was getting into.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I don't want you to die.

ALICIA
Then save me.

BENNY
Oh, aggggh.

Benny shoots the Phantom in the neck with a taser.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
Damn it.

BENNY
Sorry, man. I just can't have you following me.

The Phantom falls to the ground, paralyzed.

BENNY (CONT'D)
(to Alicia)
Listen, I'm going to keep my gun in my pocket 'cause I don't want to scare the kid. Just don't do anything stupid, alright?

THE BLACK PHANTOM
Benny! Anything happens to my family, anything goes wrong and you're a dead man.

BENNY
Well, duh.

EXT. BLACK PHANTOM'S HOUSE- DAYLIGHT

Benny pulls up and the Phantom comes out of the house. Benny gets out of the car.

BENNY
We're taking your car.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
Why are we taking my car?

BENNY
Because I'm dead. Why the fuck would we take my car?

INT. PHANTOM'S ESCALADE- CONTINUOUS

The Phantom drives. Both he and Benny are silent. It's awkward.

BENNY

Whatcha thinkin'?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I'm thinking the same thing I've been thinking since you showed up in my living room. Why did I shoot The Russian first?

BENNY

Why did you shoot The Russian first?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

The Russian was worth forty. You were worth ten.

BENNY

Un-fucking-believable. Ten thousand. This is the problem with organized crime. Everyone overestimates the brawn and underestimates the brains.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

If you're the brains, why'd you take the Kadakian suicide job?

BENNY

'Cause when I didn't want to do it, The Russian called me a faggot.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

What are you, Marty McFly?

BENNY

From *Back to the Future*? As in,
 (As Biff)
 "What are you, chicken?"
 (Back to himself)
 You like that movie?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Of course. I love that movie.

BENNY

Me too. You're a pretty smart guy.
You were as hard as shit to find.
It took me five days just to get
your name. Oh, but when I got it-

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Shut up.

BENNY

Oh come on.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I'm serious. Don't say it.

BENNY

Michael Richards.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Damn it.

BENNY

Now how, does a black militant like
yourself wind up with the name,
Michael Richards?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

It's a very common name. And the
sad thing is? I loved that damn
show.

BENNY

So what do you want me to call you?
I feel kind of weird calling you
"The Black Phantom" the whole time.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

It's not "The Black Phantom." It's
"The Phantom." I was "The Phantom"
for four years working down south
and then as soon as I came up North
and started working for white
people, everything that's black,
you have to label as black.

BENNY

Oh, don't give me that "white
people" shit. You people do it
too.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

"You people?"

BENNY

"You people who happen to be black." Is that less offensive?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

No we don't.

BENNY

You're telling me, that a black girl loses her black boyfriend to a white girl, she's gonna leave race out of the story? Like she and her girlfriend would be out, and see her man's new girl and the friend would be, "Oh, she's white? You never mentioned that." "I didn't think it was important." Bullshit.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Mike, man. Just call me Mike.

BENNY

Can I call you Kramer?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

No. Call me Mike.

BENNY

Well, Mike. Once I got your name, I hacked into the military intelligence database.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

How'd you do that?

BENNY

Oh, the shit I know how to do, Mike, will blow your fucking mind. Looking at your file, I mean, wow. That blew my fucking mind.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I don't wanna talk about that.

BENNY

Just trying to make conversation, I'm bored...Why'd you join?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Well, when I got out of Grambling, and I didn't get drafted like I thought I would, I didn't have a whole lot going on.

BENNY

You thought you were gonna get drafted? You were 1AA.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Walter Payton, Steve McNair, Jerry Rice, all 1AA.

BENNY

Doug Williams. He went to Grambling, why didn't you mention him?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I'm not a big Doug Williams fan.

BENNY

What? Washington Redskins Superbowl XXII MVP. First black quarterback to win the Superbowl? How can you not like Doug Williams. You're black. Isn't that in the rules somewhere?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

No. Liking Doug Williams is not in the Black Rulebook. I'm a Cowboys fan.

BENNY

Cowboys! You gotta be shittin' me. I bleed burgundy and gold, baby.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Anyway, I wasn't doing shit. And then September 11th happened and I figured, somebody has got to save the world, why not me?

BENNY

So how do you go from a highly decorated captain to a gun for hire?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Because they lied to me. I joined because if we didn't get Sadaam he was gonna take over the entire world. I drank their Kool-Aid and ate their Freedom Fries. But there were no weapons of mass destruction and we didn't take down the bad guys. We went after the guys who had the oil and wouldn't sell it to us. So when I got out, the army had made me this finely-tuned killing machine and I didn't want to waste it. I just wanted to decide who the bad guys were.

BENNY

Sadaam Hussein was a mass-murderer. He killed thousands of his own people.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Nobody even talked about Sadaam until after they couldn't find the WMDs, they changed their stance to, "Well, he's a dick anyway." A dick who happens to have a shitload of oil.

BENNY

The thing about oil is, we fucking need it. This Escalade that you're driving doesn't run on world peace. You're no better than those fucking liberals. You wanna eat the hamburger, but god forbid we kill any of the cows.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I killed a shitload of cows. I can't believe it. I'm in the car with a damn Republican.

Silence.

BENNY

(To the tune of Deep Blue
Something's "Breakfast at
Tiffany's")

You say that we've got nothing in common. No common ground to start from. And we're falling apart.

(MORE)

BENNY (CONT'D)

You'll say the world has come between us. Our lives have come between us. But I know you just don't care.

(Pause for effect)

And I said what about "Back to the Future?" He said, "I think I remember the film, and as I recall, I think, we both kinda liked it." And I said, "Well, that's the one thing we've got."

INT. PASCALLI'S BAR- LATER THAT MORNING

Pascalli sits in his usual booth with Nicky, Gino, Billy. The same four bodyguards protecting him. Apparently, this is what they do everyday.

The Black Phantom walks into the room carrying a body bag over his shoulder. He makes his way back to Pascalli's booth and roughly drops the bag down on the ground.

Billy comes up to frisk the Phantom, per procedure.

BILLY

Hey, Black Phantom, hope you don't mind. Just a little a formality.

Billy starts to pat down the Phantom. The Phantom glares at him and Billy stops.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Take your hands off me.

Billy takes his hands off. Pascalli nods.

GINO

Let's see that little Dutch faggot.

The Phantom unzips the body bag revealing Benny's face.

BILLY

Rest in peace, Benny Bonnema.

The Phantom zips it up fast.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Let's see my money.

PASCALLI

Billy, go count out ten grand.

Billy goes into the other room to count out the money.

PASCALLI (CONT'D)
You want a drink or something?

THE BLACK PHANTOM
Just the money is fine.

PASCALLI
All business. I like that. Hey,
Nicky, didn't I say that about this
guy?

NICKY
Yeah.

PASCALLI
What did I say about this guy?

NICKY
He's all business.

PASCALLI
That's right.

Billy comes back with a roll of ten thousand dollars.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
(To Billy)
I think I'll have that drink now.
Gimme a Ballantyne Sonata.

BILLY
What's in that?

THE BLACK PHANTOM
Look it up.

Billy goes over to the bar and begins to page through the bartending encyclopedia.

PASCALLI
How'd ya do it? What's the story
behind this hit?

THE BLACK PHANTOM
He missed. I didn't.

PASCALLI
Good story...Benny never was a good
shot anyway.

Pascalli laughs. Gino gets up from the booth.

GINO
 I gotta take a piss.
 (to Billy)
 Hey, make me one of those
 Ballantyne Sonatas too!

Gino heads the bathroom.

GINO (CONT'D)
 I don't usually drink that ghetto
 shit. But when in Rome...

Gino closes the door behind him. The Phantom stands up and walks toward the bathroom.

BILLY (O.S.)
 It's not in here.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
 Then I'll just have a-

The Phantom picks up a chair and wedges it under the doorknob of the bathroom.

THE BLACK PHANTOM (CONT'D)
 -McFly.

At the word "McFly," the body bag rips open and Benny springs up pointing a gun at Pascalli.

The Black Phantom jumps into action, pulls out his gun and shoots one of the bodyguards in the forehead.

Benny frantically shoots at Pascalli. Bullets go everywhere except into Pascalli.

Billy drops behind the bar and hides.

BILLY
 Holy shit! God damnit!

The Black Phantom takes out another bodyguard with a shot to the chest followed by a shot to the head.

Gino bangs on the bathroom door trying to get out. He begins shooting at the door, bullets barely miss the Phantom. The Phantom fires at the bathroom door, but bullets continue to come out.

The Phantom continues to shoot at the bathroom door.

Nicky points his gun at Benny and The Phantom shoots Nicky in the arm. The gun falls out of Nicky's hand.

NICKY

Fuck this.

Nicky runs into the back room.

The Phantom alternates between shooting at the door and shooting at the other two bodyguards.

Benny continues to fire at Pascalli until he runs out of bullets. He still hasn't hit Pascalli. Pascalli pulls out a gun and points it at Benny.

PASCALLI

Die, you Dutch faggot.

BENNY

Mike!

The Phantom takes out a new clip to try to hit Pascalli and realizes there is no time to reload. The Phantom throws the gun at Pascalli, hitting him in the nose. Pascalli falls back and drops his gun.

The Phantom pulls out his backup pistol and shoots the third bodyguard in the head, killing him.

Nicky comes out of the back room with a Tommy gun.

NICKY

Goodbye assholes!

The Phantom realizes Benny's in trouble. He rushes over to Benny and tackles him to the ground to protect him as Nicky starts laying down gunfire.

The Phantom points his gun at Nicky when he realizes he and Benny are in the direct line of fire from Pascalli who has gotten his gun back. He pushes Benny's head down and bullets narrowly miss Benny.

With gunfire coming from Pascalli, the remaining bodyguard, and Nicky's Tommy gun, the Phantom decides to call it a day.

The Phantom pulls Benny out the front door of the bar in the midst of heavy gunfire.

EXT. PASCALLI'S BAR- CONTINUOUS

Benny and The Phantom run out of the bar toward the Escalade. The Phantom pushes the keyless entry on the car, unlocking it and starting the engine.

Nicky runs out of the bar still shooting with the Tommy gun.

Benny and The Phantom jump in the car and drive away.

INT. PHANTOM'S ESCALADE- CONTINUOUS

Silence.

Silence.

Silence.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

What the fuck was that back there?
Are you kidding me? How did you
miss him?

BENNY

You said you were going to put him
right in front of me! The plan was
to put him right in front of me. I
WAS LIKE 30 FEET AWAY!

THE BLACK PHANTOM

You were 15 feet! You were 15 feet
away! God! You are a horrible
shot!

BENNY

Well, I was a much better shot
before someone blew one of my
fucking fingers off.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

And if you know you're such a
horrible shot, what the fuck are
you doing using a god damn six-
shooter?

BENNY

It was a 357 stainless steel,
magnum revolver. It was a gift
from Pascalli.

(MORE)

BENNY (CONT'D)

This ain't no "Cowboys and Indians six-shooter", it's a God damn hand cannon. You hit someone one time and he ain't coming back.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Oh yeah? Well what happens if you hit him none times? What happens then? I should have taken my chances back in my living room! You probably would have missed!

BENNY

Look, maybe you should just watch your tone.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Watch my tone?!

BENNY

Don't forget. I'm the one who's got your wife and kid in a safe.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Oh! You do have my family in a safe! I totally forgot! I thought I was doing this job for you because of your warm personality and marksmanship.

BENNY

Alright, look, I fucked up. I'm sorry. Let's get past this and focus on the task at hand. I mean if anything, this brought us closer.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

How so?

BENNY

Because now, Pascalli wants us both dead and it's a good thing we have your people in that safe.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

And why is that?!

BENNY

Because if I can get to your family, you better believe Pascalli can too.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
Fantastic.

Benny takes out his phone and dials. The phone rings as Benny and The Phantom continue their conversation.

BENNY
I'm calling Ricardo.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
Who the fuck is Ricardo?

BENNY
He's my one friend you didn't kill.
(into the phone)
Ricardo, it's Benny. I'm in a major fucking spot right here and I need a favor. You get a beat on Pascalli or any of his guys, hit me back. Call. Me. Back.

Benny hangs up the phone.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
So what now?

BENNY
We wait. We gotta kill some time and I fucked up, so whatever you want to do, we'll do.

INT. BOWLING ALLEY- THAT AFTERNOON

We open on Benny trying to get his fingers in the bowling ball. It's not easy to hold with one finger missing.

BENNY
(Re: bowling)
Really?

THE BLACK PHANTOM
You said anything.

BENNY
Of all the motels in all the world, I gotta pick the one across the street from a bowling alley.

Benny finally gets a handle on the ball and throws it down the lane. Gutter.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Damnit. Okay, now that we're calm, let's talk about the job. How many did you hit at Pascalli's?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Three definite. Maybe four.

BENNY

Who'd you get?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I don't know their names. Obviously not Pascalli. Obviously not the dude who came out with the Tommy gun-

BENNY

-That was Nicky Pascalli. His son. And where the fuck did he get a Tommy gun? The Smithsonian?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I got the really tall stocky dude with no neck.

BENNY

Marco.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I got the one with the eightball on his forearm.

BENNY

Eight ball.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

And the dude with the Paulie Wallnuts haircut.

BENNY

Lucky.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

And I might have gotten the one in the bathroom. That first dude that called you a Dutch faggot.

BENNY

That would be Gino. So that leaves Pascalli, Nicky, Billy, and maybe Gino. Four. Oh, and Frankie.

(MORE)

BENNY (CONT'D)

That's five. Okay, that's not terrible. Three down, five to go. That's not bad for a first strike.

The Phantom throws his bowling ball down the lane and gets a strike.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

There was only supposed to be one strike.

A WAITRESS comes by and drops some food off.

Benny tips the waitress, sits down and takes a huge bite of his burger. He looks over at The Phantom who is praying before he eats. Benny stares. The Phantom raises his head.

BENNY

You've got to be shittin' me.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

You don't believe in God.

BENNY

I don't believe in the Bible.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Why not?

BENNY

Why don't I believe that we all came from two people? That two of every species of animal got on a boat for forty days and nights? Why don't I believe a guy lived in the belly of a fish for three days with no oxygen? I dunno, I guess I'm just naive. Isn't there something about "Thou Shalt Not Kill" in there?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

"Judge not lest ye be judged."
Besides, I'm just casting out the wicked.

BENNY

Whatever helps you sleep at night.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

So what do you think life comes from? Just one big bang?

BENNY

I know, I know, I'm gonna say,
"yeah" and then you're gonna say,
"Well where did the bang come
from?".

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Then what do you believe?

BENNY

You know what I believe? I believe
life comes down to about seven or
eight lefts, when you shoulda taken
a right.

The Phantom ponders that statement.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

You know what? That's probably the
first intelligent thing you've said
since I've met you.

(Pause)

So what got you into the life?

BENNY

Why?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I'm bored. Just trying to make
conversation.

BENNY

What do you already know?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I just know that you're an egghead
that went to some Ivy League
school. Cornell or some shit.

BENNY

Cornell? Fuck you! I went to
Dartmouth. I was a white kid in a
little wannabee gang with my older
brother in the DC suburbs just
doing dumb kid shit. Slinging a
little, stealing a little. But all
good things must come to an end.
Some shit went down, people got
killed, and that was enough for me.
I hit the books again and got my
grades back up to a 4.0 and wrote
an essay on my life experiences.

(MORE)

BENNY (CONT'D)

Essay gets published, full-ride to Dartmouth.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I figured you for one of those rich white kids that got your education handed to you.

BENNY

Fuck no. I didn't join a gang because I thought it was cool, I joined because our lights got cut off. So I get to Dartmouth and I'm surrounded by all those white kids that you were just talking about. And the haves and have-nots don't mix so well. I guess old habits die hard. So I started robbing them, and I would get really good at getting the drop on their property. B&E was like an art form to me. I robbed the whole floor and my cousin hooked me up with a fence in New York.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

How come they never figured out it was you if you were the only one that didn't get robbed?

BENNY

Oh I robbed myself. Put on a real big tear-fest in front of everyone. I'd lay it on real thick too. I was like Phillip Seymour Hoffman or some shit.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

You never felt bad about that? Robbing from your friends?

BENNY

No! They had everything. I didn't feel bad for them! Wait, no, that's not true. I did feel bad one time. It was the third time I had robbed myself. I had this little thirteen inch television and I really played it up about how I didn't have my TV and who would do this and I really outdid myself. I could have gotten an Oscar for that one.

(MORE)

BENNY (CONT'D)

All the kids felt so bad they got their parents to chip in and buy me a 60" Sony with surround sound. I felt real bad about that shit.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Amazing. How'd you go from B&E to contract killer?

BENNY

So senior year, one of my professors was a degenerate gambler. And somehow he found out I was the one that was jacking everybody. I had to give him a cut or else he would get me kicked out of school. So he starts taxing me. I've got one semester left and he's trying to juice me for everything before I get that diploma. At the same time, he's raking up this huge debt with my roommate, who was his bookie. But my roommate doesn't have any muscle. My fence was tied in with this loan shark, so I bought the professor's debt from my roommate and I sold it to that motherfucker. And this dude is charging something crazy like 35 points. Naturally, the professor starts falling behind. He starts showing up to class with black eyes, broken legs. So he starts taxing me more. But even with the increase, he can't keep up. So then I go to the loan shark who's crazy. He's more concerned about the principle of getting stiffed than he is about actually getting the money. So when he took the contract out on my professor, I thought, "Why should someone else profit from this perfect plan I put together?". So I took it. I liked that shit; it was exciting. And after you do something like that, after you murder your Ethics professor for five grand, there's no way you can ever sit in a cubicle.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I think that story makes a pretty good case on why schools shouldn't offer scholarships anymore.

Benny laughs. Benny's cell phone rings.

BENNY

Oh shit, it's Ricardo.

Benny picks up the phone.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ, Ricardo, what took you so long? I'm literally dying over here. You got anything for me?

INT. RANDOM APARTMENT- SAME TIME

Ricardo stands in the middle of the apartment. Ricardo paces around the apartment with a bloody knife in his hand.

RICARDO

So I'm in Chelsea-

INTERCUT BETWEEN BENNY AND RICARDO

BENNY

What the fuck are you doing in Chelsea?

RICARDO

I know, right? I'm whacking out this poof-

BENNY

I believe the politically correct term is puff.

RICARDO

Whatever. But it's not a regular whack job. It's an information job too. And this dude is just not giving it up, man. And I'm trying everything.

Ricardo walks past the bed where we see a decapitated man in the background.

RICARDO (CONT'D)

For a pillow-biter, this dude was no joke. So I'm going through his phone, and he's got all these dirty text messages from a Gino V.

Close-up on a text message that reads, *"I'll be in the second to last stall, waiting for you to suck my huge cock."*

BENNY

No way.

RICARDO

And I'm thinking, I know a Gino V. So I check that number with the number in my phone, it's the same fucking guy.

BENNY

Gino is a poof.

RICARDO

He's supposed to meet him tonight at The Boiler Room.

Benny grabs the scorecard from the Phantom and begins to jot down some information.

BENNY

Okay, okay. Hey, I owe you. I know. I know. Late.

Benny hangs up the phone and walks back over to the Phantom.

BENNY (CONT'D)

The good news is, you didn't kill Gino.

INT. HANDICAP BATHROOM STALL- THAT NIGHT

Graffiti lines the walls of this gritty stall. Both Benny and the Phantom stare at a large hole in the stall that sits conveniently at waist level. Techno music can be heard pumping in the background.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

What's the plan?

BENNY

He's gonna stick his dick through that hole and you're gonna suck it.

(MORE)

BENNY (CONT'D)

And if he doesn't tell us where Pascalli is, you're gonna stop.

The Phantom stares at Benny, not laughing.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Okay, Plan B. He gets into the stall. You lock the door. And then I'm gonna do what I do. You just look black and scary.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Why don't I interrogate him, and you back me up?

BENNY

Don't take this the wrong way, I think the world of you. But this isn't some snatch and grab, shoot-em-up and go deal. We gotta get information and we don't have a lot of time.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

So you're saying that you don't think I can do it?

BENNY

In the time frame we're working with? No.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

What's the time frame?

BENNY

Two, three minutes tops.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I'll bet you ten thousand dollars I get everything we need in sixty seconds.

The door to the bathroom opens and an unseen man walks in. Silence. He enters the stall next to Benny and The Phantom. Benny quickly exits his stall and locks the door to the bathroom. Benny looks at his watch and hits the timer.

We hear pants unzip and see the look on The Phantom's face as a dick comes through the glory hole. The Phantom walks over, raises the butt of his gun and comes down on the balls, squishing them completely. We hear a scream out of agony.

Benny kicks open the other stall.

BENNY

Oh shit, it's the wrong guy.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

What?

BENNY

I'm kidding, I'm kidding, it's the right guy.

We hear screams from Gino writhing in pain.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Stop sabotaging or the bet's off.

Gino looks up.

GINO

Benny?

BENNY

Who's the faggot now?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

(yelling)

Fuck Benny, you're dealing with the Black Mother-fucking Phantom. Where the fuck is Pascalli?

GINO

I don't know.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

You just think I'm a stupid nigger don't you? We all out of stupid nigger, but we got plenty of crazy nigger!

The Phantom smashes Gino's balls with the butt of the gun three times. Gino cries out in pain.

GINO

Stop! Stop!

The Phantom points it at Gino's dick.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I am done fucking playing with you. I'm going to blow your fucking dick off if you don't tell me where Pascalli is right now.

GINO

I don't know where he is right now.

The Phantom cocks the hammer.

GINO (CONT'D)

He's travelling all around. You guys scared the shit out of him. I'm meeting Billy at the gun warehouse in the morning to re-up and then he's gonna take me to him. I swear to God, I would never call you a stupid nigger.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Where's the warehouse?

GINO

Staten Island. On Industry and Spencer.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

What time?

GINO

9am.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Time!

GINO

I said 9am.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Benny, time!

Benny looks at his watch.

BENNY

Fifty-seven seconds.

The Phantom shoots Gino in the head. The Phantom puts his gun in his pocket.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

You owe me ten thousand dollars.

BENNY

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Give me a boost, will ya?

The Phantom helps Benny up to climb out of the window of the bathroom.

INT. MOTEL ROOM- LATER THAT NIGHT

A hotel room with two double beds. Benny sits on one of the beds while The Phantom brushes his teeth.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

That gay bar must have been torture for you.

BENNY

I'm not homophobic.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

What? The whole reason for this left turn is because you couldn't say no after someone called you a faggot.

Spit.

BENNY

Yeah, but not "suck a dick" faggot, but in the context of "I'm too much of a pussy to do this job" faggot. It's you God-freaks that have a problem with gays.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

God intended for love to be between a man and a woman.

The Phantom rinses.

BENNY

Oh don't give me that Adam and Eve, Adam and Steve bullshit. Being gay isn't a choice. It's just like being black.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

No no, I can't choose to be black. But I can choose to not suck a dick.

Benny and The Phantom cross as Benny moves into the bathroom to brush his teeth. The Phantom sits on his bed.

BENNY

Yeah, but you can't choose whether or not really really wanna suck a dick. You think some kid living in ass-backwards Mississippi is thinking, "Hmmm...how can I make everyone hate me?" Bullshit. You're either born straight or you're not.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

It's all about temptation. You can either overcome your worldly desires or you can succumb to them.

BENNY

Fuck that. If God made you to love dudes, but sentences you to burn in hell for acting on it, then he's a fucking dick.

Spit.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Hey man, watch that shit.

BENNY

I used to think gays were inferior too.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

What changed?

BENNY

I'm at this club, having a few drinks, and me and this big gay dude start having words. I'm not holding my tongue because I'm used to gays being sissy little queens. Now this dude, he's like a gay Vin Diesel or some shit.

Benny rinses.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

So what happened?

BENNY

He beats the shit out of me in front of like two hundred people. Like really wailing away.

(MORE)

BENNY (CONT'D)

And I'm on the ground thinking,
"Maybe these faggots, ain't such
faggots. They're alright".

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Did you give the gay dude a pass?

BENNY

No, I waited for him in the parking
lot and shot him in the face. I
thought about giving him a pass,
but I said to myself, "If I don't
kill this guy, I'd only be letting
him go because he's gay and that
wouldn't be right. Because in the
end, they just want to be treated
like everyone else."

THE BLACK PHANTOM

You got a really weird code,
Dutchman. For someone who believes
so strongly in homosexual equality,
you sure say "faggot" a lot.

BENNY

Yeah, but I don't mean it like,
(Southern accent)
"All faggots will burn in hell."
(Back to normal)
More like, "You have Nickelback in
your iPod...Faggot." It's just a
fun word to say. Plus, in my line
of work, it's a pretty effective
tool. It helps with moral. "Get
your faggot ass up and let's do
this."

THE BLACK PHANTOM

You make a lot of valid points, but
I still think homosexuality is a
sin.

BENNY

Says the guy who had another man's
dick in his hand today.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

(Holding back a smile)
Oh shut up.

Benny walks back and sits on his bed. The two get ready for
bed.

BENNY

You were pretty badass back there,
man. Shit, I was scared.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Pretty good, huh?

BENNY

Eh, you got the job done, but you
really didn't do it with much
class. You torture a dude and he
gives up the information, you can't
just blast him like that.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Why not?

BENNY

You gotta give him a cigarette
first.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

What if he doesn't smoke?

BENNY

Doesn't matter. It's a calming
effect. 'Cause all that shit that
you heard about cancer and
Emphysema and voice boxes isn't
gonna matter anymore because
cigarettes are not gonna kill you.
It's a nice "fuck you" before you
go into that white light. If you
take out all the side effects,
smoking's pretty fucking cool.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I caught Garrett smoking two days
before he had this big showcase
recital in DC.

BENNY

What'd you do?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I cancelled the whole trip.

BENNY

Harsh. You're a pretty no nonsense
father, huh?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Damn right. He was only ten years old. He don't need to be smoking cigarettes. I never had that problem again.

BENNY

Where'd you come up with the name Garrett? You a big SNL fan?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Nah, I named him after Garrett Morgan, the black man who-

BENNY

-invented the traffic light in 1923. How'd he take you canceling his recital?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Not well. He didn't talk to me for a week, but later he understood. That same showcase is coming up again in April. Hopefully he'll be able to do that one.

BENNY

Don't do that.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

What?

BENNY

I know what you're doing. You slip your kid into the conversation, make me think about him and feel sorry about his whole plight in this and just say, "Hey, maybe I'll let him go and you'll help me with my problem based on the honor system". You didn't have to take the contract on me. You made that left turn.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

You didn't have to take my son.

BENNY

YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO KILL KATYA! I liked her, man. She was my friend.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

You're right. I didn't have to
kill Katya. I'm sorry. I won't
bring up my son anymore. Now let's
get some sleep and tomorrow we'll
finish this.

Lights out.

INT. SAFE- SAME TIME

Alicia sleeps as Garrett nudges her to wake up.

GARRETT

Mommy, I can't breathe.

ALICIA

What about the oxygen pump?

GARRETT

It turned off an hour ago.

Alicia rushes over to the pump where oxygen is fed into the tank and begins to bang on it, trying desperately to get it to work again. The alarm on the tank begins to beep incessantly. Garrett begins to wheeze desperately for air. Things start to go black.

INT. MOTEL ROOM- EARLY MORNING

The Phantom wakes up in a cold sweat. The alarm clock is beeping incessantly. It was just a dream.

The Phantom puts his holsters on over his wife beater and throws a button-down shirt on. Leaving it open he throws on a jacket. Benny stirs.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Let's go.

INT. PHANTOM'S ESCALADE- CONTINUOUS

The Phantom and Benny ride in silence.

BENNY

This is fun...you got any tunes?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

The CDs are in the rear seat. I doubt you'll like 'em. I don't have any white people music in there.

BENNY

No, we listen to your music. You just don't listen to ours.

Benny pulls out a CD case and starts looking through the selection.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Oh, Biggie Smalls, here we go!

He grabs the CD and slides it in.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

You like Biggie?

BENNY

I love Biggie.

"10 Crack Commandments" by Biggie Smalls begins to play.

THE BLACK PHANTOM & BENNY

One two three four five six seven
eight nine

The Phantom smiles at Benny.

THE BLACK PHANTOM & BENNY (CONT'D)

Uhh, it's the ten crack
commandments
What, uhh, uhh
Nigga can't tell me nothin bout
this coke, uh-huh
Can't tell me nothin bout this
crack, this weed
To my hustlin niggaz

The Phantom stops singing and stares at Benny.

BENNY

Niggaz on the corner I ain't forget
you niggaz
My triple beam niggaz

The Phantom immediately turns off the stereo.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Why'd you turn it off? I thought you liked Big.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I do like Big. You can't say nigger.

BENNY

I know that. I said "nigga."

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Oh! Well then that completely takes the oppression out of it. My bad, dawg!

BENNY

Look, if I'm singing it to a song, it's fine. Chris Rock said that shit.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

When you're in Chris Rock's car, you can say nigger or nigga as many times as you want. You can have a big motherfucking nigger spelling bee for all I care. But when you're in my car, you don't say it.

BENNY

You said it.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I'm black.

BENNY

Wouldn't you say it's a contradictory standard when one race of people is allowed to say a word and another race of people is not based solely on the color of their skin?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

If one of the races enslaved the other race, then yes.

BENNY

I knew it! I knew it would come up. You hang out with a black person long enough and it always comes back to slavery.

(MORE)

BENNY (CONT'D)

Well let me let you in on a little secret. Everyone that was responsible for slavery is dead, because it happened a long fucking time ago. So you can sit around in your own self pity and blame every missed opportunity on the color of you skin or you can pull yourself up by your bootstraps-

The Phantom slams on the brakes and Benny goes flying into the dashboard.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Ow! That's my head, dick!

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Oh no you did not just say that shit to me. "Pull myself up by my bootstraps?" You're like one of those rapists that goes back to the victim and says, "Come on, it wasn't that bad." You don't want to change the problem of racism in America, you just want to say that shit happened a long time ago. Shut up. I can't have a conversation about discrimination with you because you know nothing about it.

BENNY

I don't know anything about discrimination? Um, I'm Dutch.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

This is such a stupid conversation. When you're black, that's your master status. Let me ask you something, you ever felt like you didn't get a job because you were Dutch? You ever felt a boss thinking, "Well, his resume looks great, but I really fucking hate wooden shoes."

The Phantom starts driving again.

BENNY

Are you kidding me? I work organized crime in New York City. There is no Dutch representation.

(MORE)

BENNY (CONT'D)

I can never get made because I'm not Italian. The Irish, the Middle Easterners, blacks all use their own guys. Nobody wants a Bonnema.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

What about that Dutch cat...Dutch Schultz? He was Dutch.

BENNY

Oh, you mean Arthur Flegenheimer? He had to change it to Dutch Schultz because no one would respect his God given name.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Oh wow, what adversity.

BENNY

Do you have any idea how fucking hard I had to work to get where I am now? And you want to talk about master status? Try going through life with only nine fingers.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I thought we weren't gonna bring up the past anymore.

BENNY

I'm not talking about how I got it. When a baby's born, everyone says, "Came out with all ten fingers and all ten toes." And when you got nine fingers, that's the first thing people use to describe you. There are girls that will exclusively date black men. There are no girls that will only date nine-fingered guys.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

A nine-fingered guy never got hung for dating a white girl. P.S. You've had nine fingers for like a week. And if I want to hide the fact that I'm black, I can't just put on a glove.

BENNY

All I'm saying is that this is America. You work hard and you can do anything.

(MORE)

BENNY (CONT'D)

I mean, hell, look at Barack. The most powerful person in the world is black. What else do you peop- you guys, that was close- want?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

That must have hurt your heart when a black man was elected President.

BENNY

I voted for Barack.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Bullshit.

BENNY

No I did. Seriously, I did.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

You probably just say that shit 'cause it sounds good. What was your take on that "historic" election?

BENNY

Well, if somebody would have told me that a black man and a white man would be running for the Presidency in 2008 and one man's slogan was "Yes We Can!" and the other man's slogan was "The Mac Is Back", I definitely wouldn't have been able to match the two.

The Phantom laughs.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Look, I don't love George Bush.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I do.

BENNY

Why?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Because after his presidency, white people who would never vote for a black man said, "Hey, what's the worst that could possibly happen?" I think he should be honored every Black History Month.

Benny laughs.

BENNY

Now that we can have a conversation, if the "N-word" is such a mean, degrading, spiteful, dehumanizing word, then why do so many black people use it so often?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Well, I could tell you that that word brings us together and there's a sense of community in the oppression that we all struggle through, but that's bullshit. It's just a fun word to say.

Pause.

THE BLACK PHANTOM (CONT'D)

So whatever happened to Dutch Schultz anyway?

BENNY

He was shot to death with rusty bullets.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Oooh. That's a bad way to go. Who did it?

BENNY

The Italians killed the Dutchman.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Well, looks like history might repeat itself.

INT. GUN WAREHOUSE- A LITTLE BEFORE 9:00AM

An OLD MAN with a thick foreign accent, sits watching security cameras. All of a sudden one of the cameras goes static. The old man hits the screen a couple times and realizes that the connection has been pulled. He turns around a grabs a shotgun from another table.

In the other camera feed, unseen by the old man, Benny walks across the screen. The old man goes to the back door. Pointing his gun, he waits for the intruder. A gun cocks off screen. Benny points the gun at the old man's head.

BENNY

Drop the shotgun, old timer.

The old man drops the gun. The Phantom walks in through the back door.

OLD MAN

They told me you might come.

BENNY

What'd they say?

OLD MAN

They said, "Watch out for a good looking black man and a nine-fingered white guy."

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Aw damnit.

BENNY

I told you! I fucking told you. "Good looking black man!", wow, you really got the short end of that stick.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Why don't you just pull yourself up by your bootstraps?

Benny shoots The Phantom a look.

A little time cut to:

The old man sits on the floor with one wrist handcuffed to a pole. Benny and The Phantom point their guns at him.

THE BLACK PHANTOM (CONT'D)

So are we gonna kill this old man?

BENNY

I don't want to, but I'm not gonna have this whole thing undone because we weren't thorough.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

True that.

OLD MAN

I don't think you should kill me.

BENNY

No offense, but your opinion's a little biased.

(To the Phantom)

Alright, if we kill this guy, then we don't have to worry about him tipping off Pascalli.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Well, we could just incapacitate him. What he knows is good for the next couple of hours.

BENNY

But we're gonna take a lot of these guns, right?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Of course.

BENNY

Well, if we take his guns, he might not be too happy about it and that comes back on us later.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

That is a very good point.

OLD MAN

Pascalli took this warehouse three weeks ago. They're his guns.

BENNY

(To the Old Man)

Great rebuttal.

(To the Phantom)

See what he did there? He's using facts to win his argument. He didn't bring any personal bullshit in. You could learn a lot from this old man.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Yeah, your nine finger tirades are the reason I wanted to get into impartial debating.

BENNY

Oh shut up.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
Shut up? Great rebuttal. You
learn that one at Dartmouth?

BENNY
We're no Grambling State-

THE BLACK PHANTOM
Don't bring Grambling into this-

OLD MAN
If you're going to kill me, do it.
Jesus Christ, you faggots sound
like an old married couple.

Benny and The Phantom smile.

BENNY
We can't kill this old man.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
No we can't.

The Phantom looks over at the security cameras and sees Billy
at the door.

THE BLACK PHANTOM (CONT'D)
Looks like our guest is arriving.

Billy enters through the front door to find the old man still
handcuffed. Benny and The Phantom are nowhere to be seen.

BILLY
Salim, what the fuck?

A hammer cocks and a gun is suddenly at Billy's temple.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Hey, Benny.

A little time cut to:

The Phantom stands over the old man. A half empty bottle of
Nyquil sits on the floor next to the old man's free hand.

OLD MAN
I can't drink an entire bottle of
NyQuil.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
It's better than the alternative.

The old man continues to drink. Pull out to see Benny with Billy on the other side of the room. Billy's ankle is chained to another pole. The Phantom walks over to Benny.

THE BLACK PHANTOM (CONT'D)
How you want to torture this fool?

BENNY
We're not.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
Why?

BENNY
'Cause I like Billy.

Benny goes into his own jacket and takes out a syringe and drug. Benny prepares the drug.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
You gonna give him heroin?

BENNY
Nah, it's truth serum. Ever seen this stuff before?

THE BLACK PHANTOM
Yeah, the army uses it on white prisoners.

BENNY
Not now.

A little time cut to:

Benny puts the serum back in his jacket pocket.

BENNY (CONT'D)
We just have to wait for the pupils to dilate.

Benny takes out a cigarette.

BENNY (CONT'D)
You want a cigarette, Billy?

BILLY
A cigarette. Shit. No, Benny, no. You and me go back, man.

BENNY
You want the cigarette or not?

BILLY

Yeah.

Benny puts the cigarette in Billy's mouth and lights it for him. Billy's pupils begin to dilate.

BENNY

Here we go. Why were you meeting Gino here?

BILLY

Pascalli's running low on fire power. He's scared, Benny. The Black Phantom's got him shitting in his pants and he's running out of guys.

BENNY

Where is he?

BILLY

He's at his union office. The one by the docks.

BENNY

How many guys are left? Not including you or Gino.

BILLY

As of last night, three. He's been working his ass off to get more, but nobody wants to go after The Black Phantom.

BENNY

Did you know Pascalli put the hit on me and The Russian?

BILLY

No.

Benny looks at The Phantom.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

He wasn't there.

A little time cut to:

Benny and The Phantom go through the guns. They stock up on ammo and various weapons. The Phantom looks up and sees even more guns hanging on the wall.

THE BLACK PHANTOM (CONT'D)
Oh wow. Look at these!

Benny looks up, equally amazed.

Benny's cell phone rings. Benny picks it up.

BENNY
Yo.

INT. SPANISH HARLEM APARTMENT- SAME TIME

Ricardo sits in his apartment.

RICARDO
Pascalli ain't killed you yet?

INTERCUT BETWEEN RICARDO AND BENNY.

BENNY
Nah, in fact, we're about to wrap this thing up.

RICARDO
Just remember Benny, that tip I gave you wasn't free.

BENNY
What do you want for it?

RICARDO
What do you got?

BENNY
We got guns.

The Phantom puts on a bulletproof vest.

RICARDO
Guns? How many?

BENNY
Lots of guns. I'll chop it up with you later and we'll get 'em.

Ricardo's phone beeps. Ricardo looks at his phone. *Pascalli calling.*

RICARDO
Alright, peace.

Ricardo clicks over to the other line.

RICARDO (CONT'D)
 (extra smarmy)
 And what do you want?

Benny hangs up on his end. He looks over and sees Billy sleeping on the ground curled up with the old man. He points his phone at the two and begins to record.

BENNY
 Aw, this is too cute.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
 How we doing on time?

Benny reaches into Billy's pocket and takes out his keys.

BENNY
 We got four hours. The carriage turns into a pumpkin at 2:00pm.

INT. BILLY'S CAR- CONTINUOUS

Benny drives and The Phantom sits shotgun.

BENNY
 So this is it. The third act! You know, we're a pretty good team.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
 I wish you could shoot a little bit better, but yeah.

BENNY
 When this is all over, there's gonna be a lot of demand for the two guys that took out the entire Pascalli family.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
 What are you saying?

BENNY
 Wow, you don't make this easy. What I'm saying is, you're good. And I need you. I'm saying we should partner up.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
 No way.

BENNY

We'll split everything fifty-fifty.
I'll even cut you in on the
Kadakian money.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

No. I can't trust you.

BENNY

Why not?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Why not? Because you put my wife
and kid in a safe, Benny.

BENNY

That?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Yes, that. Look, we had a good
run. The time I spent with you
wasn't terrible. But when this job
is over, this is over.

BENNY

I haven't had a terrible time with
you either.

Benny pulls a manila envelope out of his bag.

BENNY (CONT'D)

If anything happens to me or if
this doesn't go down the way it's
supposed to, then open this.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Is that what I think it is?

BENNY

Yeah.

Benny puts the envelope in the glove box.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Thanks.

BENNY

Don't mention it.

EXT. COMMERCIAL PARKING GARAGE- LATER THAT MORNING

Nicky Pascalli gets into his car and drives away. We pull out to reveal The Phantom and Benny sitting in Billy's car on the roof of a parking garage across the street looking down on Nicky with binoculars.

BENNY

Where's he going?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I dunno, I'm gonna take a closer look.

The Phantom gets out of the car and walks out of sight. Suddenly, a hand with a rag comes through the window over Benny's mouth. Benny struggles and then passes out.

The Phantom walks back toward the car. Ricardo is crouched down in the backseat behind Benny. When The Phantom gets close, Ricardo shoots him three times in the chest. The Phantom falls to the ground.

RICARDO

The Great Black Phantom.

Ricardo gets out of the car and walks around. The Phantom isn't there. Ricardo looks around. The Phantom is nowhere in sight. Ricardo runs back into the car, starts it up and drives off. GUNSHOTS shoot up from the floor!

RICARDO (CONT'D)

Oh shit!

The Phantom is underneath the car holding on to the undercarriage. Ricardo starts to shoot the floor of the car. Shrapnel hits The Phantom in the face, forcing him to let go.

The Phantom rolls out from underneath the car and sees the tail end go down the ramp. The Phantom swings over the railing down to the next level.

INT. COMMERCIAL PARKING GARAGE- CONTINUOUS

Ricardo drives the car right toward The Phantom. The Phantom shoots the windshield, barely missing Ricardo's head. Ricardo uses Benny as a shield. Ricardo begins to return fire and drive right toward the Phantom. At the last second, the Phantom jumps on top of a neighboring parked car and onto the roof of Ricardo's car.

RICARDO
Un-fucking-belivable.

Ricardo shoots through the roof. The Phantom punches through the window, grabs Ricardo's gun and throws it out of the car. Ricardo grabs The Phantom's arm. Ricardo slams on the brake and turns the wheel. He lets go of The Phantom's arm causing him to fly off the car.

The Phantom pulls his gun back out and shoot out all four tires of the car. Ricardo loses control of the car and crashes into a wall. The Phantom gets up, points his gun at the car and quickly charges over.

As he's getting closer, the engine of the Jeep Cherokee next to the crashed car starts. The Phantom begins to run, shoots at the Jeep but it is blocked by Billy's totaled car. The Phantom shoots out a single tire of the Jeep. Ricardo floors it and crashes right through the entrance gate and he and an unconscious Benny are gone.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
Damn it, Benny.

INT. WAREHOUSE OF AN UNDISCLOSED LOCATION- LATER

Ricardo pulls a cuffed Benny through the front door of the warehouse. Pascalli (whose nose is really fucked up from the previous fight), Nicky, Frankie (the other bodyguard), and two large, pale, blonde men, the O'SHEA BROTHERS, stand around.

BENNY
You Judas! You Benedict Arnold!
You Lando Carlrissian!

RICARDO
Come on, Benny. Let's not make
this harder than it has to be.

PASCALLI
Why's he still alive?

RICARDO
You wanted his body, here it is.
I'm not killing Benny. You do your
own dirty work.

Ricardo sits Benny down in a chair in front of a table. He uncuffs one of Benny's hands and cuffs it to a nearby pole.

BENNY
Oh wow! I'm not even mad anymore.

PASCALLI
(to Ricardo)
Where's The Phantom?

RICARDO
He got away.

PASCALLI
What? How?

RICARDO
He's really, really, really good.

PASCALLI
God damnit!

BENNY
(re: The O'Sheas)
Sal, who the fuck are these guys?

PASCALLI
Benny, meet the O'Shea brothers.
They're helping us with our little
spook problem.

BENNY
Irish?

PASCALLI
Yeah, so what?

BENNY
You hate the Irish!
(Laughing)
How desperate are you right now!?

A young kid, KARL (17) comes out from the back of the
warehouse.

BENNY (CONT'D)
Karl? What the fuck are you doing
here?

KARL
I'm with them now.

BENNY
You hired KARL? THE DELIVERY GUY?

PASCALLI
I need replacements. What do you care?

BENNY
Because I like Karl!

One of the O'Sheas walks up to Benny. He has a thick Irish accent.

RYAN O'SHEA
Mr. Bonnema, I wish we were meeting under better circumstances but I just wanted to say that me and me brother Cullen here are really big fans of your work.

BENNY
Thanks...I heard of you guys too.

RYAN O'SHEA
Really?

PASCALLI
Well, now that we all know each other, let's get to work.

Nicky walks forward with a sledgehammer.

NICKY
We need to find out everything you know about The Phantom and fast.

BENNY
Guys, guys, let's just do this the easy way. I got some truth serum in my jacket pocket.

NICKY
You kill my cousin, Freddy, Gino, Billy and we should go easy on you?

BENNY
I didn't kill Billy.

NICKY
Bullshit! He hasn't answered his phone in three hours.

BENNY
He's just sleeping.

NICKY

Bullshit!

BENNY

No, uh, Ricardo, give me my phone.

Ricardo hands Benny his cell phone. Benny scrolls through and finds the video of Billy napping with the old man.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Sal, for all the shit we've been through, all the work I've done for you, all I'm asking is that you murder me with a little bit of class. You know the serum works. I wouldn't be here if it didn't.

Pascalli thinks for a minute.

PASCALLI

Alright, Benny. We'll try it...for old time's sake.

INT. BANK SAFETY DEPOSIT ROOM- SAME TIME

The Phantom grabs a key from inside the manila envelope that Benny gave him. He re-reads the letter with an address and safety deposit box number on it. The Phantom finds the box and opens the door.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

God damnit.

INT. WAREHOUSE OF AN UNDISCLOSED LOCATION- SAME TIME

Benny's pupils are now almost fully dilated.

PASCALLI

Is it working yet?

BENNY

Your nose looks great. Nope, not yet.

PASCALLI

Oh, you like my nose? I got it from one of these.

Pascalli hits Benny in the face with his gun.

PASCALLI (CONT'D)

Keep up with the jokes, Benny, you got about five minutes before I bring out the hammer.

Benny holds his nose and sees the blood in his hand.

BENNY

Anybody got a cigarette?

Ryan O'Shea takes out a pack of cigarettes and tosses them on the table and pours a little whiskey from his flask into a shotglass. Benny puts a cigarette in his mouth. Ricardo lights it for him.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Thanks...buddy.

(To Pascalli)

Since we've got a few minutes, something's been bothering me. Why the fuck didn't you tell me you took out Ralph?

PASCALLI

Because you have a big fucking mouth, Benny.

FRANKIE

Look at his eyes, they're fucking huge. I think he's ready.

Benny's pupils are now fully dilated.

NICKY

Let's see if this shit works. Benny, why do we call you the Dutch Faggot?

BENNY

Well, I imagine you call me Dutch because I come from Dutch ancestry-

FRANKIE

-And the other part?

BENNY

And you call me faggot because you think that chick that blew me on St. Patrick's Day was a dude.

FRANKIE

Was it a dude?

BENNY

Yeah.

NICKY

Hah! I knew you were a fag!

FRANKIE

Wait, you realized she was a dude before or after you finished?

BENNY

About halfway through.

Nicky and Frankie are beside themselves with laughter.

NICKY

Thank you, Benny. This truth serum: best fucking idea you ever had!

PASCALLI

Okay, okay. Knock it off, assholes. The Phantom, does he have any family?

BENNY

He's got a wife and an eleven year old boy. One hell of a piano player.

PASCALLI

What's his address?

BENNY

Sugar Hill. 613 West 155th Street. It's a brownstone with a black gnome on the stoop. If you pass the Blimpie's you've gone too far.

CULLEN O'SHEA

That shit does work.

PASCALLI

(to Cullen)

Go! Bring the wife and kid back here.

Cullen runs out the door.

BENNY

I feel real funny right now. You could ask me anything and I'd tell you. You just gotta ask the right questions. Like, where was Frankie on New Year's Eve?

FRANKIE

Shut the fuck up, Benny!

BENNY

Ask me, Nicky. Ask me.

Karl looks at Benny in a moment of panic.

NICKY

(to Frankie)

What, are you a fag too?

BENNY

(whispering)

Ask me, Nicky.

NICKY

Fine. Where was Frankie on New Year's Eve?

BENNY

He was in the employee bathroom of your father's bar fucking Julia, in the ass.

NICKY

What Julia? My Julia?

FRANKIE

Nicky! He's lying. Shut the fuck up, Benny. Yo, this serum isn't working, give me the hammer.

BENNY

I don't understand. The serum was working a minute ago when I was getting a BJ from a dude, but now it's not working when Frankie's fucking your wife in the ass?

Nicky pulls the gun on Frankie.

NICKY

Did you fuck my wife, Frankie?

PASCALLI

Nicky!

FRANKIE

Nicky, you're like a brother to me,
I would never do that.

BENNY

Ask Karl, he's the one that walked
in on it.

Nicky points the gun at Karl.

NICKY

Karl, is that shit true? Did he
fuck my wife?

PASCALLI

Nicky!

KARL

Hey man, I don't want to get
involved.

Nicky cocks the hammer.

NICKY

That's not what I fucking asked
you!

PASCALLI

Nicky!

KARL

Yes.

Nicky points the gun back at Frankie and blows his head off.
Pascalli wipes some of the blood off his own face. Pascalli
slaps Nicky in the face as hard as he can.

PASCALLI

God damnit, Nicky!

NICKY

He fucked Julia!

PASCALLI

We are running out of fucking guys,
you dumb shit! Don't you see what
he's doing? He's playing us!

Pascalli walks over and punches Benny in the face.

PASCALLI (CONT'D)

I don't want to hear any funny stories. I don't want to hear any amusing anecdotes. You speak when spoken to. Understand?

Benny spits out a tooth.

BENNY

Yeah.

PASCALLI

Tell me everything about The Black Phantom.

INT. GUN WAREHOUSE- SAME TIME

The Phantom takes off his jacket and shirt revealing the bullet proof vest with a bunch of bullets in it. He takes off the vest displaying his ripped chest (you're welcome, ladies) with welts from the bullets. He puts on a new vest and begins to redress.

INT. WAREHOUSE OF AN UNDISCLOSED LOCATION- SAME TIME

Pascalli, Nicky, Ryan, Ricardo and Karl continue to listen to Benny.

NICKY

(laughing)

Michael Richards? Get the fuck out of here.

PASCALLI

How good is this guy?

BENNY

US Army Ranger. Did three tours in Iraq. Made Captain on his second tour.

PASCALLI

How'd he make Captain so fast?

BENNY

That is an excellent question. His platoon walked into an IED trap in Sadr City and got taken out in the initial contact. He takes one in the shoulder, one in the leg.

(MORE)

BENNY (CONT'D)

Everybody else is dead except one guy trapped under the Humvee screaming his head off. Now anyone with half a brain would have ran. Not this asshole. He stays and fights. Gets 23 confirmed kills. Carries the injured soldier out on his back for three miles.

PASCALLI

Bullshit. I've seen this movie; it's called *Rambo*.

RICARDO

Nothing for nothing, Sal, but I've seen this guy in action. That sounds about right.

INT. GUN WAREHOUSE- SAME TIME

The Phantom quickly tosses different types of ammo into a duffel bag.

INT. WAREHOUSE OF AN UNDISCLOSED LOCATION- SAME TIME

Pascalli, Nicky, Ricardo, Karl, and Ryan continue to listen.

BENNY

Purple heart, Bronze Star, Silver Star. One hundred and eighty-three confirmed kills. And he's gonna save me.

Pascalli laughs.

PASCALLI

Now why would he go and do a thing like that?

INT. GUN WAREHOUSE- SAME TIME

The Phantom, smoking a cigarette, picks up two Uzis and throws them into a duffel bag. Loads up a shotgun.

INT. WAREHOUSE OF AN UNDISCLOSED LOCATION- SAME TIME

Pascalli, Nicky, Ryan and Karl still listen, riveted.

NICKY

So let me get this straight.
You've got his wife and kid in a
safe. You're the only one who
knows the combination and in two
hours they run out of oxygen.

BENNY

Yeah.

NICKY

You fucking asshole!

Nicky smacks Benny in the face.

PASCALLI

God damnit, Bonnema, you piece of
shit!

BENNY

Wait, wait, wait!

Benny takes a drag off his cigarette.

BENNY (CONT'D)

It gets much worse. I swallowed a
transmitter that's linked to a
tracking device-

INT. BANK SAFETY DEPOSIT ROOM- FLASHBACK

The Phantom opens up the safety deposit box to reveal a
tracking device with a note that says, "Find Me!".

BENNY (V.O.)

-that the Phantom now has in his
possession. He knows where I am.

INT. WAREHOUSE OF AN UNDISCLOSED LOCATION- SAME TIME

Back to the group listening to Benny.

BENNY

Anybody want a cigarette?

RICARDO

Well, good luck with that. I think
I'm going to take my hundred grand
for Benny and get the hell out of
here.

PASCALLI

No way. It was a hundred grand for Benny and The Black Phantom. It was a package deal.

RICARDO

Bullshit, that wasn't the deal.

PASCALLI

Well, I'm changing the deal.

Pascalli pulls his gun on Ricardo who in turn pulls his gun back on Pascalli.

RICARDO

Don't point that gun at me, Sal.

Suddenly, Cullen's head rolls across the floor and stops at their feet.

RYAN O'SHEA

Cullen?

BENNY

He's also a really good bowler.

The lights go out. Guns fire. People yell. Expletives fly. *Click.* Who's out of ammo? Silence.

The lights come back on. The Phantom stands there holding a shotgun. Pascalli takes off running. The Phantom shoots three bullets into Ryan O'Shea. Ryan falls to the ground.

Ricardo has reloaded and starts laying down machine gun fire on The Phantom. The Phantom takes off, disappearing.

NICKY

Karl, you take Benny. That Phantom comes anywhere near him you blast his ass.

Nicky takes cover behind a pillar.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Where are you, you fucking nigger?

BENNY

I wouldn't call him that, man. He gets really angry.

Nicky shoots in Benny's direction. Benny ducks.

BENNY (CONT'D)
I'm just trying to help!

Benny turns to Karl.

BENNY (CONT'D)
Hey Karl?

KARL
Yeah, Benny?

BENNY
GET THE FUCK OUT OF HERE!

Karl throws his gun down and takes off out the exit. Benny reaches as far as he can and grabs the gun that Karl left behind. Benny shoots the chain from his cuffs off, freeing himself.

Benny starts shooting at Nicky. Nicky returns fire. Holding onto his gun for dear life, Benny runs behind a crate for protection.

Leaning out, Benny continues to shoot at Nicky from behind the crate. Nicky returns fire. Benny ducks back behind the crate. The Phantom appears right next to him.

BENNY (CONT'D)
Jesus Christ!

THE BLACK PHANTOM
I got your note.

BENNY
When did you get here?

THE BLACK PHANTOM
Right when you started talking
about that guy sucking your dick.

BENNY
Great.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
Something's been bothering me.

BENNY
What's that?

THE BLACK PHANTOM
You know how you're so impressed I
shot your finger off?

BENNY

Yeah.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I was aiming for your head.

BENNY

That's okay. I didn't really vote for Barack. I just said that shit because it sounded good.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Pascalli's hiding behind that machine that looks like a big ass R2D2. I'm gonna make a mad dash and go out that door. My back's gonna be to him so he's gonna come out. You take the shot.

BENNY

What are you gonna do?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I'm gonna shoot that guy who called me a nigger!

BENNY

What if I miss?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

You won't miss with this.

The Phantom pulls out two Uzis duck-taped together and hands it to Benny. Benny looks at the gun, still nervous.

THE BLACK PHANTOM (CONT'D)

Now get your faggot ass up and let's do this.

Breathing heavy, Benny watches as The Phantom takes off from behind the crate and runs out an open door.

BENNY

(Sotto)

This is for you, Schultz.

Pascalli pops up from behind a piece of machinery and points his gun at The Phantom. Pascalli starts to shoot. Benny takes out Pascalli with his double Uzi.

Benny turns his gun on Nicky, but Nicky is protected by a pillar. Ricardo shoots at Benny and Benny turns his gun on Ricardo.

BENNY (CONT'D)
You want some too, Ricardo?

Benny continues to shoot until he's out of bullets. Hearing the gun click, Nicky comes out from behind his pillar, pointing his gun at Benny. Nicky charges Benny, gun drawn.

BENNY (CONT'D)
Oh, shit.

The Phantom appears back in the warehouse and takes out Nicky with one shot. Ricardo shoots at The Phantom, hitting in him in the shoulder and forcing him behind Nicky's pillar. The Phantom's hurt, but keeps fighting.

BENNY (CONT'D)
Mike!

Benny grabs Nicky's gun and shoots back at Ricardo. The gunfight goes on until Ricardo runs out of bullets. *Click.*

As he tries to reload, The Phantom comes out from behind the pillar and charges Ricardo. When he gets close, he shoots. *Click.* The Phantom's out of bullets.

Benny sees that Ricardo has almost finished reloading, runs out from behind the crate shooting frantically at Ricardo to stop him from reloading. *Click.* Benny's out of bullets too. He reaches for another clip and realizes he has none. Ricardo and The Phantom are in a race to reload.

BENNY (CONT'D)
Wait! Stop! Stop!

Ricardo and The Phantom pause and look at Benny.

BENNY (CONT'D)
IS ANYONE GETTING PAID TO KILL
ANYBODY RIGHT NOW!?

Pause. Benny and The Phantom put their guns back in their pants and Ricardo slings his rifle over his shoulder.

RICARDO
Benny, it was nothing personal.

Benny punches Ricardo in the face as hard as he can.

BENNY

Fuck you...I'll call you tomorrow.

Benny and The Phantom exchange a look and run out the door.

INT. PHANTOM'S ESCALADE- CONTINUOUS

Benny jumps into the driver's seat and starts the car. The Phantom gets in on the passenger side, grabs Benny's head and slams it into the steering wheel.

BENNY

What was that for?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

That's for making me think I had my family back two hours ago. What if they killed you?

BENNY

Then you didn't do your job. Nobody gets a ring for almost winning the Superbowl.

The Phantom buckles up in the passenger seat.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Let's hurry up and get your money. If that Armenian gives me any shit, I'm going to shoot him right in his hairy back.

Benny thinks for a second and makes a hard left.

THE BLACK PHANTOM (CONT'D)

What are you doing? Kadakian's is in the other direction!

BENNY

I'm making that right turn.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Then why the fuck are we going left?

BENNY

No, the metaphorical right turn. We're gonna go get your family.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Thanks. But just out of curiosity, we've still got two hours. Why are you doing this?

BENNY

I figured that you really miss them so, we can do that first.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Benny...

BENNY

Look the 36 hours thing, it's not an exact science.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

What?

BENNY

Well, in theory it works, I've just never let anybody out before.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

So how was my family going to get out?

BENNY

They weren't. I was gonna kill you guys.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Fuck, Benny!

BENNY

Weren't you gonna kill me?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I still might!

Benny steps on the gas.

A little time cut to:

Benny and The Phantom pull up in front of a storage unit.

INT. STORAGE UNIT- CONTINUOUS

Benny quickly works the combination to the storage unit.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
Open it! Open it!

BENNY
What could you possibly think I'm
doing?

THE BLACK PHANTOM
I swear to God, Benny!

Benny finally unlocks the combination and pushes the door open to reveal Garrett and Alicia lying lifelessly on the floor.

BENNY
Oh, shit.

The Phantom pulls out his gun.

BENNY (CONT'D)
Mike, I'm sorry. It was an
accident.

Benny raises his hands and backs up as The Phantom walks toward him. The Phantom cocks the hammer.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
I don't give a fuck.

As Benny backs up, he trips on Garrett's leg and falls.

GARRETT
Ow!

THE BLACK PHANTOM
Garrett? Garrett!

The Phantom picks up Garrett and hugs him. Alicia gets up.

GARRETT
Mommy wanted to play a trick on you
and pretend we were dead.

THE BLACK PHANTOM
Alicia, why would you do that?

ALICIA
Because Mommy can be a real bitch
sometimes.

BENNY
You almost got me killed.

ALICIA

Wouldn't want that to happen. I don't know what I would do if the man who made me piss in Gatorade bottle for the last two days died.

(To Phantom)

Baby, you're shot. Are you okay?

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Yeah. I'm fine.

GARRETT

You're lucky you left me in charge. Mommy was so scared.

The Phantom hugs and kisses Alicia.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I'm sorry about that, baby.

ALICIA

Just don't get sloppy again.

The Phantom pulls out his keys and hands them to Alicia.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

Take the car. Me and my partner gotta go see an Armenian about a horse.

The Phantom turns his back and starts walking away.

ALICIA

Partner?! Oh we're gonna talk about this when we get home.

THE BLACK PHANTOM

I'm sure we will.

The Phantom and Benny continue walking.

BENNY

Now that we're partners, can I call you my ni-

THE BLACK PHANTOM

-Nope.

FADE OUT.

THE END