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THE STING, PART II
THAT'S WHY THE LADY IS A TRAMP

First Draft Screenplay

Written

by

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THE STING, PART IITHAT'S WHY THE LADY IS A TRAMP

FADE IN

1 EXT. ATLANTIC CITY NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT 1

It's a balmy night in August, 1940. We open on the exterior of a swank Atlantic City nightclub, its dazzling facade illuminating a passing parade of hipsters, which stops like a freeze dance every time the club door opens and allows a few bars of the music within to escape. It's the dream of every hipster that a party of fifteen will come out, keeping the door open long enough perhaps to hear Ziggy Elman's entire trumpet solo on "Body and Soul".

2 ANOTHER ANGLE 2

This time, however, only a couple emerges, accompanied at best by a few diminished eighth notes. The man, elegantly dressed and refined in manner, is immediately recognizable as Kid Twist, the bogus telegraph operator in "The Sting." On his arm is a statuesque blonde in clinging crepe. They proceed to a cab and slide in the back.

3 INT. CAB 3

As Twist leans forward to give instructions to the cabbie, he fails to notice that the woman slides right out the other side. He turns to find that her place has been taken by a huge hulk of a man who says nothing and stares straight ahead. Twist has seen that look before and moves to get out the way he came in, only to find that there is now a thug on the other side of him too. This one closes the door beside him and assumes the same pose as his friend. Twist realizes that he's in trouble. The cabbie pulls out with no word from the thugs. It doesn't matter. He knows better than they do where they're going.

CUT TO

4 INT. A DOWNTOWN HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 4

The camera moves in slowly on a man sitting alone in the dark, his head partially illuminated by the lights from the amusement park across the street. The only sound in the room comes from an unseen fan. The camera stops when we're close enough to realize that the man is Doyle Lonnegan the gangster/mark of "The Sting." His eyes are set and far off,

CONTINUED

4

CONTINUED

4

his face lost in thought. A knock is heard at the door, and Lonnegan jumps a bit as if someone had just snuck up on him. We hear a voice outside. It's Floyd, Lonnegan's right-hand man.

FLOYD

Doyle. Homer's downstairs. They made a clean snatch on Twist. You want us to dump him?

LONNEGAN

No, bring him here. I wanta see him first.

FLOYD

Okay.

(noticing that there's no light coming under the door)

You all right in there?

LONNEGAN

I'm all right.

5

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR

5

as Floyd walks on down the hall.

6

INT. LONNEGAN'S HOTEL ROOM

6

Lonnegan slips back into his reverie. The camera starts to move in on him again. We burn into his eyes, which never blink despite the play of the neon across them.

We hear: A sound montage of the replay of the last few minutes of "The Sting."

1. The voice of Lonnegan placing his half million dollar bet with great bravado, the call of a race in the b.g.
2. Kid Twist telling Lonnegan that he's bet incorrectly and will lose all his money.
3. Lonnegan trying frantically almost hysterically, to get his money back from the cashier.

CONTINUED

4. A fusilade of gun shots.
5. The voice of Detective Snyder urging Lonnegan out of the betting parlor.

Again a knock is heard at the door.

LONNEGAN

Come in.

The door opens to reveal Twist and his two captors silhouetted in the doorway. Lonnegan reaches out and turns on a light, and for the first time we are able to see the room. It looks like an expensive suite in any luxury hotel, except that the walls are covered with photographs, 8 x 10 blowups of every single man involved in the con of Lonnegan some four years before. Prominently displayed above the others, like the leaders of some Eastern European politburo, are shots of Gondroff and Hooker.

Lonnegan allows Twist to take in the room before he speaks. Twist tries hard not to notice the photographs.

LONNEGAN

What do you think of my pictures
Twist?

TWIST

My name's not Twist, and I don't
know much about pictures.

LONNEGAN

You find yours yet?

TWIST

I don't know why a picture of me
would be up there.

LONNEGAN

(without taking
his eyes off
Twist)

On the wall to your left. Fourth
one from the right. Between Curly
Jackson and J.J. Singleton.

Twist doesn't bother to look at the photograph. He knows
it's there.

LONNEGAN

I coulda picked somebody else. I
know where most of them are now.
You just happened to be the closest.

CONTINUED

6

CONTINUED - 2

6

TWIST

I got no idea what you're talkin' about. I don't know any of these people....

LONNEGAN

Four years ago, forty-seven months and six days to be exact, you helped them take me for half a million dollars. I should think you'd remember that.

TWIST

Look, you got me mixed up with somebody else. I....

LONNEGAN

(not even
listening to
Twist)

You played the telegraph operator, the guy who held up the race results. I'll never forget when you came in and told me I'd screwed up the bet. Acting like it was the end of the world when inside you had to be jumping up and down. Gondorff musta been proud of you, Twist. I wish you could remember it. I had hoped it would have meant more to you to take a man like me.

(offering
his hand)

I can only congratulate you on a job beautifully done.

Lonnegan has attempted to deliver all this with a "no hard feelings" attitude, but Twist is not fooled. He knows there will be no reprieve for him. He decides to go out like a champ.

TWIST

Believe me, Lonnegan, it was the greatest day of my life.

CUT TO

7

EXT. RIVER FRONT - NIGHT

7

Lonnegan and Floyd are sitting in a car looking out over the river to a warehouse on the other side. All the lights are out in the warehouse, except for one on the second story at the top of a fifty-foot-long loading chute which runs from the second floor out over the water. It is normally used to convey cargo from the warehouse to freight barges

CONTINUED

7 CONTINUED

7

below. Lonnegan and Floyd have their eyes glued to it, expecting something to happen there soon. Floyd, in particular, seems to be anxious.

7-A INT. LONNEGAN'S CAR

7-A

FLOYD

You shouldn't be here, Doyle.

LONNEGAN

Get the word out that Macalinski put Kid Twist with the fishes.

A body, feet encased in concrete, goes speeding down the loading chute and disappears below the surface of the black water.

LONNEGAN

That's one.

With a gesture to Floyd, Lonnegan sits back grimly, and the car moves off.

Main title and opening credits.

8 EXT. JOHNNY HOOKER'S APARTMENT BUILDING - EARLY EVENING

8

We pick up Johnny Hooker washing himself in a makeshift shower that he's rigged up on the fire escape of his one-room apartment. He uses old bed sheets for a curtain and his shower head consists of a comb taped over the end of a garden hose which runs in through the window to a faucet on the small sink which occupies one corner of his totally undistinguished room.

Hooker is obviously in an expansive mood, as he sings along to the radio which he's hung on the landing above him. It's playing Helen Ward's version of "Goody Goody" with the Benny Goodman orchestra. His rinse water, meanwhile, drips through the grating of the fire escape to the pavement six floors below, watering several window boxes on the way. Hooker finishes up, and climbs back through his window.

9 INT. HOOKER'S APARTMENT

9

As he's toweling off, the Eirie Kid enters the room.

HOOKER

Hey, where's your suit?

CONTINUED

EIRIE

I decided not to wear it. It'll just get dirty on the streetcar.

HOOKER

What are you talking about? I rented a limousine.

EIRIE

A limousine to go to the fights.

HOOKER

We're management now, Eirie. When you're the owner of an up and comin' light-heavy you don't show up on no streetcar.

EIRIE

But our guy ain't even fightin' to-night.

HOOKER

So what. You want everybody to think we're small-time? Christ, the kid could be fightin' for the title inside a year, and you wanta show up on a goddamn trolley. A bus woulda been better than that.

EIRIE

We can't afford no bus, let a limo.

Eirie notices a new pair of shoes on a chair.

EIRIE

Those your boats?

HOOKER

(proud as
hell)

How you like 'em, huh? Alligator Brazillian.

Eirie looks them over like they're stale bread.

EIRIE

Hooker, I think we oughta skip the fight and see if we can't get ourselves some pocket money. You know that dame I been tellin' ya about down at the Gardens? Well I been studyin' her and I know we can take her for a bundle.

HOOKER

I don't like it, Eirie. I promised myself I was gonna go legit.

EIRIE

You're just nervous, that's all. We're both a little rusty. We'll get over it once we get into the pitch. I know we still got our touch.

HOOKER

It's bad enough goin' back on the grift, but connin' women. That's low, Eirie. We used to have a rule No poor people and no women.

EIRIE

That was pregnant women, and this one ain't carryin' nothin' but dough. I tell ya, this dame is a thoroughbred, been in there two or three nights in a row, never talkin' to nobody but this old broad that hangs around with her. She dresses like a champion, but I can tell she don't know her way around.

HOOKER

I still don't like it.

EIRIE

You like livin' in this pigpen better? You're already two months behind on the rent. The only reason they ain't thrown you out is they couldn't get anybody else to live here.

HOOKER

Well you're the bookkeeper of the operation. Why don't you pay the damn rent?

EIRIE

I can't. You're overdrawn four grand at the bank.

Eirie is interrupted by a knock at the door.

Hooker goes to answer it, half-dressed in a pair of socks

CONTINUED

with knee suspenders and green shorts with the letters YMCA on them. It's a Deliveryman with a tuxedo in his hand.

DELIVERYMAN

Tuxedo for Mr. Hooker.

HOOKER

That's me.

(handing over
a dollar bill)

Here's a little somethin' for your trouble, buddy.

DELIVERYMAN

How about a little somethin' for the tux?

HOOKER

(easing the guy
out the door)

Bill me.

Hooker turns back to Eirie and begins to putting on his tux.

HOOKER

How can I be overdrawn? The last time I looked in there, I had eighty gees.

EIRIE

That was two-and-a-half years ago, before you started buyin' prize fighters, race horses, zinc mines and every other goddamn thing.

HOOKER

That stuff's gonna pay off, Eirie. It just takes time, that's all. In the world of investment, you gotta spend money to make money.

EIRIE

Hooker, I'm tellin' ya, if you don't do somethin' pretty fast, you're gonna start gettin' visits from the coppers

Hooker knows that Eirie's right. People are gonna make some noise over four grand.

HOOKER

(resigned)

All right. I'll call the girls and tell 'em we'll be a little late.

CONTINUED

10 CONTINUED - 2

10

EIRIE

The girls?

HOOKER

You're gonna like these two, Eirie.
They're hat checkers at the Rondella.

EIRIE

Christ, what am I gonna say to these
babes? I don't know nothin' about
hats.

As Hooker dials his call, we:

CUT TO

11 INT. THE MARINE ROOM OF THE STEEL PIER - NIGHT

11

One of the great ballrooms of the era, in a class with the Roseland in New York and the Aragon and Trianon in Chicago. Featuring an ocean of hardwood dance floor, divided here and there into inlets and bays by the arrangements of the tables, the Marine was a must play date for all the big swing bands of the forties. Not as elegant certainly as the supper clubs, but more exciting.

The band's female vocalist is just getting into "You Turned The Tables On Me" as Hooker and Eirie enter the ballroom.

EIRIE

She's at table sixteen, on the left
toward the front.

12 HOOKER'S POINT OF VIEW - TABLE SIXTEEN

12

Hooker's eyes search the floor and finally come to rest on table sixteen. He's not quite ready for what he finds there. He had expected the Woman to be rich, but he hadn't expected her to be beautiful. Regal in bearing, she has the untouchable beauty of a Hedy Lamarr. The kind that turns passing strangers into employees. Hooker's first instinct is to turn around and go home. He has barely noticed the Older Woman to her left, who is plainly dressed and exudes a professional protectiveness toward her companion.

12-A HOOKER AND EIRIE

12-A

EIRIE

What'd I tell ya, huh? If she ain't
loaded with jack, I don't know my
own name.

CONTINUED

12-A CONTINUED

12-A

HOOKER

I don't feel right about this, Eirie.
I mean, she's with her mother and
everything.

EIRIE

Look, this is no slight on her.
She happens to be keepin' company
with some cash. It's not like you
hate the dame. Someday when you're
a millionaire, you can buy her a
bracelet or somethin'.

HOOKER

Hell, we don't even have any props
with us. What are we gonna take
her on?

Eirie was prepared for this. He takes out an envelope con-
taining a stack of fake money, and another one containing
paper cut up the size of dollar bills.

EIRIE

I got the boodle and the stiff right
here. All we gotta do is back it
with some real green and we got
everything we need. How much
cash you got?

HOOKER

Fifteen bucks.

EIRIE

I got twenty. We'll put mine on
top and yours on the bottom. It
ain't great, but it's good enough.

Eirie puts the twenty on the top of the false bankroll,
and the ten on the bottom.

EIRIE

Your problem is you're lettin' her
looks go to your head. Since when
have you ever gotten to first base
with a dame like that? These society
types think they're too good for
regular people. She wouldn't be
seen outside a barnyard with either
one of us.

This is a very telling point with Hooker. His heart be-
gins to harden against the Woman.

CONTINUED

12-A CONTINUED - 2

12-A

HOOKER

You're right, Eirie. That kinda
babe gives me the pip.

Shot through with new motivation, Hooker looks at the
Woman like she's a barbell to be cleaned and jerked. He's
a complete professional now. He takes off his watch and
hands it to Eirie, then snatches a flower out of a vase
and puts it in his lapel. We follow him as he makes his
way over to table sixteen.

13 AT TABLE SIXTEEN

13

Hooker immediately affects the demeanor of an entrepreneur.

HOOKER

Excuse me, ladies. You haven't by
chance seen a gold watch around
here, have you?

WOMAN

(through a
thick French
accent)

No, I do not think so, Mr....

HOOKER

Stewart. Charles Stewart. I'm the
manager here.

WOMAN

Pleased to meet you, Mr. Stewart.
I am Veronique LeFleur, and....

OLDER WOMAN

(interrupting)

The Countess Veronique Fabian LeFleur.

VERONIQUE

(slightly
embarrassed)

Giselle, they do not care about these
things in America.

(to Hooker)

This is my maid servant, Giselle
Duvillard. We are sorry that you
lost your watch.

HOOKER

Oh, it wasn't mine, Miss LeFleur.

GISELLE

Countess LeFleur.

VERONIQUE

Giselle!

CONTINUED

13

CONTINUED

13

HOOKER

A Mr. Jerome Hawthorne lost it in here tonight, and is quite anxious to get it back. It's an Elgin Special with a monogrammed J.H. on the back. He's offering a thousand dollar reward for its return.

VERONIQUE

(honestly
relieved)

Oh, then it's not an expensive one.

Hooker struggles to maintain his nonchalance in the face of such a remark. It's a hard one for a poor boy to swallow. He looks for some indication that she may be kidding. He doesn't get one.

HOOKER

Well, it was just that it was very personal to Mr. Hawthorne. It was given to him by his father just before he was killed in the Battle of Belaue Wood.

VERONIQUE

(truly moved)

Oh, how sad. If we find it, we will bring it to you, how do you say...on the double?

14

ANGLE

14

Both women permit themselves a little laugh at their mastery of this English idiom.

HOOKER

(taking his
leave)

Thank you, Miss LeFleur.

GISELLE

(sullenly)

Countess LeFleur.

15

ON HOOKER

15

We follow him as he returns to Eirie, out of sight of the two women.

HOOKER

You were right, Eirie. Money's nothin' to her. She's a countess.

CONTINUED

15 CONTINUED

15

HOOKER (Cont'd)

French. Not a bad egg for a countess. Maybe in France they're not so snot-nosed.

It's obvious that Veronique's charm has rekindled some second thoughts in Hooker.

EIRIE

Aw c'mon. Underneath they're all alike. You're not softening up on me, are ya Hooker?

16 ON EIRIE

16

This time we follow Eirie as he makes his way to the table. He boldly plops himself down right next to Veronique in the booth, talking to her in a conspiratorial fashion, out of the side of his mouth.

EIRIE

Look lady, I know you don't know me, but I need a little help. The manager here's got it in for me, and I'd appreciate it if you could pretend like we was friends and everything. Like we been sittin' here for a long time, havin' a nice evening....

17 ANGLE

17

as Hooker suddenly appears at the table. Eirie pretends to be carrying on a conversation with the woman, who doesn't know what to make of him.

HOOKER

(to Eirie)

Fisher, I thought I told you to stay outta here.

EIRIE

It's a free country, Stewart. A man can dance if he wants to.

(to the Countess)

Me and my date was just about to cut up the rug a little, wasn't we honey?

The Countess doesn't know what to say. She has no idea what Eirie is talking about.

HOOKER

Stand up and empty out your pockets.

CONTINUED

17

CONTINUED

17

Eirie hesitates a second, then stands up and reluctantly empties out his pockets. He shows nothing but a wallet and a pair of keys.

EIRIE

See, I'm clean.

HOOKER

Good, then you won't have anything to weigh you down on the way out. Or do I have to call the police?

EIRIE

(deciding it's
time to leave)

All right, all right. I didn't want to hang out in this dive anyway.

Eirie beats a speedy retreat.

VERONIQUE

Who was that man?

HOOKER

Oh, he's a cheap crook. A pickpocket, a fence, you name it.

18

ANOTHER ANGLE

18

Both women are visibly frightened to have been in the presence of such a man. Veronique glances down at where Eirie was sitting and something catches her eye -- there's a gold watch on the seat. She picks it up quickly and hands it to Hooker.

VERONIQUE

Mr. Stewart, there's a watch here. I think it's your friend's.

HOOKER

(inspecting
the watch)

It's Hawthorne's all right. Fisher probably stole it from him and took it out of his pocket when I asked to search him.

The women are really scared now.

GISELLE

Aren't you going to call the police?

CONTINUED

HOOKER

Wouldn't do any good unless we had found the watch on him. Whatever, you found the watch. You have a reward coming.

VERONIQUE

Oh, but I could not take it. I have done nothing to deserve it.

HOOKER

I insist. Mr. Hawthorne will be very unhappy with me if I don't follow his instructions. You found the watch. The money is yours. Please, he will be most insulted if you turn it down.

VERONIQUE

(resigned)

All right, I do not wish to offend the man.

(to Giselle)

When in America, I suppose we must do as the Americans.

hands her the envelope with the boodle in it. She puts it in her purse without even bothering to check it.

HOOKER

Excuse me, but if I may be so bold, I wouldn't carry that money in your purse. Not in a neighborhood like this. You walk down the street with a purse in plain view, you're gonna lose it. There are twenty other thieves outside just like Fisher, only worse.

The two women are immediately concerned.

VERONIQUE

What should we do?

HOOKER

Here, let me show you something. If I were you, I'd put all my money in the envelope.

complies, immediately, pulling out a bankroll that knocks

CONTINUED

20

CONTINUED

20

Hooker's eyes out. She puts it into the envelope and then passes it to Giselle, who dips into her purse and adds her money to it. She turns her body as she does so, so that Hooker cannot see how much money she has. Hooker is amused by her modesty. Giselle then licks the envelope and seals it.

HOOKER

May I have the envelope a second?

Giselle hesitates, but Veronique makes her hand it over.

HOOKER

All right, you take the envelope and stick it up under your arm, inside your coat, like this.

Hooker demonstrates by slipping the envelope inside his tuxedo coat and up into his armpit. By shooting from the side, we see that there is already another envelope there, the one with the cut paper.

HOOKER

That way you can feel it all the time, and no pickpockets will be looking for it there.

He reaches back inside his coat and pulls out the envelope, but of course it's not the one he put in. It's the one with the cut paper. He hands it to Veronique, who thanks him and hands it to Giselle, who tucks it up inside her coat, glancing both ways to make sure no one saw her do it.

HOOKER

I am sorry for all the commotion here tonight. I hope you enjoyed your evening, Countess.

Giselle allows herself a little smile that Hooker is finally using the proper term of address. The Countess nods that her evening has been satisfactory, and Hooker takes his leave.

21

ON HOOKER

21

We follow him as he walks right on out of the ballroom and joins Eirie on the street.

22

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT - ON HOOKER AND EIRIE

22

Hooker is not nearly as elated as we might expect.

EIRIE

Everything go okay?

CONTINUED

22

CONTINUED

22

HOOKER

Yeah, it was easy. I don't even think we needed the build up. I coulda asked 'em for the money outright and they'da given it to me. Not that I'm proud of it.

EIRIE

(hefting the envelope)

Yeah, well let me see what we got here. Feels like enough to open our own steel mill.

Eirie rips open the envelope and pulls out the most beautiful stack of construction paper we've ever seen. Not a dollar bill in sight. Both Hooker and Eirie stare at it in shock for a second. Then it begins to dawn on them.

EIRIE

Hooker, we been had.

Barely are the words out of Eirie's mouth than Hooker races back into the club.

23

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

23

Hooker zeroes in on table sixteen. It's empty. He races back outside.

24

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

24

Hooker frantically looks up and down the street for some sign of the two women.

HOOKER

I find that broad, I'm gonna wring her neck.

EIRIE

Forget it. She's probably halfway home with our thirty bucks by now. Wouldn't that rot your socks.

Eirie is somewhat amused by the whole thing. Hooker is fit to be tied. He literally begins jumping up and down.

HOOKER

We gotta do somethin'. We'll call the police, that's what we'll do. Christ, what kinda town are they runnin' where people can go around pullin' this sorta thing. This burg is crawlin' with grifters and the cops are pickin' nose.

25

ANGLE

25

Eirie can't believe this outpouring of righteousness from Hooker. Hooker continues his tirade as they get into their limousine.

HOOKER

Usin' construction paper yet. Think how the people who made that paper would feel if they knew what she was using it for. They thought they were makin' somethin' nice for little kids. This is the kinda thing that gives construction paper a bad name.

26

ANOTHER ANGLE

26

As the limousine pulls out, we move to reveal that Lonnegan's man, Floyd, has been watching the departure from a car across the street. We can't see who's in the back seat, but we can guess.

CUT TO

27

EXT. HOOKER'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

27

The limousine pulls up in front of the building and Hooker and Eirie get out. They are just about to go up the front steps when two thugs jump out of the shadows, scaring the hell out of all of us, not to mention Hooker and Eirie. Hooker tries to run for it, but he's caught and slammed up against a wall.

THUG

You Johnny Hooker?

HOOKER

Maybe.

THUG

We're from Atlas Tuxedo. You told our guy to bill you. We checked your credit -- you ain't got none. Our boss don't like to be stiffed. That tux'll be ten bucks.

HOOKER

I ain't got it.

THUG

Then you either give up the tux or your good looks.

Hooker pulls out his pockets with his best "have mercy" smile. He looks from some sign that it's winning the thugs over. Fat chance.

CUT TO

28

INT. HOOKER'S APARTMENT BUILDING - STAIRWAY - NIGHT

28

walking up the stairs of Hooker's apartment building. Hooker, having lost the tuxedo, is now clad only in his YMCA gym shorts, his knee socks (suspenders) and, of course, his alligator shoes. It hasn't been his night.

EIRIE

Ya know with things a little tough and all, maybe we oughta go see Gondorff. His letter said he's got a big house down there in Florida with a yard and everything. We could lie around in the sun a little, maybe borrow a few bucks.

HOOKER

I'm not goin' down there with my hat in my hand. He thinks I don't know how to take care of myself.

EIRIE

He's not gonna be like that. He's in the chips. He'd be glad to help ya out.

HOOKER

(tired as hell)

I don't know. We'll talk about it in the morning.

29

INT. HOOKER'S APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY

29

Eirie starts off toward his room as Hooker tries to open the door to his own room. Suddenly the door opens by itself and Hooker finds himself looking at a large Man in a food-stained undershirt.

MAN

Somethin' I can do for you?

HOOKER

Yeh, this is my apartment.

MAN

Used to be. They moved you out an hour ago. Seems you wasn't paid up.

EIRIE

I'll be damned. They got somebody to live here.

CONTINUED

29

CONTINUED

29

HOOKER

You know what they did with my clothes?

MAN

They pawned 'em to get the rent you owed.

EIRIE

Ha, you got the last laugh on 'em there, Hooker. They won't get two months' worth outa those duds.

Hooker gives Eirie a look that could melt a brick.

MAN

Well I'd love to talk to you guys all right, but I gotta go decorate the den.

Without further ado, he closes the door.

30

IN THE HALLWAY

30

Hooker and Eirie start back down the stairs.

EIRIE

You ready to go see Gondorff now?

HOOKER

Yeah, what the hell. You got some clothes you could lend me?

EIRIE

Sure, but we don't have nothin' for train tickets.

HOOKER

I know. Just get me a badge and I'll do the rest. No more strike-outs tonight, Eirie.

Look out. Johnny Hooker is back.

CUT TO

31

INT. THE ATLANTIC CITY RAILROAD STATION - NIGHT

31

We pick up Hooker and Eirie as they come into the station and fan out in different directions. Hooker is wearing Eirie's clothes, which look ridiculous on him. The pants are a good eight inches too short, and the shirt is bursting at the seams, showing patches of skin between the buttons.

32 INT. TRAIN STATION - GIFT SHOP - NIGHT

32

We follow Eirie into the gift shop where he goes to the toy section. He looks through several small novelties until he finds what he's looking for -- a little tin replica of a policeman's badge. He looks around for store detectives, and seeing none, slips the badge into his pocket.

CUT TO

33 INT. TRAIN STATION - CORRIDOR - HOOKER

33

in another part of the station. We see him removing a sign from a door, but the angle prohibits us from being able to read it. He drops the sign in a waste can and walks out into the passenger lobby. Eirie passes him and slips him the tin badge.

34 INT. TRAIN STATION - ANOTHER SECTION

34

After scanning the area carefully for a minute, Hooker goes up to a conservative-looking Businessman, who's busy reading the schedule board. Hooker flashes open his wallet to reveal the little tin badge and then quickly closes it again.

HOOKER

Excuse me, sir. Treasury Department.
I'd like to ask you a few questions.

BUSINESSMAN

What for? I haven't done anything.

HOOKER

We don't doubt that, but there's a counterfeiting operation passing bad money in the station. Have you made any purchases here today?

BUSINESSMAN

(reluctantly)
Well, yes, a small gift, and some food.

HOOKER

Then I'm afraid we'll have to impound your money until we're sure that it's all good. Can I see your wallet please.

BUSINESSMAN

(handing it over)
But I got a train to make.

CONTINUED

HOOKER

It'll only take twenty minutes or so. You can pick it up at the window down the hall.

BUSINESSMAN

But what about all these other people?

HOOKER

(blowing up)
We'll get 'em! Give us a chance. I'm not the only agent in here ya know. We go around advertising ourselves, how many counterfeiters do you think we'd catch, huh?

(pointing to
his shirt)
You think I'm wearin' this rag here 'cause I like it? Christ, everybody thinks life's a holiday or somethin' when you got a badge.

(pouring
it on)
I been here for thirteen hours, Charlie, and I never knew there was so much ugliness in people. You try to help 'em and they spit on ya. I shoulda let you gotten yourself arrested for passin' false notes.

The Businessman is totally shamed.

BUSINESSMAN

I'm sorry, really I am, but I can't wait twenty minutes. My train leaves in ten.

HOOKER

All right, I'll give ya a break.
(pointing to
a hall)

Down that hall there, there's an unmarked door on the left. Go in that door and wait at the cashier window. I'll take this...

(indicates
the money)
...in the back and run it through right away. We'll have ya outa there in a couple minutes.

CONTINUED

34 CONTINUED - 2

34

BUSINESSMAN

Thank you. You don't know how much
I appreciate this.

HOOKER

(with a
little wave)
Think nothing of it.

The Businessman goes off down the hall, more than grateful
for the special treatment.

35 AT THE TICKET COUNTER

35

Hooker, meanwhile, joins Eirie and the two spring over to
buy tickets for Florida.

36 ON THE BUSINESSMAN

36

as we follow him down the hall to the unmarked door. He
strides on through to find himself face-to-face with a wall
of busily flushing urinals.

CUT TO

37 EXT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT - FLOYD

37

sprinting out of the train station, having seen Hooker and
Eirie buying their tickets. He races up to the limousine
in which Lonnegan is waiting.

FLOYD

(out of
breath)

Hey, they're takin' a powder on
the train. We better hurry if
we're gonna put the snatch on 'em.

LONNEGAN

Let 'em go.

FLOYD

(in disbelief)

Let 'em go? Christ, what if they
skip the country or somethin'?

LONNEGAN

They're goin' down to Florida to
see Gondorff. They'll be back.
All of 'em.

Floyd just looks at Lonnegan in wonderment. How does he
know this kinda stuff.

CUT TO

38

INT. FLORIDA RAILROAD STATION - ARRIVAL GATE - DAY

38

We pick up Hooker and Eirie getting off the train, and winding their way through the crowd. Both are traveling light. Hooker, of course, has no luggage at all -- just the clothes Eirie lent him.

HOOKER

I gotta get some decent clothes.
I can't show up at Gondorff's
lookin' like this.

EIRIE

You got the money right on your
feet there. We shoulda thought
of it earlier.

HOOKER

(looking down
at his beloved
alligators)

Aw, no....

CUT TO

39

INT. PAWN SHOP - DAY

39

Hooker has his alligator shoes up on the counter. The Pawnbroker looks them over with the crushing indifference that characterizes his breed.

HOOKER

They're alligator, ya know.

PAWNBROKER

So what. We got five thousand of
'em in the Everglades across the
street.

HOOKER

(pissed)

Not Brazilian ones.

The Pawnbroker hands over a twenty dollar bill. Hooker doesn't like it, but he takes it.

CUT TO

40

EXT. A FLORIDA STREET - DAY

40

Hooker and Eirie are walking along with a copy of Gondorff's letter in hand, obviously looking for an address. Hooker has on his new clothes now, and while they're none too stylish, at least they fit. They find the address they want on the curb and look up expecting to see Gondorff's house. Instead they are greeted with a sign that says: FLORIDA STATE PENITENTIARY. Eirie stands there with his mouth open. Hooker is just plain disgusted.

41 EXT. ANOTHER STREET - DAY

41

HOOKER
A big house with a yard, huh?

CUT TO

42 INT. PRISON VISITING ROOM - DAY

42

Hooker and Eirie sit in the visiting room awaiting the appearance of Gondorff. Hooker is barely able to control his anger. Eirie, of course, is fascinated with the prison and everything in it.

43 ANGLE

43

A door opens and out comes Gondorff, wearing a smile as wide as the stripes, which clothe him from head to toe. He's also wearing the fedora hat which is his trademark.

GONDORFF
Howdy. Glad you could make it.

HOOKER
Bite off.

GONDORFF
What the hell are you so sore about. I'm the one that's in jail. You remember that senator I took on a stocks deal? I got a job as a gardener in a cemetery, figurin' nobody there is gonna put the finger on me. Turns out the senator comes down to observe Veterans Day and I'm out there waterin' the lawn. First honest work I ever did and look what happens to me. I been here two years.

HOOKER
You coulda told us.

GONDORFF
Then I never woulda got ya down here. I knew if you thought I was in the money, you'd come down and try to mooch some.

CONTINUED

HOOKER

(incensed)

I don't need your goddamn money. I got a zinc mine in Cuba, some oil interests in Japan and a race horse that's definitely Kentucky Derby material. Not to mention the next light-heavyweight champion.

GONDORFF

What's his name?

HOOKER

Typhoon Taylor.

GONDORFF

Who sold him to ya, Jackie Pope?

HOOKER

Yeah, you know Jackie?

GONDORFF

Christ, he tried to sell me the same guy four years ago, only he was callin' him Tugboat Taylor then. Every time he loses, Jackie gives him a tougher name.

HOOKER

He's better now. I got him fightin' a contender next week at the Jersey Gardens. I tell ya, Typhoon's got a right hand like a steam drill.

GONDORFF

How do you know? He's never hit anything with it.

HOOKER

I been workin' with him personally. I used to be a Golden Gloves champion, ya know.

GONDORFF

You're a great businessman, Hooker. Did this horse you bought have all three legs?

HOOKER

Some day you're gonna be sorry you don't have a piece of my action.

CONTINUED

GONDORFF

Look, I don't even care if you showed up just to mooch. If I had some dough here, I'd give it to ya. Unfortunately, all I got with me is bad news.

(pause)

Somebody killed Kid Twist.

Hooker and Eirie are stunned.

HOOKER

But I just saw him a couple days ago.

GONDORFF

Police in Atlantic City got a tip. They pulled him out of the bay with cement on his feet.

HOOKER

Lonnegan?

GONDORFF

I thought so at first, but this isn't his style. Besides, what would he be doin' in Atlantic City. The word is it was a hood named Carlo Macalinski.

HOOKER

It's not like Twist to con a racketeer. How could he get so down on his luck to do somethin' like that?

GONDORFF

Look at us three. We paintin' any pictures of success?

It's a question that needs no reply. The answer is obvious.

EIRIE

You gonna go after this guy?

GONDORFF

After the Lonnegan con, I said we'd never do anything like that again. We keep stinging heavy gees, no matter how good the reason, and pretty soon there won't be any place safe for us.

CONTINUED

43

CONTINUED - 3

43

HOOKER

I figure we ought to stick to that line of thinking...next time.

A smile creeps onto Gondorff's face. He was hoping Hooker would feel that way.

GONDORFF

They're lettin' me outa here on Wednesday. Billie's comin' down with some tickets for Atlantic City. We'll be back in time to catch your boy's fight. See ya then.

Hooker and Eirie nod good-bye, and are shown out of the visiting room.

44

INT. PRISON CORRIDOR - DAY

44

We follow Gondorff as he's led back to his cell by a guard named Clancy. It's obvious the two know each other well.

GONDORFF

Hey Clancy, they don't have any zinc in Cuba, do they?

CLANCY

Nope, ain't got no oil in Japan, either. They're still runnin' the Kentucky Derby though.

As Gondorff disappears down the hall, we:

CUT TO

45

A MONTAGE SEQUENCE

45

beginning on the day of Gondorff's release. We pick up Gondorff coming out of the prison gates, wearing a prison-issue suit and carrying a small satchel of belongings. He dances a little jig as Billie rushes forward to greet him. They embrace with an enthusiasm worthy of the occasion, as Hooker and Eirie look on somewhat sheepishly. A cab waits behind them.

CUT TO

46

INT. FLORIDA TRAIN STATION - PHOTO BOOTH

46

He goes directly into one of the self-photo booths and draws the blinds. We don't know why he's doing this yet, but the purposefulness with which he goes about it indicates something beyond vanity.

CUT TO

47 INT. A PHILADELPHIA BOTTLING PLANT - DAY

47

We pick up a heavysset, middle-aged man, known in con circles as the Big Ohio, picking cases of bourbon off the conveyor line and loading them onto a forklift pallet. A shift foreman happens by and hands him an envelope, hunching his shoulders to indicate he has no idea what's in it. The Big Ohio stops to open it and pulls out a photo booth picture of Gondorff with his hand to his nose in the traditional confidence man's salute (the "office"). Below the picture is nothing but the words: JERSEY GARDEN. 8:30 PM. THE FOURTH.

48 ANOTHER ANGLE

48

The Big Ohio smiles knowingly to himself. Suddenly we hear the splintering of bottles as the rapidly piling up cases begin to be crushed at the end of the conveyor, spilling bourbon all over the floor. The Big Ohio could care less.

CUT TO

49 EXT. A NEW YORK RACE TRACK - DAY

49

J.J. Singleton is in the grandstand watching a race through binoculars when a steward hands him an envelope. He opens it to find the same picture that the Big Ohio got. He ponders the message a second and then begins to gather up his things, completely oblivious to the people around him who are going crazy rooting home their favorites.

CUT TO

50 INT. A PLUSH BOSTON PENTHOUSE - DAY

50

We see a handsome, debonair man partaking of his midday meal, while his butler is busy unpacking his suitcase. The man is the Tuxedo Kid, so named because he always wears a tux unless he's sleeping or on a con. He has them in twelve different colors. On his lunch tray is an envelope. He opens it to find a picture of guess who. Tuxedo motions to the butler to start putting the clothes back in the suitcase. As the butler struggles to keep a stiff upper lip, we:

CUT TO

51 EXT. THE JERSEY GARDEN - NIGHT

51

It's the night of Typhoon Taylor's fight. We pick up Hooker, Gondorff, Eirie and Billie as they pull up in front of the Jersey Garden. As we might have guessed, it's in Jersey, but it ain't no garden. Gondorff looks the place over, hoping they can get the fight in before the place falls down.

CUT TO

57

INT. TAYLOR'S DRESSING ROOM

57

Hooker pokes his head inside. Taylor is sitting in a card game with a couple other fighters. It's hard for him to hold his cards because his hands are taped.

HOOKER

How ya feelin', Typhoon.

TYPHOON

(trying to
figure out
what to discard)

Don't worry, boss, I'm gonna murder 'em.

Hooker looks to the trainer, Shorty, who's reading a pulp devoted to fight stories.

HOOKER

Shouldn't he be gettin' his gloves on?

SHORTY

Naw, the Golden Dread ain't due to lose for another ten minutes or so.

HOOKER

Yeah, all right.

CUT TO

58

THE ARENA AGAIN - NIGHT

58

It's later now. Hooker and friends are all in their seats. The ring is in the final stages of being cleaned up as the fighters enter the ring. The mud has all been shoveled into wheelbarrows and the canvas has been mopped up. The ring Announcer steps to the mike.

59

IN THE RING - NIGHT

59

The Announcer is at the mike.

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the Garden's semi-main event. Seven rounds of boxing. In the red corner, weighing one eighty-two and wearing the black trunks, the number six ranking light-heavyweight contender, the pride of Dublin, Irish Billy Healy.

CONTINUED

59

CONTINUED

59

Healy dances out to even more scattered applause.

ANNOUNCER

And in the blue corner, weighing
one ninety-two, wearing the white
trunks, the big wind that blows
nobody good, Eddie 'Typhoon' Taylor.

Typhoon dances out to even more scattered applause. Hooker
and Eirie have been visibly moved by the Announcer's intro-
duction of Taylor. What poetry.

HOOKER

You watch my guy, Henry. He's got
the greatest right I've ever seen.

60

IN THE RING

60

The bell rings and the fighters come out. Immediately,
Typhoon backs Healy into a corner and unleashes the famous
right. It misses, crashing mightily into a ring post. It
damn near splinters the thing. Hooker wasn't kidding.
Taylor has a great right. Unfortunately, we're about to
find out what he doesn't have -- any defense. While
Typhoon is busy admiring the damage he's done to the post,
Healy blasts two shots to the body and a left hook to the
chin. Typhoon goes on his face.

61

ON HOOKER

61

Hooker jumps up immediately and hops down to ringside to
talk to Taylor, whose head is hanging over the side of the
ring.

HOOKER

Don't let this upset ya, Typhoon.
It was just a lucky shot. He's gonna
be comin' in on ya now. Go into a
crouch like you're hurt, and when he
wades in, uncork the right. You got
that?

62

IN THE RING

62

Typhoon nods in such a way that lets us know he'd be lucky
if he knew his own name right now. He gets up at eight and
waits for Healy to come in on him. He crouches, but none
too sure of his directions at this point, uncorks a left

CONTINUED

62 CONTINUED

62

instead of a right. It catches Healy full on the chin. Unfortunately Healy doesn't seem to notice. Whatever power there was in Typhoon's left is gone. Healy unloads a right cross to Typhoon's jaw. Typhoon, being a much more observant type, goes on his back, landing very close to where he went down last time.

63 AT RINGSIDE

63

HOOKER

Get it up, Typhoon. This don't look good.

TYPHOON

(woozy)

Leave me alone. A guy can only take so much. I gave it my all.

HOOKER

Your all! It's only thirty seconds into the goddamn first round.

64 ANOTHER ANGLE

64

It's no use. Typhoon is taking the rest of the night off. Hooker stands there stunned as Taylor is counted out. Gondorff comes down to commiserate.

HOOKER

If only he coulda thrown one more right.

GONDORFF

It's a hard punch to throw when you're lying down.

As Gondorff and Hooker walk away from the ring, the camera moves to reveal another presence in the arena.

65 ON LONNEGAN

65

High up in the stands we find Doyle Lonnegan taking in the whole scene. Floyd as always is next to him.

LONNEGAN

I told you they'd be back.

FLOYD

Look at that punk Hooker. If I was that ugly I'd shoot myself.

Lonnegan says nothing, but he's obviously amused at the ability of Floyd's emotions to alter his eyesight. Gondorff and company are almost out of the arena now.

FLOYD

They're leavin'. We go get 'em now?

LONNEGAN

I told you no, Floyd.

FLOYD

What the hell are we waiting for? After what those guys did to us. I tell ya, that bastard Hooker is mine. I got a bullet with his name on it. Actin' like he was some kinda hot poop, tellin' us he could fix races, callin' Slade and me Mutt and Jeff. I don't let nobody get away with that shit.

LONNEGAN

He's not gonna get away with anything. He and Gondorff are gonna pay me back and then you'll have your day.

FLOYD

(shaking his head in disbelief)
I don't get it.

LONNEGAN

If everybody could understand it, it wouldn't be much of a plan, now, would it?

FLOYD

I still think we're makin' a mistake screwin' around like this.

LONNEGAN

It wouldn't be enough to kill them now. They'd leave this world thinking Doyle Lonnegan was a stupid man.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

67 EXT. A CHINESE MARKET - DAY 67

We see Hooker enter the market.

68 INT. CHINESE MARKET - DAY 68

Hooker nods to the Chinese store owner and makes his way to the back of the store. He opens a large meat refrigerator door and goes inside.

69 INT. SMALL MEETING ROOM 69

Instead of hanging beef sides in the refrigerator, we find a small meeting room. Around the table in the center are Gondorff, Eirie, Singleton, the Big Ohio and the Tuxedo Kid. Gondorff is dressed in his usual casual attire -- sleeveless T-shirt, fedora hat and cigar. The Tuxedo Kid provides a splash of color with a lime-green number. Hooker pulls up a chair.

GONDORFF

All right, let's get started.
What's the news on this guy, J.J.?

Singleton organizes some notes he's made.

SINGLETON

I tell ya, Henry, Macalinski's been around. He started as a strong-arm at a carnival. Then he ran a shell game, a monte booth, even did some of the magic when the magician was too soused to go on. But most of all, he discouraged the customers from takin' too close a look at how they were losin' their money. They say he still likes to do a trick or two at his parties when he gets a few drinks in him. A guy walked out once when he was doin' a rope trick. They found him the next day with his feet in a drill press. He never walked at all after that, let alone out of a party.

This piece of information has a very sobering effect on the group.

EIRIE

Why do we always gotta go up against these types?

CONTINUED

GONDORFF

If they weren't these types, we wouldn't have to.

HOOKER

So if he's not a carney worker anymore, what the hell is he?

BIG OHIO

He became an enforcer for Gandi Bellino in '34. At the time, Bellino was tryin' to nail down all the prostitution in the city. He put Macalinski in charge of his gunsels. After Macalinski finished torpedoing the opposition, he torpedoed Bellino. Now he runs more girls than anybody on the island. He's still a shitty magician, though.

GONDORFF

He musta made a few enemies during all this.

BIG OHIO

Yeah, but nothin' he can't handle. He's got some sore spots, though. For one thing, he can't stand Negroes. Guys like JoJo Berry and Willie Bates. He says they give prostitution a bad name by sellin' cheap. It really frosts his butt when they pick up the good white talent.

Gondorff says nothing, but we can tell this bit of information is not lost on him.

GONDORFF

Okay. Tuxedo, what do you got on his personal habits?

TUXEDO KID

Macalinski's the glamour type. Snappy dresser, big tipper, owns the Bluebird Club down on the pier. Buys a new suit every day, wears it once and then burns it. They say he's got fifty-four diamond rings and three hundred pair of shoes.

GONDORFF

I guess he doesn't believe in burning those.

TUXEDO KID

He's got every vice there is and a few I'm not acquainted with, but his biggest weakness is the janes. He thinks he's death to women.

GONDORFF

Is he?

TUXEDO KID

You never see him with less than four.

This creates a general feeling of disgust around the table. If there's one thing a grifter can't stand in a mark, it's pretention.

GONDORFF

Do any of these dames ever stay tight with him?

TUXEDO KID

Naw, he doesn't like women that much. He just can't stand it when they don't like him.

HOOKER

Looks like we might be able to use a woman on him in the setup.

GONDORFF

If we can find one with grifting experience.

TUXEDO KID

He'd be a perfect mark except for the fact that he probably knows all the standard cons from his carney days.

GONDORFF

Then we'll have to go with a new one. Watchin' Typhoon the other night, I got an idea for a fight con that might be good for this clown. I thought we'd call it the Gondorff after its founder -- I mean until we come up with something better.

Immediately everyone at the table comes up with something better. Gondorff has to call for order.

CONTINUED

GONDORFF

The Gondorff it is. I haven't got it all figured yet, but we'll need a gym to start with. J.J. and the Big Ohio can get on that. Tuxedo can handle the bookmaking. The only other thing we need is...

(pause)

...a fighter.

Everyone looks to Hooker. Hooker would rather they looked at somebody else.

HOOKER

Why don't we get a real fighter?

GONDORFF

Naw, we need somebody who can grift. And Eirie said you were a Golden Gloves champion.

HOOKER

Yeh, but that was fifteen years ago.

GONDORFF

It couldn't be any worse than when Lonnegan's guys were shootin' at ya.

Hooker realizes it's useless to protest. He nods his head in acceptance of his role.

GONDORFF

All right then, we'll all have to work on percentage. We're pretty short of cash. That queer the deal for anybody?

Gondorff looks around the table. Everybody's in.

GONDORFF

Okay, let's go to work.

CUT TO

We pick up Hooker wandering through the sporting goods area. He stops in the boxing section and tries on a few pairs of gloves, testing the feel by throwing a couple shadow punches. A Salesman approaches.

CONTINUED

70

CONTINUED

70

SALESMAN

Can I help you?

HOOKER

Yeah, I'll take this pair. You got any punching bags?

SALESMAN

Well, we got a weight-bay sort of thing on a stand. It's not like you'd find in a gym, but....

HOOKER

That's good enough. I just need somethin' to sharpen up on.

As the Salesman goes to ring up the purchases, Hooker happens to glance across the store.

71

HOOKER'S POINT OF VIEW - THE LINGERIE DEPARTMENT

71

He sees something in the lingerie department he can scarcely believe. The woman behind the counter. He looks closer. No doubt about it. It's Veronique, the part-time Countess.

71-A

BACK WITH HOOKER

71-A

HOOKER

(to the
Salesman)

Hold this stuff for me, will ya.
I'll be back a little later.

Hooker sneaks over toward the lingerie department, taking great care not to let Veronique see him. He takes a detour through the toy department.

72

IN THE TOY DEPARTMENT

72

Hooker pauses to lift a pair of handcuffs.

73

IN THE LINGERIE DEPARTMENT

73

Hooker then boldly strides into the lingerie department and goes right behind the counter, elbowing aside a few customers on the way. Veronique is not delighted to see him.

CONTINUED

73

CONTINUED

73

HOOKER

(pulling out
his handcuffs)

You're under arrest by order of the
Federal Bureau of Investigation.

At first Veronique is dumbfounded. She figures he must be kidding.

VERONIQUE

Drop dead, will ya.

We are seeing a new side of Veronique. No phony French accent here. It's quite obvious that English is her first language. She attempts to ignore Hooker by turning back to her customers.

VERONIQUE

Don't pay any attention to this guy.
He's....

74

ANOTHER ANGLE

74

She doesn't get to finish the sentence. Hooker grabs her arms and starts to handcuff them behind her back. Veronique struggles mightily, kicking and screaming. The customers are shocked.

VERONIQUE

Keep your hands off me, creep.

HOOKER

I was hopin' you'd come along quietly, lady, but I can see you got no class. Looks like we'll have to add resisting arrest and assault on an officer to the list of charges.

75

ANOTHER ANGLE

75

Hooker has the cuffs on now, but Veronique continues to struggle. Meanwhile, the commotion has brought the department Manager running.

MANAGER

What's going on here?

CONTINUED

HOOKER

(flashing his
toy badge)

Eddie Hoover, FBI. Your saleslady here, Miss Newberry, is wanted for extortion and embezzlement in fifteen states.

VERONIQUE

Don't believe this guy, Mr. Hertel.

MANAGER

But her name is Sherman. Veronica Sherman.

HOOKER

Just one of her many aliases. It was Sheila Newberry in Chicago. She skimmed six grand from Macy's there. I hope she didn't hit you too hard.

MANAGER

I hadn't noticed her taking anything.

HOOKER

That's why she's so good. We been chasin' her for a year and a half, but I guess your luck finally ran out, huh sister?

VERONICA

Aw, dry up.

Hooker starts to lead her away. Mr. Hertel is not quite sure what to do.

VERONICA

Please, Mr. Hertel, this guy is a phony. He's nothin' but a two-bit con artist. I know, I beat him on a switch just last week when he tried....

Veronica stops in midsentence, realizing what she's just admitted. Mr. Hertel is more upset by this than if she were an embezzler. Whatever doubts he had about Hooker are now gone. He gives Veronica his most scandalized glare. She knows she's had it.

VERONICA

Aw, the hell with it. I was tired 'a workin' in your crappy store anyway.

CONTINUED

75

CONTINUED - 2

75

Now Hertel is really scandalized. As Veronica's being led away, she turns to a wide-eyed customer who had been about to buy a nightgown.

VERONICA

You're gonna look like a bulldozer in that, lady. I wouldn't wear this stuff to shovel bird shit.

Hooker doesn't need to lead Veronica anymore. She's storming out of the store under her own power, even though her hands are handcuffed behind her back.

76

EXT. DEPARTMENT STORE - NIGHT

76

We pick them up as they emerge onto the street.

HOOKER

Just wanted you to know I'm not a sore loser.

VERONICA

Get lost, bozo.

77

EXT. DEPARTMENT STORE - ANOTHER ANGLE

77

HOOKER

Don't give me no high-hat, sweetheart. You're down to my size now. What happened to the Countess racket?

VERONICA

I decided to pack it in. All you meet in that line is bums like you. Christ, I gotta give Harriet twenty-five percent, I gotta buy the clothes, pay off the maitre d', buy a few drinks and I hook into some jerk who's only good for thirty bucks. If you were any kind of pro at all you would've sweetened that boodie with a 100 on the top, instead of a crummy twenty.

HOOKER

I'm smarter than the average guy, that's all.

CONTINUED

VERONICA

Naw, you're just poorer. Now take the air, will ya.

HOOKER

What if I offered you a job?

VERONICA

I'd say take it yourself before someone deserving gets it.

HOOKER

It'd be a chance to work the big con with Henry Gondorff.

VERONICA

Why should I believe you know Henry Gondorff?

HOOKER

What else you got goin'?

Veronica doesn't answer, but Hooker knows he's gotten through to her.

HOOKER

I'll meet ya tomorrow at 710 Delaware Avenue, second floor. Two o'clock.

VERONICA

Don't count on it.

Hooker splits off and heads back toward the department store.

VERONICA

Hey, you wanna take these cuffs off now?

HOOKER

Not particularly.

VERONICA

What if some guy tries to paw me on the way home?

HOOKER

Don't worry, lady. With your personality, nobody'd get near ya. Too bad, too. You got a nice pair of gams.

CONTINUED

77

CONTINUED - 2

77

VERONICA

(defiantly)

You'll never know how great.

On this note of tenderness, we:

CUT TO

78

EXT. MIDTOWN ATLANTIC CITY - DAY - ESTABLISHING

78

an old brick building in one of the more rundown sections of the city. The windows of the second floor have been glazed over and a workman is painting the words GOLDING'S GYM on them.

79

INT. GOLDING'S GYM - DAY

79

Hooker comes into frame and goes up an unmarked stairway to the second floor. Once a clearinghouse of some sort, the place is rapidly being transformed into a boxing gym under the direction of Singleton and The Big Ohio. Construction goes on everywhere -- heavy bags are suspended from the ceiling, speed bags are affixed to the walls and a ring is under construction in the center. In addition, dressing rooms are being built at both ends. Gondorff, at present, is using one of them as an office. Hooker strolls through the gym, taking in the work, and then enters the office.

80

INT. GONDORFF'S OFFICE - DAY

80

Gondorff and the Tuxedo Kid are going over some preparations.

HOOKER

Looks pretty good.

GONDORFF

You're gonna have to start usin' it soon. I got you scheduled for a fight with Danny Kelley on the 19th at the Auditorium. The promoter owed me a favor, so he didn't let it bother him that he never heard of you.

TUXEDO KID

(handing Hooker
a little booklet)

Here's the press book we made up on you. We send that to all the sports-writers in town. That way they don't

CONTINUED

80

CONTINUED

80

TUXEDO KID (Cont'd)
 need to go checkin' around to find
 out who you are. It's all laid out
 for 'em.

HOOKER
 (reading his
 ring name
 from the
 cover)
 I'm Bobby Florian, huh?

GONDORFF
 Make sure you know everything in
 there yourself. You gotta tell some
 of it to Macalinski. It's got all
 your previous fights. As of now,
 you're seven to one.

HOOKER
 Did I beat anybody good?

TUXEDO KID
 Yeah, I had you knock out three guys
 in the first round. I said you were
 lethal with either hand.

Hooker smiles at this. He likes the idea of bein' lethal
 with either hand.

81

ANOTHER ANGLE

81

The Big Ohio pops his head in the door.

BIG OHIO
 Hey, Gondorff. There's some jane out
 here to see you.

HOOKER
 I'll be damned, she showed up.

GONDORFF
 Who showed up?

HOOKER
 I think I found a girl that's just
 what we're lookin' for. Name's
 Veronica Sherman.

(lying
 through
 his teeth)
 I grifted with her some the last
 couple years.

CONTINUED

81 CONTINUED

81

GONDORFF

(perking up)
Oh yeah? What'd you play?

HOOKER

Oh, ya know...the glim dropper, the
tat, stuff like that. She's smart,
she's a good-looker and she don't
rattle.

GONDORFF

How come you didn't mention her the
other day?

HOOKER

I wasn't sure she was in town.

GONDORFF

All right, Ohio, send her in.

82 ANOTHER ANGLE

82

Ohio opens the door and motions Veronica in.

HOOKER

Veronica, this is Henry Gondorff.

Veronica shakes his hand.

VERONICA

Nice to meet ya.

GONDORFF

Hooker says you two played some con
together.

VERONICA

Yeah.

GONDORFF

What did you play?

HOOKER

(irritated)

I told ya that already.

VERONICA

Oh, ya know, the Spanish prisoner,
the tip racket, the pigeon drop.

CONTINUED

GONDORFF

(appalled)
The pigeon drop!

HOOKER

(to Veronica,
insulted as
hell)

What do you take me for? I wouldn't
play no pigeon drop, stealin' from
old ladies.

VERONICA

(blowing
her top)

How was I supposed to know what dumb
stuff you made up? You coulda at
least filled me in.

HOOKER

I didn't even know you was comin'.

GONDORFF

(calling for
quiet)

All right, all right. At first I
figured you had never played any-
thing but footsie together, but now
I can see you ain't even done that.
What's goin' on?

HOOKER

She reversed a switch on me a couple
weeks ago.

GONDORFF

Not bad. What was your name again?

VERONICA

Sherill. Veronica Sherill.

GONDORFF

You told Hooker it was Sherman.

VERONICA

So you want me to send away for my
birth certificate?

GONDORFF

Miss Sherill, or Sherman, or whatever
the hell it is, when we're on a con
we at least try and tell the truth

CONTINUED

GONDORFF (Cont'd)
to each other. I mean you don't
gotta tell it all the time, just
when you're asked somethin'.

VERONICA
(somewhat
contrite)
It's Sheridan. Veronica Sheridan.

GONDORFF
Can you play a sophisticated type,
Sheridan? I mean a cafe society
dame?

HOOKER
She beat me doin' a French countess
with a maid servant.

Veronica supports Hooker's assertion by spouting some French.
Gondorff is impressed.

GONDORFF
All right, Veronica, you're on. Be
here at eight o'clock tonight. We're
gonna run through the set-up. Tomor-
row night we go up against our man.

Veronica nods. She plays it cool, but inside she's excited
as hell.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

83

EXT. THE BLUEBIRD CLUB - NIGHT

83

Located on the amusement pier, the Bluebird is Macalinski's club. Hooker, Eirie and Veronica are sitting in a car across the street, obviously waiting for something. It's the night for the con to begin and they're all a little edgy. Veronica is particularly quiet in the back seat.

EIRIE

Where's Gondorff? He's twenty minutes late already.

HOOKER

Take it easy, Eirie. He'll be here. Has he ever not shown up before?

EIRIE

He's never had to do what he's doin' tonight, either. What if that stuff don't look right?

HOOKER

It'll look right; Singleton knows what he's doin'.

(turning to
Veronica)

How come we ain't heard anything outa you, Sheridan? You nervous?

VERONICA

No, why should I be?

HOOKER

I was nervous my first big con.

VERONICA

If I had your skill, I'd be nervous too.

HOOKER

That's what we like to hear, Sheridan. I was afraid you were gettin' stiff on us back there.

A pair of headlights appears down the street and stops about twenty feet away.

HOOKER

That's him. Let's go, Eirie.
(to Veronica)
Lag us about thirty seconds.

CONTINUED

- 83 CONTINUED 83
- Veronica nods her head. As Hooker and Eirie get out of the car, we:
- CUT TO
- 84 INT. THE BLUEBIRD CAFE - NIGHT 84
- The most exclusive club in Atlantic City and definitely in the tradition of the great supper clubs of the early forties. Characterized by its bold deco design, satin curtains and tablecloths and an elevated bandstand with its Busby Berkeley backdrops, the Bluebird prides itself on its elegance. The bandstand is actually divided into three tiers, the top tier (containing the drummer and piano player) a good twelve feet above the floor. The waiters are all dressed in black tuxedos, the band in tails, and the cocktail waitresses and cigarette girls in tuxedoettes -- backless tuxedo jackets, tuxedo shorts with cummerbund, high heels with spats, and top hat -- much like the girls in Fatha Hines Grand Terrace Chorus.
- 85 ANGLE 85
- Hooker and Eirie enter the club, and after checking their hats, move to a position to eyeball the floor.
- 85-A THEIR POINT OF VIEW 85-A
- Then the band vocalist is into a rendition of "I Can't Get Started."
- 85-B BACK WITH ERIE AND HOOKER 85-B
- EIRIE
Which one is him?
- HOOKER
The guy at the table in back with all the bimbos around him.
- 86 ON MACALINSKI 86
- sitting at his private table, holding court with several party girls of the period. A physically imposing, but less than handsome man, Macalinski dresses with all the flash of the true narcissist. His tastes are expensive like the Tuxedo Kid's, but not nearly as good.

87 ON VERONICA

87

Veronica enters the club now, a vision in black satin. She informs the maitre d' that she's alone and is led to a table within Macalinski's line of sight. She lights a cigarette and surveys the room, a stunning presence, at once sophisticated and totally relaxed.

87-A ON MACALINSKI

87-A

Macalinski spies her just as another guy sits down with her.

87-B ON EIRIE AND HOOKER

87-B

EIRIE

Who's that jerk?

HOOKER

I don't know, but we gotta get him outta there. Give him a call, Eirie.

88 WITH EIRIE

88

Eirie immediately walks over to Veronica's table. On the way, he snatches a napkin from an empty table and drapes it over his arm, giving him the appearance of a waiter.

EIRIE

Excuse me, sir, what's your name?

RICHARDSON

Richardson. Lionel Richardson.

EIRIE

That's what I thought. Mr. Richardson, there's a call for you in the lobby. On the green phone.

Richardson gets up to take his call wondering who could be calling him here.

89 ON MACALINSKI

89

Macalinski looks over again and catches Veronica's eyes. She makes contact, giving just a hint of interest and then, demures slightly. Macalinski takes it as an invitation. He gets up and moves confidently toward Veronica's table, leaving his entourage to fend for itself.

90 AT VERONICA'S TABLE

90

He arrives at the table and goes into his opening line, only to find another Voice saying it in unison with him.

MACALINSKI AND VOICE

Good evening, mind if I sit down?

91 ANGLE

91

Macalinski and the camera turn toward the source of the other Voice. Standing there is one of the sharpest-looking black men we have ever seen. Resplendent in an ivory suit with vest, shoes and hat to match, the man is particularly striking because of his deep blue eyes. Of course, the man is Gondorff.

Both men look at each other with contempt, but each adopts a civil tone.

GONDORFF

There seems to be an echo in here.

MACALINSKI

Excuse me, but I'm afraid I was here first.

GONDORFF

I'm sorry, but I believe I was here first.

Gondorff looks to Veronica to settle the dispute.

GONDORFF

Madam?

VERONICA

I really couldn't tell. It seemed you both were here at the same time.

MACALINSKI

Who would you prefer, then?

VERONICA

I don't know either of you well enough to prefer. It's no disgrace for two men to sit at the same table, is it?

CONTINUED

Both men exchange glances as if fully expecting the other to leave. When it doesn't happen, both sit, none too happy with the situation.

MACALINSKI

(to Veronica)

I'm Carlo Macalinski. I own the club here. You may have heard of me.

VERONICA

No, I'm sorry. I'm new in Atlantic City.

(offering
her hand)

Lola Forrest.

Veronica turns to Gondorff now. He takes her hand and kisses it as he introduces himself. Macalinski is disgusted by Gondorff's elaborate chivalry.

GONDORFF

Ivory Berrigan. It's a pleasure to meet you, Miss Forrest.

VERONICA

Do you live here too?

GONDORFF

No, I'm here on business. Unfortunately I have to travel quite a bit overseeing various interests. When I encounter a woman of your charm, it makes all the miles worthwhile.

VERONICA

Well, thank you, Mr. Berrigan. You're very kind.

Macalinski wants to throw up.

GONDORFF

(to Veronica)

I was wondering if you'd like to go somewhere nice for dinner. I know a place across the....

MACALINSKI

(snapping)

We've got the best food in town right here.

CONTINUED

GONDORFF

I beg to differ, Mr. Macalinski.

Macalinski has had enough. The pretense of amiability is quickly dropped.

MACALINSKI

Why don't you come off that phony culture bit. You're not foolin' Miss Forrest. She's gonna be spending the evening with me.

GONDORFF

Maybe if you chain her to the table.

VERONICA

Gentlemen!

MACALINSKI

You know, I could always have you shown to the door.

GONDORFF

I doubt if that would make a favorable impression with Miss Forrest. And it might look to your staff like you were afraid of me.

VERONICA

Please, there's really no need....

Veronica's pleas for peace are a drop in the bucket. There's no turning back now.

MACALINSKI

You don't worry me, Berrigan. Just 'cause you shined enough shoes to buy yourself a suit don't mean you can play with the white folks. I own this town. Miss Forrest knows I can give her anything she wants.

GONDORFF

Except class. They wouldn't even let you in here if you didn't own the place.

CONTINUED

91 CONTINUED - 3

91

MACALINSKI

(getting
hot now)

Who you talkin' to about class, brown boy. I've had over five hundred females in my life.

GONDORFF

Yeh, but four hundred ninety of 'em were sheep.

Macalinski stands up as to invite Gondorff outside, just as:

92 ANOTHER ANGLE

92

Eirie passes by with a drink. Eirie makes sure to bump into him showering the drink all over Macalinski's head and suit. Eirie apologizes profusely, but receives nothing but verbal abuse in return.

While Macalinski is busy toweling off his suit, Gondorff comes over and attempts to dry Macalinski's hair with a napkin. He makes one swipe, and suddenly Macalinski is bald.

VERONICA

Mr. Macalinski, your hair!

Macalinski reaches for the top of his head and feels only skin. He has a terrible realization as Gondorff looks in his napkin and holds up a slightly soggy hairpiece.

GONDORFF

This is real convenient, Macalinski. We'll just send this rug out to be dry cleaned and you won't have to wash your hair. What'll they think of next? Is that your real nose?

Macalinski's humiliation has given way to pure rage. He tries to snap the toupee out of Gondorff's hands.

MACALINSKI

Give me that.

Unfortunately, Gondorff pulls away slightly as Macalinski grabs the hair, causing the hairpiece to split right up the middle. At this point, Gondorff lets go and calls for a waiter loud enough for the whole club to hear.

CONTINUED

92

CONTINUED

92

GONDORFF

Waiter, waiter! Could we get some thread over here? Mr. Macalinski seems to have a run in his wig.

Macalinski motions the waiter to get lost or fear for his life.

GONDORFF

(with
sincerity)

That's too bad. It was such a nice one too. You probably get lotsa compliments on that. 'Course you'd think they'd give ya better glue with it.

MACALINSKI

You watch your tongue, nigger, or you'll wake up one morning without it.

93

ANOTHER ANGLE

93

Macalinski has said this with his back to Veronica so that she hasn't heard it. Gondorff figures maybe it's time to lay off for a while. Both men take their seats, as Macalinski reaches for a deck of cards in the center of the table.

MACALINSKI

(surprisingly
composed now)

I think we owe it to Miss Forrest to settle our differences like gentlemen. A simple game of skill.

Macalinski puts two cards face down on the table. He then goes through the deck and pulls out the queen of diamonds. He holds it up for Gondorff and Veronica to see.

MACALINSKI

The queen, in honor of Miss Forrest.

He puts the queen face down on the table between the two other cards, and lays the rest of the deck aside. As he does it, we see him slip one card up his sleeve.

MACALINSKI

The game is simple enough. I move the cards around. Mr. Berrigan tries to pick out the queen. If he does, he'll have the pleasure of Miss Forrest's company alone. If not, he'll leave this club and never return. Fair enough, Berrigan.

CONTINUED

GONDORFF

Fair enough.

MACALINSKI

(to Veronica)

Why don't you try it once, just to show Mr. Berrigan how it's done?

VERONICA

All right, if you insist.

Macalinski moves the cards. It's easy to follow the queen. It ends up in the middle. Veronica picks it out with no trouble.

MACALINSKI

See, nothin' to it, Berrigan. Even you should be able to do it.

As Macalinski takes the queen back from Veronica, he palms it and replaces it with the card up his sleeve. It's done in a movement so deft that we can only see it in slow motion. Gondorff and Veronica can't possibly have seen it at all. Macalinski puts the new card face down in the middle again, with everyone assuming it's still the queen.

MACALINSKI

All right, Berrigan, your turn.

Macalinski begins moving the cards again, more quickly this time, but it's still not difficult to follow the card that should have been the queen. It ends up in the middle again.

MACALINSKI

Well, which one is it?

Gondorff studies the cards. It seems like there's no way he can win. None of them are queens. Gondorff puts his hands on the two outside cards.

GONDORFF

I'll say it's neither of these two.

Before Macalinski can protest, Gondorff flips over the two cards. Neither, of course, is the queen.

GONDORFF

Looks like I win. The queen has got to be the other one.

Macalinski does a slow burn, but there's nothing he can do. He's been outfoxed. He goes to take in the non-queen that's still face down, but Gondorff's hand is on it first.

CONTINUED

93

CONTINUED - 2

93

GONDORFF

I just wanta thank the little lady
before she goes back in the deck.

Gondorff flips over the card. It's a four of clubs. Veronica reacts with feigned shock. Macalinski tries to maintain his dignity.

GONDORFF

If you'll excuse us, Miss Forrest
and I have a date for dinner.

MACALINSKI

(to Veronica)

You're not really gonna go out with
him, are ya?

VERONICA

It would be a pleasure.

As Veroncia and Gondorff get up to leave, Gondorff flips a dollar bill toward Macalinski.

GONDORFF

That's for the use of the table. Keep
the change.

(pointing to
Macalinski's
shoes)

Maybe you can get yourself a shine.

Macalinski gives Gondorff a look that could kill.

94

WITH GONDORFF

94

as he turns and leaves the club with Veronica on his arm.
He winks at Hooker as he passes his table.

95

ON MACALINSKI

95

as he starts back toward his own table. There's a tap on
his shoulder. He turns around to find a very agitated
Lionel Richardson.

RICHARDSON

Excuse me, sir, I was told you were
the owner. Can you tell me where
the green phone is?

CONTINUED

95

CONTINUED

95

MACALINSKI

(in no mood
to talk to
anybody)

Buzz off.

He walks away, leaving poor Richardson to make another futile search for his telephone call.

CUT TO

96

EXT. THE BLUEBIRD CLUB - LATER THAT NIGHT

96

Macalinski, accompanied by three bodyguards, comes out a side door of the club and walks down the pier to the amusement center. He's generally in a foul mood, and has sent the women home for the night.

97

EXT. AMUSEMENT PARK - NIGHT

97

A couple of concessionaires say hello to Macalinski, but he doesn't respond. As he reaches the park entrance, Hooker approaches from the side. He's dressed more working class now, complete with a Cagney beret. He adopts the speech pattern of a prizefighter.

HOOKER

Mr. Macalinski.

Hooker gets no acknowledgement from Macalinski, but is immediately surrounded by two bodyguards. Macalinski walks on ahead.

HOOKER

I wanta see Macalinski.

BODYGUARD

He don't wanna see nobody.

HOOKER

Tell him it's about Ivory Berrigan.

One of the bodyguards hustles ahead to Macalinski. They have a short conference and the Bodyguard waves Hooker and the second bodyguard forward. Macalinski, however, doesn't wait for them. He continues on toward his objective.

HOOKER

Where are we goin'? Can't I talk to him here?

BODYGUARD

He's takin' his ride. He does it every night before he goes to bed. Says it helps him sleep.

Finally Macalinski reaches his destination -- the famous Parachute Jump, an awesome tower of steel reaching 300 feet into the air, culminating at the top in a brightly lit eight-pronged platform. Suspended by long cables from each prong of the platform are the flimsy-looking two-seater chairs, which now dangle a few feet off the ground waiting for the next round of riders. Having no weight in them at this point, the chairs swing slightly in the breeze, sending pinging noises up the cables which just seem to disappear in the dark sky above. Not a ride for the faint of heart. The Operator of the parachute is quite familiar with Macalinski.

OPERATOR

Evening, Mr. Macalinski. Oughta be able to see all the way to Philadelphia tonight.

Macalinski just nods. For the first time, he turns to face Hooker, who has caught up by now.

MACALINSKI

You was in the club tonight, right?

HOOKER

Yeah, but....

MACALINSKI

(pointing to the
parachute chair)

Get in.

Hooker looks up at the tower. He's not at all sure he wants to get in that seat.

MACALINSKI

You wanna talk or don't ya?

Hooker nods weakly and gets into the seat. The Operator straps them in and the chair begins to rise.

98-A ON HOOKER AND MACALINSKI

98-A

HOOKER

The name's Florian, Bobby Florian.

Hooker offers his hand. Macalinski ignores it.

MACALINSKI

What about Berrigan?

HOOKER

That thing he did with your hair and all. That wasn't no accident.

CONTINUED

98-A CONTINUED

98-A

HOOKER (Cont'd)

He'd been plannin' to do that as a favor for some friends of his, JoJo Berry and Will Bates, who don't like you so good, just to make you look bad in your own joint.

MACALINSKI

(sarcastically)

And you felt so bad about it, you decided to tell me so I could kill ya.

HOOKER

Hey, look, I got nothin' against you. I'm a fighter, not a mob gee. I just done what he tells me up to now.

MACALINSKI

Are these business interests he says he's got all fighters?

HOOKER

Yeah, me and a couple other guys who ain't worth shinola. He makes his dough offa my right hand.

Hooker holds up a clenched right fist to demonstrate the point.

HOOKER

See, when I signed with this guy, he told me he was gonna bring me along right....

At this point, Hooker happens to glance down at the ground:

99 HOOKER'S POINT OF VIEW - THE GROUND BELOW

99

which is now about 150 feet away. It scares the hell out of him.

99-A BACK WITH HOOKER

99-A

HOOKER

Anyway, I win my first four fights in a row all by knockouts, three of 'em in the first heat. So he gets me a fight with Alvarado, who's ranked number fifteen. The guy's so far

CONTINUED

99-A CONTINUED

99-A

HOOKER (Cont'd)
over the hill, you can't see him no more, and Berrigan tells me I gotta throw the fight so he can pay off some markers. Take a dive in the fifth. So I'm out there, fresh as a daisy, ain't been hit with nothin' all night, and I gotta lie down.

Hooker steals another quick glance at the ground.

100 HOOKER'S POINT OF VIEW - THE GROUND BELOW

100

The height is starting to get to him.

100-A BACK WITH HOOKER AND MACALINSKI

100-A

Macalinski, meanwhile, continues to take in the sights like he was looking out a train window.

HOOKER

So he leaves me alone the next three fights. I bust three more guys, including Frankie Carl, who ain't no bum. I take him out in the fourth. So now I got a shot at Kelley in a week, who couldn't beat me with an axe, and Berrigan wants me to go in the water again. Every time I start gettin' someplace, he tanks me out. I ain't gonna take that no more. I coulda been eight and zero by now and fightin' high rankers.

101 ANOTHER ANGLE

101

The height is about 240 feet now and the wind is beginning to blow the chair around a little. Hooker is struggling to maintain his cool.

MACALINSKI

That's very touching, but what do ya need me for?

HOOKER

If I cross Berrigan, I'm gonna need some protection. I don't take that dive, and his people'll break my legs. They tell me you got some muscle in this town. I don't know if it's enough to handle Berrigan, but I'm willin' to take a chance.

CONTINUED

101 CONTINUED

101

MACALINSKI

(chuckling
to himself)

Don't think I got enough to handle
Berrigan, huh?

HOOKER

I'm tellin' ya, he's no good. I
seen what he's done to some people.
Nobody wants to mess with him.

MACALINSKI

Well, assuming I don't die of fright,
what's in it for me?

HOOKER

Well, I got some money goin' down on
this fight. I'm layin' six grand on
me. I cut you in for, say, twenty
percent at even odds, that's, ah....

MACALINSKI

(instantly)

Twelve hundred dollars.

HOOKER

That oughta be worth some protection.

MACALINSKI

About fifteen minutes.

HOOKER

Okay...Fifty percent. Look, I ain't
got any more. What do you say?

102 ON MACALINSKI

102

Macalinski isn't about to say. The chair has reached the
top now. He looks out over the panorama.

MACALINSKI

(pointing
northwest)

Arnie was right. You can see
Philadelphia.

103 ON HOOKER

103

Hooker takes a look, but quickly fixes again on a point about
two feet in front of his face. He really looks bad now.
The rigid expression of one who is really scared stiff.

CONTINUED

103 CONTINUED

103

Suddenly the bottom drops out and the chair plunges in what seems like free fall. So realistic was this ride that the Armed Forces used to use it to train paratroopers. The last glimpse we had of Hooker was one of sheer terror. About eighty feet from the bottom a parachute opens and slows the final stages of the descent. We:

CUT TO

104 THE BOTTOM OF THE RIDE

104

as the seat settles down to the ground, Macalinski steps out like he'd just been for a manicure. Hooker staggers out, not at all sure of his balance.

HOOKER

So what do ya say, Macalinski?

MACALINSKI

(walking away)

I'll think about it. What gym you train at?

HOOKER

Golding's on Seventh. Where should I call ya? The club?

MACALINSKI

Forget it. If I want to talk to ya, I'll get in touch with you.

Hooker watches them go, leaning on a post for support. Once they're safely out of sight, he stumbles over to a trash can and throws up.

CUT TO

105 EXT. A DINER ON THE AMUSEMENT PIER - NIGHT

105

A typical waterfront greasy spoon with a horseshoe counter and napkin holders that dispense fortunes.

106 INT. DINER ON THE PIER - NIGHT

106

Hooker enters the diner to get something to settle his stomach. The place is pretty empty this time of night. Hooker orders a bicarbonate. While he's waiting, he happens to look across the counter just as a familiar face looks up at him. It's his old friend, Lieutenant Snyder, the Chicago bunco detective. The two men are astonished to see each other. At first, neither of them moves from his position.

CONTINUED

SNYDER

Hi there, Hooker. Remember me?

HOOKER

How could I forget you, Snyder.
What are you doin' in Atlantic City,
bringin' in a new disease?

Snyder has long since learned to let cracks like that roll off his back. He feigns casualness, but is ready to move at the slightest hint that Hooker is going to flee. Hooker, on the other hand, is finely attuned to any sign that Snyder may attack. Hooker's bicarbonate is brought to him by the fountain attendant.

SNYDER

I'm with the federal bunco people
now. Came down here to pinch a guy.

HOOKER

(drinking his
bicarbonate)
Well I hope you find him.

SNYDER

I just did. Didn't expect him to
walk right up to me though.

HOOKER

You're bluffin'. The feds got bigger
guys to worry about than me.

SNYDER

Not this one. I coulda overlooked
that three grand in bad notes you
slipped me in Chicago, but when you
played me for the chump in that
Lonnegan caper, that tore it. It
was all I could do to keep Lonnegan
from puttin' a bullet in me. I
figure if you go up for a ten-year
stretch, it might square things up.

HOOKER

You know it ain't gonna do no good
to chase me. I've always been faster
than you.

SNYDER

Yeah, but I got the endurance. I
been waitin' four years for this.

- 107 ANOTHER ANGLE 107
- Snyder gets up from his stool to make his move. Hooker flips a coin on the counter to pay for the bicarbonate and then sprints out the door with Snyder in close pursuit.
- 108 EXT. AMUSEMENT PARK PIER - NIGHT - ON HOOKER 108
- racing down the amusement midway with Snyder at his heels, both dodging the street vendors and the scattered people still strolling the pier at this hour. Hooker makes for the Fun House, leaping the turnstile much to the surprise of the attendant. Snyder flashes his badge as he crashes through.
- CUT TO
- 109 INT. FUN HOUSE - NIGHT 109
- Like most forties fun houses, this one consists of a series of "obstacles" that one must pass through to get out. Once you're in the progression, you have to go on. There's no turning back. The obstacles are designed to be fun if taken at a deliberate speed. If you're in a hurry, the place can be treacherous. Neither Hooker nor Snyder are deliberating.
- 110 FUN HOUSE ENTRANCE TUNNEL 110
- The first obstacle is a revolving drum just inside the entrance tunnel. It's difficult enough to walk through. But Hooker tries to take it at a dead run. He's thrown down violently and tumbles several times. Snyder is able to grab him for an instant, but is immediately thrown off his feet too.
- 111 ANGLE 111
- The two men grapple fiercely, tumbling head over heels, banging off the walls, flailing at each other with arms and legs. Neither is able to establish dominance because of the constant revolving of the drum. Hooker finally kicks himself free and scrambles out on hands and knees. Both men have taken a terrible beating.
- 112 ANOTHER TUNNEL IN THE FUN HOUSE 112
- Hooker jumps to his feet and heads into another tunnel, this one pitch dark. Still the two go as fast as they can, in an effort to gain ground, crashing from side to side, tripping on things, knocking over the laughing clowns and roaring devils that pop out at them.

113 AT A FOUR-LANE SLIDE IN THE FUN HOUSE 113

Hooker emerges from the tunnel at the top of a four-lane slide. Usually one negotiates the slide by sitting on a burlap sack. Hooker disdains the sack, flinging himself down the slope head first. Both are getting skin burns to go with the bruises they got in the barrel. Neither man is having fun in this house.

114 IN THE FUN HOUSE - AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SLIDE 114

Hooker has his choice of the "Slanted House" or the "Mirror Maze." A good mirror maze is truly a confounding experience. People have been known to get lost in them for upwards of an hour.

115 IN THE FUN HOUSE - MIRROR MAZE 115

Snyder charges in after Hooker, and is brought to a quick stop by the sight of sixteen different images of himself. The pace of the chase now changes completely.

Snyder makes his way slowly through the maze, painstakingly trying to discern the real path from all the reflected ones. Every once in a while an image of Hooker will flash across several mirrors, but Snyder has no idea which one to chase. It's quiet now, the only sound, the labored breathing of the two men. Hooker finally calls to Snyder from another part of the maze.

HOOKER

You never shoulda followed me in here, Snyder. I've been through this maze a hundred times.

SNYDER

It don't matter what you do, Hooker. I'm not leavin' Atlantic City without you.

HOOKER

Guess I might as well give up then.

Suddenly, Hooker appears right off Snyder's left shoulder. He cocks his arm for a punch, but Snyder catches him out of the corner of his eye, whirls around, and smashes a mighty blow to Hooker's gut. Or what he thought was Hooker. Unfortunately, it's just another mirror image. Hooker, because of his experience in this maze, knew just where to stand to create a single reflection. Snyder's punch splinters the mirror to bits and opens a nasty cut on his head.

CONTINUED

115 CONTINUED

115

Snyder is an enraged bull now. Several images of Hooker begin to appear in the mirrors. Snyder goes after all of them, wildly clubbing them with his pistol butt, kicking them with his boots, shattering mirror after mirror in a frantic attempt to destroy the real Hooker. Finally all the images of Hooker disappear, and Snyder hears his footsteps receding rapidly in the distance. He knows by the time he finds his way out, Hooker will be long gone. He looks back at the trail of destruction he's left and then slumps back against the wall in exhaustion. We hold a beat and:

CUT TO

116 EXT. THE CHINESE MARKET - NIGHT

116

The store is closed, but Hooker gets in with a key and goes back to the "meat locker."

117 INT. MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

117

Gondorff, Singleton, The Big Ohio, the Tuxedo Kid and Eirie are waiting for him. Gondorff has gotten out of his ivory suit, preferring, of course, his undershirt and fedora. However, he's still in his makeup. We see that it only covers from his neck up and from his wrists out. The rest of him is lily-white.

GONDORFF

Well it took ya long enough. How'd it go?

HOOKER

He didn't say much. I don't know how good a hook I got into him.

GONDORFF

What'd he say when you told him about the Kelley fight?

HOOKER

Nothin'. Just kept lookin' at the scenery. Maybe he doesn't hate you enough yet.

GONDORFF

It's not enough for these guys to hate ya. They gotta see how they can make money offa hatin' ya. He'll figure it out.

CONTINUED

117 CONTINUED

117

HOOKER

That ain't the worst of it. I ran into Snyder tonight.

GONDORFF

What the hell's he doin' here?

HOOKER

He's a fed now. Been failin' his way upward, but he still don't like me any better than he used to.

GONDORFF

You think he knows what we're here for?

HOOKER

Naw, he came for me. Says he's gonna send me up this time.

GONDORFF

You say the word, we all go home. None of us'd like to see you do a stretch.

HOOKER

Forget it. None of us likes the stretch Kid Twist is doin' either. I've stayed away from Snyder this long, I can lose him for another couple weeks.

GONDORFF

(tired)

Okay, let's knock off for tonight.

CUT TO

118 EXT. AN ATLANTIC CITY STREET - NIGHT

118

It's late at night now and the street is about deserted. Hooker is making his way home staying in the shadows as much as possible in case Snyder may be patrolling the streets. He passes an apartment building and sees a light on in a third floor window. He stops for a second, considers it and decides to enter the building.

CUT TO

119 INT. VERONICA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT - HOOKER

119

getting off the elevator, an old cage-type, at the third floor. He goes down the hall to door 306 and knocks. The door opens, and there stands Veronica. The radio plays Helen Forrest's "I'm Nobody's Baby."

CONTINUED

119

CONTINUED

119

HOOKER

Howdy. I was in the neighborhood;
I thought I'd drop by and say you
did a nice job on Macalinski tonight.

VERONICA

(making no move
to invite him in)

It was nothin'. Just another con.

HOOKER

If it was so nothin', why aren't
you asleep yet?

VERONICA

Just restless, I guess.

Hooker, tired of standing in the doorway, walks right in,
much to the chagrin of Veronica.

120

INT. VERONICA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

120

VERONICA

I didn't invite you in.

HOOKER

I thought you might like some company
for a change. I never see you with
anybody. Christ, Sheridan, how come
you're so hard-nosed all the time?
I mean, now that we're even Steven....

VERONICA

We ain't never gonna be even Steven,
and if I wanted company, I woulda
got some. I know ten guys I could
call right now and they'd be up
here inside a five minutes.

HOOKER

All right, I won't stay long. I know
you wanna get back to not worryin'
about the con. Can I have a beer?
I'll pay ya for it.

Hooker goes in the icebox and gets two bottles of beer.
Veronica plunks herself down on the couch, her arms crossed.
She is restless.

CONTINUED

VERONICA

Get me one too. Maybe it'll make me tired. If I didn't have to worry about Macalinski seein' me, I could go out dancin' or somethin'.

HOOKER

You could dance here.

VERONICA

Not likely. You need a partner.

HOOKER

You got one.

VERONICA

Aw, c'mon. I used to teach dancin'. I don't dance with just any shlump.

HOOKER

(infuriated)

You think I can't dance? I happen to be from Chicago, sweetheart.

VERONICA

So am I.

HOOKER

You go to high school at all?

VERONICA

Yeah. Taft.

HOOKER

Taft? I went to Jefferson. Scored two touchdowns on ya in '24. Eighty-five yard punt return. Sixteen yard end run. And I was only a sophomore. If I'd ever gotten to be a junior, no tellin' how many I mighta scored.

VERONICA

That don't mean you can dance. Everybody knows a Jaffie couldn't take two steps in a row.

HOOKER

Why would I ask ya to dance if I couldn't dance?

CONTINUED

VERONICA

You didn't come over to dance. I know what you came up here for. None of the guys at Jefferson could do that, either.

HOOKER

Not with a Taft broad, anyhow. You were liable to catch somethin'.

(going over to
the record player)

Sit tight, doll. I'll show ya who's from Chicago.

Hooker searches quickly through some records and finds something he likes, Glenn Miller's "In The Mood." He puts it on the turntable and drops the needle. He moves a couple chairs out of the way to make more room as the intro starts. Veronica can't believe this.

HOOKER

All right, Sheridan. Do your worst.

The beat comes up and Hooker and Veronica launch into the most knock-down, killer-diller lindy jitterbug we have ever seen, featuring all the great "air steps" and acrobatics the early forties could muster. Veronica executes an amazing series of twirls, kicks and jumps that come within inches of taking Hooker's head off. Hooker, on the other hand, is a great power dancer, whipping Veronica around like a top, throwing her over his back, around his shoulders and under his legs. They're both dancing fluidly, but with a certain savagery -- each one trying to outdo the other, each one trying to push the dance into steps that the other can't follow. It's a slam-bang two minutes. The Soul Train All-Starts got nothin' on this.

The record ends and the dance finishes in a draw. Both Hooker and Veronica maintain their nonchalance, like it was a walk in the park, each trying hard to disguise the fact that they're gasping for breath. Hooker chugs the last of his beer and picks up his hat.

HOOKER

Hope ya get some sleep.

VERONICA

Yeah, see ya around.

CONTINUED

121

CONTINUED

121

Hooker walks quietly out the door.

Once he's gone, Veronica sags into a chair, completely worn out, but not a little bit exhilarated. She'll get to sleep tonight.

'I'm nobody's baby, I wonder why.
Won't someone hear my plea
And please take a chance with me
Because I'm nobody's baby now.'

FADE OUT

FADE IN

122 INT. LONNEGAN'S HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

122

The same room we saw him in at the beginning of the film. The photographs are still on the wall, but there's now a blank space where Kid Twists's picture once hung. One of Lonnegan's aids, Gelleher, is showing him a flyer advertising the Florian (Hooker)-Kelley fight.

GELLEHER

Looks like they're gonna use some kinda boxing scam, peddling Hooker as a fighter. I heard they tied into Macalinski last year.

LONNEGAN

Yeah, Scanlon told me about it. Gondorff played him made up like a nigger.

Just the thought of what Scanlon told him starts Lonnegan chuckling. Pretty soon he's laughing almost uncontrollably. Gelleher is a little taken aback. He's never seen Lonnegan like this before.

LONNEGAN

(barely
able to
talk)

You know what they did to him?

GELLEHER

No, what?

Lonnegan is laughing so hard it takes him ten seconds to quiet down enough to tell Gelleher what Gondorff did.

LONNEGAN

They took off his toupee...
(breaking
up again)
...and ripped it!

GELLEHER

(amazed)

And ripped?

Lonnegan can only nod. He's convulsed with laughter again. He pounds the desk with sheer glee.

123 ANOTHER ANGLE

123

Suddenly, Floyd storms into the room, obviously agitated about something. He plunks a copy of the Chicago Tribune down on Lonnegan's desk.

CONTINUED

FLOYD

Doyle, look at this. That bastard Chicago DA has indicted us. Can you believe them rabbits? For tax evasion, the bum. That sucker's lookin' for a lead luncheon.

LONNEGAN

Don't get excited, Floyd. I knew about it a week ago. We've beat that rap before, we'll beat it again.

FLOYD

But don't you see what this does? The feds'll be all over us. We can't go around killin' Gondorff's people with that much heat on. We'll all end up in the chair.

LONNEGAN

I know all that Floyd. I've been thinkin' about it all week.

FLOYD

So what do we do? Just let 'em go?
(getting worked
up and pointing
to the flyer)
That guy called me Mutt.

LONNEGAN

No.

(pause)

We get Macalinski to kill 'em for us.

FLOYD

Yeah, but we're the ones who took it in the shorts. What kinda charge do we get outa this.

LONNEGAN

Just the satisfaction of bringing off a con that goes Gondorff one better than he gave us. As good as his game was, it only took our money. So Macalinski pulls the triggers. Dead is dead.

FLOYD

Not to me, it ain't. A guy is always deader when I kill him.

LONNEGAN

How do you know Macalinski'll do it?

CONTINUED

123

CONTINUED - 2

123

LONNEGAN

Don't worry about Macalinski. I'll give him a reason. There's only one guy in this world I fear more than him.

GELLEHER

Who's that?

LONNEGAN

Me.

This last remark is lost on Floyd. He's totally absorbed in the flyer on Hooker's fight.

FLOYD

Christ, Mutt and Jeff. I hate fuckin' Mutt and Jeff. If I was in the ring with this guy, I'd punch him a new face.

CUT TO

124

INT. GOLDING'S GYM - DAY - A MONTAGE SEQUENCE

124

detailing Hooker's somewhat reluctant training for the Kelley fight. We see shots of him:

1. skipping rope;
2. shadow boxing in front of a mirror;
3. practicing his crossing punches on the 'punch catchers' held by The Big Ohio;
4. working the speed bag. He has a little trouble with this last one, as his timing is not yet sharp.

All of this training is done under the supervision of The Big Ohio, who seems to be very knowledgeable about fighting.

125

INT. GOLDING'S GYM - DAY - ON HOOKER

125

We come out of the montage with Hooker throwing combinations into the heavy bag. Gondorff (in black face and the ivory suit) and The Big Ohio are watching him. Hooker is sweating profusely and obviously getting a little tired. The rest of the gym is filled with confidence men, all dressed out as fighters and trainers, but at this point, they're just sitting around shooting the breeze.

HOOKER

(gasping)

How much longer?

THE BIG OHIO

(looking at
his stopwatch)

Minute and a half.

CONTINUED

That's too long. Hooker drops his arms and stops punching.

GONDORFF

C'mon, you'll never get in shape that way.

HOOKER

What difference does it make? I'm gonna be down anyway.

GONDORFF

Yeah, but you gotta make it look good. Macalinski's gonna know somethin's wrong if you just go out there and get pulverized.

HOOKER

How good is this guy Kelley?

GONDORFF

(mimicking
Hooker)

What difference does it make? You're gonna lie down anyway.

HOOKER

Yeah, but I wanta lie down with my head on.

GONDORFF

Then keep hittin' the bag.

Suddenly Eirie comes rushing into the gym.

EIRIE

Macalinski just drove up outside.

GONDORFF

Okay, everybody, let's get movin'!

Immediately all the previously inert confidence men spring to their feet and begin the various rigors of training. Some work the speed bags and heavy bags, some get rubdowns, others shadowbox. The Tuxedo Kid takes up a position next to Gondorff, dressed in a gaudy, checkered sport coat. We know this disguise is causing him great pain.

GONDORFF

Ohio, get in the ring and spar a few rounds with Hooker. And Ohio....

THE BIG OHIO

Yeah?

GONDORFF

Get hit a lot.

CONTINUED

Hooker and The Big Ohio quickly put on their protective head-gear and jump into the ring. Macalinski enters the gym with three of the bodyguards. He surveys the scene a second and then spots Hooker sparring in the ring. He comes over to watch, standing a couple feet behind Gondorff and the Tuxedo Kid, who pretend not to know he's there.

Up in the ring, Hooker is punching The Big Ohio all over the lot, The Big Ohio, of course, exaggerating the impact of every blow. Finally Hooker delivers a left hook, and The Big Ohio, in a tour de force of acrobatics, flips over the ropes and clean out of the ring. Gondorff calls Hooker and pretends to be furious with him.

GONDORFF

What the hell do ya think you're doin'? I told you not to show that left hook. What if some sports-writer had seen that? You think they'd ever believe you could lose to Danny Kelley on the square with a left hook like that?

HOOKER

I'm sorry. I just forget my self.

None of this has been lost on Macalinski's ears. The Big Ohio meanwhile, is staggering to his feet.

THE BIG OHIO

(dazed)

Sorry Berrigan, I've had enough.

GONDORFF

Yeah, all right.

(shouting up
to Hooker)

Bobby, that's enough for a while.

Hooker climbs out of the ring and winks as he walks past Macalinski. Gondorff turns around and for the first time is face to face with Macalinski.

GONDORFF

Well, if it ain't Macalinski. You ever find that Queen?

MACALINSKI

Yeah, it was in my sleeve.

(indicating
Gondorff's
suit)

I found it 'cause I change my clothes now and then.

CONTINUED

GONDORFF

Oh, this isn't the same suit you saw me in. I got seven or eight of these.

Macalinski didn't really come to talk fashion.

MACALINSKI

Your boy looks pretty good, Berrigan.

GONDORFF

Yeah, doesn't he though. Let me give you a tip Macalinski. Don't tell anybody 'cause I wanna keep the odds down, but this kid is gonna murder Kelley. You'd be smart to get some money down on him.

MACALINSKI

I wouldn'ta thought you'd be so interested in puttin' me onto a good thing.

GONDORFF

I believe in lettin' bygones by bygones, ya know what I mean? I don't mind doin' guys like you a favor. I figure you can use a break now and then. I wouldn't steer you wrong, Macalinski. You can't lost with a bundle on this kid.

MACALINSKI

Is that right? Thanks, Berrigan. I appreciate it.

(with sarcasm,
sweeping his
hand around
the gym)

Well, I'll leave ya to tend to all your various business interests.

GONDORFF

Yeah, by the way, Lola sends her love.

Macalinski suppresses the urge to strangle Gondorff, and leaves the gym with his guard dogs. On the way out, he passes Hooker toweling off.

MACALINSKI

(out of
the side
of his mouth)

Meet me at the Bluebird tonight at nine o'clock.

CONTINUED

125 CONTINUED - 4

125

Hooker nods, and Macalinski disappears down the stairs. Gondorff looks over to Hooker for some sign. Hooker gives him both thumbs up.

CUT TO

126 INT. THE BLUEBIRD CLUB - NIGHT

126

We pick up Hooker walking through the club and back to Macalinski's office. He knocks on the door.

127 INT. MACALINSKI'S OFFICE

127

One of Macalinski's goons opens it and immediately yanks Hooker inside and throws him up against a wall.

HOOKER

What is this?

MACALINSKI

We called the Jersey Boxing Commission, they never heard of Bobby Florian.

HOOKER

That's 'cause I done all my fightin' in California.

(pulling a piece
of paper out of
his wallet)

Here, here's my license.

Macalinski looks it over carefully, and then puts it in his pocket.

MACALINSKI

(to his goon)

All right, let him go.

Hooker sinks into a chair opposite Macalinski's desk, still a little shaken.

MACALINSKI

Your owner is even lower than I thought he was. He tried to get me to put money on you, even though he's told ya to take a dive.

HOOKER

That's 'cause he wants ya to lose your shirt.

CONTINUED

MACALINSKI

How much is he puttin' on Kelley?

HOOKER

Two hundred grand maybe. That ain't the only way he wins though. Remember the guy in the checked coat that was with 'im in the gym? That's Harry Chandler, his bookie friend. The odds on the fight are dead even all over town, except Harry's givin' two-to-one on Kelley to get people to bet on me at his book.

MACALINSKI

Does he know you're supposed to dump the fight?

HOOKER

Hell, yes. He builds up a big bunch a bets on me and he and Berrigan split the take. Berrigan gets it comin' and goin' and I don't get nothing but a one line story that says Bobby Florian went on his butt when Danny Kelley breathed on him too hard. Berrigan takes it on the lam to the Bahamas and I wind up sellin' pencils. I tell ya, if I don't throw this fight, it's gonna cost Chandler and Berrigan plenty.

MACALINSKI

And whoever bets on you at Chandler's odds is gonna win plenty.

HOOKER

That's right. That's what I'm doin' with my dough. I'm havin' a friend bet it, of course.

MACALINSKI

All right, Florian, I wanta see ya fight.

HOOKER

You saw me fight today.

MACALINSKI

I mean against somebody good.

HOOKER

Why? All I'm askin' for is protection.

MACALINSKI

You ain't gonna get any unless I see you fight.

CONTINUED

127

CONTINUED - 2

127

HOOKER

But that's impossible. Berrigan'll never let me fight before the Kelley match.

MACALINSKI

He won't know about it. We'll do it at another gym.

HOOKER

What if I get cut or somethin'?

MACALINSKI

You won't if you're any good, and if you ain't, you might as well take that dive anyway. I'll pick you up tomorrow morning at ten. The bus station.

Hooker wants to protest some more, but he's hustled out of the room before he gets a chance.

128

INT. BLUEBIRD CLUB - NIGHT

128

He walks through the club, wondering what the hell to do now.

CUT TO

129

EXT. THE BLUEBIRD CLUB - NIGHT

129

Hooker comes out of the club and starts walking up the street when he catches sight of someone getting out of a car up ahead. It's Snyder. Hooker turns and takes off down the pier. Snyder immediately gives chase.

130

EXT. AMUSEMENT PARK - DAY

130

Hooker heads for the "Cyclone Racer", the giant roller coaster. He hops in the first car, which is empty, and shouts to the operator, whom he knows well.

HOOKER

Get this baby goin', Georgie. And do me a favor. Give me a slow-down on the seventh turn.

GEORGIE

You got it, Hooker.

131

EXT. AMUSEMENT PARK - AT THE ROLLER COASTER

131

Georgie activates the tow mechanism and the car starts its slow ascent of the first hill as Snyder arrives. He considers getting in a car and going after Hooker, but then thinks better of it. He's no fool, that Snyder.

SNYDER

(to himself)

Oh no ya don't, Hooker. You're not suckerin' me into this one.

(to Georgie)

Hey buddy, these cars have gotta come right back to here, don't they? There's no other place then can go, right?

GEORGIE

That's right, Jack.

SNYDER

(breaking
into a smile)

You hung yourself this time, Hooker.

He leans back against the railing, in delicious anticipation of Hooker's return. We:

CUT TO

132

HOOKER

132

barrelling down the chutes and whipping through the curves of the Cyclone Racer. It's a helluva ride and the camera should take it for a while. Suddenly, as the car is reaching the top of another hill, we:

CUT TO

133

HOOKER'S CAR

133

which slow appreciably as it goes into the turn. Hooker jumps out and grabs onto the wooden scaffolding as the car barely makes it around the corner and starts down the hill.

CUT TO

134

GEORGIE AGAIN

134

He release the lever, and we see a hint of a smile on his face, which is a first for Georgie. We:

CUT TO

135

HOOKER

135

climbing down the outside of the scaffolding. None of this is visible to Snyder through the maze of track and wood that makes up the rollers coaster. Finally we:

CUT TO

136

EXT. ROLLER COASTER LANDING AREA - NIGHT - POINT OF VIEW OF
THE CAR

136

as it comes around the last turn and slows into the loading area. Snyder watches it all the way in. We see his face turn to putty. He can't believe the car is empty. Once it's stopped, he frantically searches under and behind every seat for some sign of Hooker. Finally he turns to Georgie.

SNYDER

What happened to the guy that was
in here?

GEORGIE

(completely
deadpan)

Probably fell off and killed himself.

Snyder knows Georgie's screwed him some way, but he doesn't know how. He turns to go look for Hooker and finds himself face to face with Floyd.

FLOYD

Evening, Synder. Doyle Lonnegan'd
like a few words with ya.

Snyder manages a weak nod.

CUT TO

137

INT. LONNEGAN'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

137

Snyder is ushered in by Floyd and Gelleher. He's a little unsettled by the pictures on the wall.

LONNEGAN

Hello, Snyder. What are you doin'
in Atlantic City?

SNYDER

I'm on vacation. Got a couple
weeks, thought I'd....

LONNEGAN

(cutting him off)

You shouldn't tell me lies like that,
Snyder, when things between us are
so sore. Floyd saw you chasin'
Johnny Hooker.

SNYDER

Okay, I was chasin' him. I came
down here to take him back to
Chicago. To face trial for connin'

CONTINUED

SNYDER (Cont'd)

you. I should think that would make you happy.

Fat chance.

LONNEGAN

I want you to lay off Hooker. He's workin' a con here that's gonna make me back all the money he ever took from me. I don't want anything to discourage him.

SNYDER

Hey look, I'm a fed now. I can't just turn my back on this stuff.

LONNEGAN

All right, then we'll make you a deal. You leave Hooker alone and I'll tell you where they're going to split up the score. That way you can come in and pinch all of 'em -- the biggest confidence bust in New Jersey history.

Snyder tries to play the brinksman.

SNYDER

I don't know. I'll think about it.

LONNEGAN

(in no mood
for further
negotiation)

There's nothin' to think about. You either take the deal, or go after Hooker and hope you get him before one of my guys gets you.

SNYDER

You can't muscle me. I got the U.S. Government behind me.

LONNEGAN

I don't care if you got the U.S. Marines behind you. You screw up this con and all your government service'll get you is a nice funeral.

Snyder decides maybe he'll soften his line a little.

CONTINUED

137

CONTINUED - 2

137

SNYDER

How do you know when they're gonna
make the split?

LONNEGAN

I got my sources.

SNYDER

All right. I'll play ball.
(with false
bravado)

But you better come up with that
info.

Snyder turns and walks out the door. Lonnegan lets him go.
He's not expecting anymore trouble.

CUT TO

138

INT. GOLDINGS GYM - NIGHT

138

The lights in the gym are off as Hooker and Eirie walk through
to the lighted office section.

139

INT. GONDORFF'S OFFICE - NIGHT

139

Gondorff lies stretched out on a couch -- his hat on his face.
He stirs and sits up as Hooker and Eirie enter.

GONDORFF

What happened tonight?

HOOKER

I had to lam it from Snyder again.
He's got that pier staked out on me.

GONDORFF

All right, then, stay off of it from
now on. What about Macalinski?

HOOKER

He threw us a curve. He wants to see
me fight somebody other than the
Ohio. I don't know who it is, but
he's takin' me to another gym to-
morrow.

GONDORFF

Christ, after we go to all the
trouble to build one of our own.

EIRIE

What are we gonna do?

CONTINUED

139

CONTINUED

139

GONDORFF

Well, I wouldn't worry too much
about it. We oughta be able to
come up with something.

We can tell by Gondorff's look that, at this point, he has
no idea what that might be. We hold a beat, and:

FADE OUT

FADE IN

140 INT. MACALINSKI'S OFFICE - MORNING

140

We see Macalinski looking over the boxing license he took from Hooker the night before. Under the name California Boxing Commission, he sees a phone number. He picks up the phone and dials it.

CUT TO

141 INT. GONDORFF'S OFFICE - DAY - BILLIE

141

answering a phone. Intercut with Macalinski as necessary.

BILLIE

Hello, California Boxing Commission.

MACALINSKI

Yeah, I'd like some information on a guy named Bobby Florian.

BILLIE

Hold on one moment, please. I'll transfer you to the Records Department.

Billie pushes the button down a couple times to indicate she's transferring the call, and then comes on the line again with a different voice.

BILLIE

(most officiously)
Miss Deering, Records Department.

MACALINSKI

I'd like to know what you got on a Bobby Florian. He's a middleweight.

BILLIE

Just a minute, please.

Billie holds a few beats and then pretends to be reading from a file.

BILLIE

Florian, Bobby. Age twenty-seven. Height six feet. Weight....

MACALINSKI

(impatient)
Skip all that. What's his record?

CONTINUED

141 CONTINUED

141

BILLIE

His record? Let me look down here. Twelve wins, eight by knockout as an amateur. No losses. As a professional, seven wins all by knockout, and one defeat. That was to Benny Alvarado at the Olympic Auditorium on the 16th of July last year.

MACALINSKI

Thanks lady, that'll do it.

Macalinski hangs up and turns to the bodyguard who slammed Hooker up against the wall.

MACALINSKI

He's on the level.

CUT TO

142 BILLIE

142

She hangs up the phone and gives the okay sign to Gondorff who's been in the room with her the whole time.

CUT TO

143 EXT. THE ATLANTIC CITY BUS STATION - DAY

143

Hooker is standing on the corner as Macalinski's limousine pulls up. The door is opened and Hooker gets in. He's carrying a gym bag with all his boxing gear in it.

144 INT. MACALINSKI'S CAR

144

The car pulls away as Hooker settles in beside Macalinski.

MACALINSKI

How do you feel today, kid?

HOOKER

Fine.

MACALINSKI

Good.

(pointing to
a bruise
on the other
side of him)

I'm puttin' ya in with Tony here. Tony Savitt, meet Bobby Florian. Tony used to be the number one middleweight contender. He'll give ya a tussle.

CONTINUED

144

CONTINUED

144

Tony flashes Hooker a wide smile. We can tell he's ready to give Hooker more than a tussle. Hooker tries to smile back, but his mouth is a little dry and it's hard to stretch it.

HOOKER

Where we gonna fight?

MACALINSKI

The Eighth Street Gym. It's outta the way. Hardly anybody goes there.

Hooker nods and casually puts his arm out of the window like he's going to rest his hand on the roof. Instead we see him hold up two fingers.

CUT TO

145

INT. EIRIE'S CAR

145

following behind Macalinski. Eirie is driving. Gordorff is also in front, The Big Ohio in the back.

GONDORFF

(eyes glued
to Hooker's
hand)

Two fingers. That's the Eighth Street Gym. Step on it, Eirie.

Gondorff then puts his arm out the window, turns to the rear and waves two fingers at the cars following him. We see that at least eight of them are filled with confidence skills, dressed out, as usual, as boxers and trainers.

CUT TO

146

INT. MACALINSKI'S CAR

146

Hooker is going through his gym bag, making sure he's got everything. He pulls out a boxing shoe. The laces are completely frazzled.

HOOKER

(to the driver)

Stop at this five and dime up here, will ya. I gotta get some new laces for these things.

The driver looks to Macalinski to see if it's okay. Macalinski shrugs and nods his head. As the car pulls over, Gondorff's car goes speeding by.

CONTINUED

146 CONTINUED

146

EIRIE

What's Hooker doin'?

GONDORFF

Giving us a little more time.

CUT TO

147 EXT. THE EIGHTH STREET GYM - DAY

147

A car pulls up in front of the gym. Billie and Singleton get out carrying a large portrait camera. Gondorff's car leads the rest of his armada around to the rear of the building.

148 INT. THE EIGHTH STREET GYM - DAY

148

Billie goes inside while Singleton sets up his camera out front. She asks for the owner of the place and is shown into the office of a paunchy old hacker named Pyle. Pyle has the customary pretention of one who has nothing to be pretentious about.

BILLIE

Hello, I'm from Life Magazine. I called you earlier.

PYLE

I don't remember no call.

BILLIE

But you must. We're doing an eight-page spread on the great boxing gymnasiums in the country. I thought sure it was this one...

(pause)

Maybe it's that one across town. Turner's Gym.

Pyle is not about to let this opportunity get away. The Eighth Street Gym is not exactly world famous. It's not even city famous.

PYLE

Naw, this is the right one, lady. Turner's is a dump. I remember you now. We've had more champions outta here than you can shake a stick at. Ain't that right, Egan?

Egan is Pyle's mousy little assistant.

EGAN

(trying to remember one)

Oh yeah, lots of 'em.

CONTINUED

148

CONTINUED

148

BILLIE

Good. I'd like to get started right away. If you could get everybody out in front of the gym, I'd appreciate it. Sort of using the gym as a back-drop.

PYLE

Why do we need everybody?

BILLIE

That's the way we did it for the Main Street Gym in Los Angeles and Paterson's in Philadelphia.

EGAN

(impressed
as hell)

Jees, we're gonna be in there with the Main Street and Paterson's?

PYLE

Well, I guess if they can do it, we can.

BILLIE

Don't worry, Mr. Pyle, you'll be right out in front.

PYLE

Okay, Egan, get everybody out.

BILLIE

We'll also need some jump ropes.

149

INT. THE WORKOUT AREA

149

Egan rushes into the gym.

EGAN

Okay, everybody, drop what you're doin' and come on out front. We're gonna have our pictures in Life Magazine. And bring your ropes.

150

EXT. EIGHTH STREET GYM

150

There's some grumbling and complaining, but everyone files out. Once the gym is cleared, Gondorff and his men pour in through the rear door and immediately fill the place with activity.

CUT TO

151 INT. MACALINSKI'S CAR - DAY

151

They're getting near the gym.

HOOKER

Hold it.

MACALINSKI

What for?

The car comes to a jolting stop.

HOOKER

I know the door guard out front.
We don't want him blabbin' to
Berrigan. Use the alley.

MACALINSKI

(to his
driver)

Do what he says.

152 EXT. EIGHTH STREET GYM - ALLEY - DAY

152

The driver pulls down the alley and into the back of the gym,
thus prohibiting them from seeing what's going on out front.

153 INT. EIGHTH STREET GYM - DAY

153

Hooker, Macalinski, Savitt and the bodyguards enter through
the rear door. They are, of course, met with the sight of
fighters training everywhere. Gondorff comes over to greet
them: Because Macalinski has never seen him without black
face, he wouldn't recognize him. Gondorff also alters his
voice slightly.

GONDORFF

Can I help you? I'm the manager
here, Lonny Pyle.

MACALINSKI

We'd like to use your ring for a bit.
(pointing
to Hooker)

I wanna test this boy here a little.

GONDORFF

Well, we got the number three middle-
weight contender in here. He's
lookin' for some work. Why don't
you throw your boy in with him?

MACALINSKI

(indicating Savitt)
No, I brought my own guy.

CONTINUED

153

CONTINUED

153

Gondorff had not expected this. Both he and Hooker are looking a little pale right now.

GONDORFF

Yeah.

He shouts over to The Big Ohio, who's disguised in a hair-piece and moustache.

GONDORFF

Hey, Joey...

(indicating
Savitt)

...tape this guy up, will ya.

(indicating
Hooker)

I'll tape the other guy.

The Big Ohio walks off to one dressing room with Savitt. Gondorff and Hooker go off to the other one, followed by Eirie.

HOOKER

What the hell we gonna do now?

GONDORFF

Just leave it to me. Okay, Eirie, get that other guy's mouthpiece out of his bag and bring it to me.

Eirie leaves to carry out his assignment as Gondorff snaps up a role of tape. We:

CUT TO

154

EXT. EIGHTH STREET GYM - DAY

154

Singleton has got his first shot posed. The fighters are all lined up in a row, with their dukes up and menacing sneers on their faces. Behind them stand the trainers, each with a towel over his arm and one hand on his fighter's shoulder. Out in front of all this stands Pyle, his arms dramatically crossed, the moulder of men. Next to him is Egan, sporting the most shit-eating grin we've ever seen.

Singleton ducks under the black cloth, tells everybody to hold still and snaps his picture. Some of the fighters turn to go back into the gym, but Billie stops them.

BILLIE

Okay, now we'll do an action one.

The fighters shake their heads, but they cooperate.

CUT TO

155 INT. EIGHTH STREET GYM - DAY

155

Gondorff is busily taping Hooker's hands. Much to Hooker's amazement, he pulls out a roll of nickels and tapes that into Hooker's fist.

GONDORFF

You can't do this for a real fight. They always check the tape. Believe me, if he runs into that hand, he'll stay down.

HOOKER

Yeah, but what am I supposed to do with everything he's throwin' while I'm waitin' for him to run into it?

Eirie bursts into the room with Savitt's mouthpiece.

GONDORFF

There's a bottle of methyl chloride over there. Let the mouthpiece soak in it a while. Once Savitt gets some of that in him, he won't be able to walk let alone fight.

We go to Hooker. He has his doubts.

CUT TO

156 EXT. EIGHTH STREET GYM - DAY - FRONT OF THE BUILDING

156

Billie is rehearsing her action shot. It calls for all of the fighters to skip rope in unison, under the watchful eye of their trainers while Pyle and Egan, of course, maintain their standard poses out front. None of this is visible from inside, because, like all gymnasiums, the windows are frosted.

Billie gives the signal to begin and all the fighters start skipping, but several are out of sync. Billie stops them.

BILLIE

No, no, no. Let's try it again. And remember, it's gotta be together. On the beat now. Ready. One, two, three....

They all begin skipping again. This time only one guy is out of step. The other fighters give him holy hell. They're tired and they wanna get this thing right, dammit.

CUT TO

157 INT. EIGHTH STREET GYM

157

Hooker and Savitt, their gloves and protective headgear on, are entering the ring. Macalinski settles back to watch.

CONTINUED

157 CONTINUED

157

GONDORFF

(to Savitt)

You got a mouthpiece?

SAVITT

Couldn't find it. Don't make no difference, I won't need it.

GONDORFF

Sorry pal, nobody fights in this gym without a mouthpiece. Eirie, get this boy a mouthpiece.

Eirie, of course, produces the one that's been soaking in methyl chloride. Gondorff jams it into Savitt's mouth, who winces at the taste.

SAVITT

Christ, this thing tastes terrible.

GONDORFF

That's just the antiseptic we use. What would you rather have, tuberculosis?

Savitt is pretty sure he'd rather not have tuberculosis. He begins to do a little shadowboxing as does Hooker on the other side. Even as he dances, Savitt begins to shake his head a little, as if to clear it. Gondorff decides it's time start. He claps his hands and the two fighters come out.

Hooker immediately begins dancing away from Savitt, realizing that Savitt is getting groggy. Savitt stalks him and whips out a few combinations, but Hooker is staying so far away that they do no damage.

SAVITT

What's the matter, you scare of me, Florian?

HOOKER

Just wanna give my legs some work before I put you away.

Hooker continues to back away as Savitt stalks him all over the ring. Macalinski doesn't like what he's seeing.

MACALINSKI

C'mon, Florian, fight, for chrissake.

Savitt decides he's had enough of this, too. He backs Hooker into a corner and comes in to finish him off. Unfortunately the methyl chloride is really getting to him now. He throws

CONTINUED

157

CONTINUED - 2

157

two wild haymakers which miss Hooker by a foot. Savitt is shaking his head and blinking his eyes now. He looks ready to fall asleep. Realizing his opportunity, Hooker steps inside and smashes the right to Savitt's stomach. Savitt doubles up, although he was probably getting ready to fall down anyway. Then Hooker cranks up and unleashes his hardest right to Savitt's chin. Savitt goes down and out like a light.

Macalinski is amazed. He comes up to Hooker as he starts to untie his gloves.

MACALINSKI

Nice work, kid. I didn't know you had that kinda power. Get yourself a shower and we'll go.

HOOKER

Don't need a shower. Didn't even work up a sweat. I'll just get the gloves off and be right out.

As Hooker goes off to the dressing room, Gondorff comes over to Macalinski.

GONDORFF

I been in this business thirty years and I ain't never seen a guy with a punch like that. Where'd you find that kid?

Macalinski isn't talking. He just smiles and walks away. Meanwhile the bodyguards are dragging Savitt out to the car. Once they're all outside, Gondorff turns to all the gang with a more than satisfied smile.

158 EXT. EIGHTH STREET GYM - ALLEY - DAY - HOOKER

158

emerging from the back door and getting into the limousine.

158-A INT. MACALINSKI'S CAR

158-A

Savitt is propped up in the back seat.

HOOKER

How's Savitt?

MACALINSKI

He's awake, but he still don't know where he is.

The limousine pulls out and we:

CUT TO

159 THE FRONT OF THE GYM AGAIN 159

Billie is ready for yet another run-through. We can tell the troops are restless.

BILLIE

All right, everybody. We'll try it just once more. This is the time we get it right, okay? One, two, three....

The fighters once again begin skipping madly. This time, however, it's perfect. Fifteen grown men skipping their asses off in perfect time, each rope coming around at the same time, each man jumping up and down in the same rhythm. It's a totally ridiculous sight.

160 ANGLE ON SINGLETON AND BILLIE 160

Singleton snaps the pictures as Billie notices Gondorff and the others driving away.

BILLIE

Okay, guys, that's a keeper. Thanks for your cooperation.

161 ANOTHER ANGLE 161

The fighters and trainers drag back into the gym. Singleton folds up his camera and he and Billie start for their car. Pyle, however, buttonholes them.

PYLE

When's this spread gonne hit the stands?

BILLIE

In a couple weeks. You be watchin' for it.

PYLE

Be sure you spell my name right. It's Pyle. P-Y-L-E.

Billie nods. She'll be sure and get that right.

CUT TO

162 INT. MACALINSKI'S CAR 162

as it moves through the city.

CONTINUED

162 CONTINUED

162

MACALINSKI

You got your protection Florian.
Do what you want to Kelley.

HOOKER

Kelley'll be ever easier than Savitt
here.

163 EXT. ATLANTIC CITY BUS STATION - DAY

163

The limousine pulls up in front of the bus terminal and Hooker
gets out.

MACALINSKI

One more thing. Where do I find
this guy Chandler?

HOOKER

One eighteen North Cumberland. Ask
to see some Webster jade.

MACALINSKI

See ya at the fights.

The limousine pulls away from the curb. Savitt is coming out
of it somewhat now.

SAVITT

Seemed to me like I was goin' down
before he even hit me.

MACALINSKI

(humoring him)

Sure, Tony, sure.

CUT TO

164 INT. VERONICA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

164

Veronica is sitting quietly on the couch, sipping some tea and
listening to Mary Lou Williams' version of "He's Funny That
Way."

'I never had nothin'
No one to care
That's why I seem
To have more than my share.
I got a man
Who's crazy for me
He's Funny That Way.'

165 ANOTHER ANGLE

165

There's a knock at the door. Veronica goes to answer it. She
seems almost excited about who might be there. She opens the

CONTINUED

165 CONTINUED

165

door to find Macalinski and two of his goons standing in it. Obviously, this wasn't who she was hoping for.

MACALINSKI

Just wanted to give you my personal regards, Lola. I woulda done it sooner, but it took a while to find you.

166 ANGLE

166

With that, he drives a vicious punch into Veronica's stomach. As she stumbles forward, he rears back and blasts her in the face, knocking her all the way across the room and over a table. She lies unconscious on the floor. We hold on her as the lights go out, the door closes and we hear footsteps disappear down the stairs. We're left with the plaintive notes of Mary Lou Williams' piano.

CUT TO

167 INT. HOOKER'S ROOM - NIGHT

167

Hooker's doing much the same thing Veronica has been doing, only in accordance with his tastes, he's drinking beer and listening to something a little more upbeat. Something like Liltin' Martha Tilton's "The Lady is a Tramp." Suddenly, Hooker gets a knock on his door. Unlike Veronica, he immediately expects the worst. Unlike Veronica, he doesn't get it. He opens the door and she staggers in, her nose swollen on one side and a huge shiner on her right eye.

HOOKER

Jesus, what happened to you?

VERONICA

(slumping onto
the couch)

I forgot to put on my makeup. This is the way I really look.

HOOKER

(in no mood
for flippancy)
Who was it, Veronica?

VERONICA

Macalinski. He thinks I oughta be payin' more attention to him. You think I could have a beer? You owe me one.

HOOKER

(offering his)
Here, finish this one.

CONTINUED

Veronica takes a long, slow drink. Hooker just gazes at her a minute. She becomes aware of it.

VERONICA

What are you lookin' at?

HOOKER

I don't know. I'm just surprised you came over here, that's all. I mean, you coulda called one of your ten guys.

VERONICA

I would of, but I don't really like any of 'em and you were closer. Sometimes on a night like this, you wonder if everybody else doesn't like you as much as you don't like them.

(pause)

How about it, Hooker? How much don't you like me?

Veronica asks this question with real concern. She's not being coy. Hooker leans forward and kisses her tenderly on all the bruised areas of her face. He doesn't like her just fine. Veronica is not at all upset by this response.

VERONICA

You think I could stick around here a while?

HOOKER

How long?

VERONICA

Just until I get proper medical attention.

HOOKER

What if I said no?

VERONICA

(lying)

I'd find somebody else.

She reaches up for his head and brings it down to her. They kiss with all the longing of strangers and the intimacy of lovers, for what will obviously not be the last time tonight.

'I get too hungry for dinner at eight
I like the theatre but never come late.
I never bother with people I hate.
That's why the Lady is a Tramp.

CONTINUED

I don't like crap games with barons
and earls
Won't go to Harlem in ermine and pearls.
Won't dish the dirt with the rest of
the girls.
That's why the Lady is a Tramp.'

FADE OUT

FADE IN

168 EXT. AN ATLANTIC CITY STREET - CHANDLER IMPORT CO. - DAY 168

Macalinski's limousine pulls up outside a one-story building that has Chandler Import Co. written on its front window. Macalinski, carrying a large leather bag, goes inside with his usual compliment of bodyguards, and is greeted by a receptionist. It's Billie.

169 INT. CHANDLER IMPORT CO. - RECEPTION ROOM - DAY 169

BILLIE

May I help you?

MACALINSKI

Yeah, I'd like some Webster jade.

BILLIE

You'll have to see Mr. Chandler about that. Second door on your right.

170 INT. CHANDLER'S OFFICE - DAY 170

Macalinski and his boys go through a door with Chandler's name on it. The Tuxedo Kid is inside, once again decked out in that checked sport coat. His office however is well ordered and rather fancy, as befits his status as an "importer."

MACALINSKI

(offering
his hand)

Chandler. My name's Macalinski.

TUXEDO KID

Oh yeah, didn't I see you in Goldings' Gym once?

MACALINSKI

Yeah, I was down there to have a look at Bobby Florian. I'd like to put a little money on him. They tell me you're in a betting mood.

TUXEDO KID

I'm giving two to one against him. I don't think the kid's got a chance. How wrong do you think I am?

CONTINUED

170

CONTINUED

170

Macalinski opens his leather bag. It's bursting with money.

MACALINSKI

About four hundred grand worth.

TUXEDO KID

That's a lotta potatoes, Macalinski. Most books wouldn't take that bet, but then most books aren't sporting men either. Me, I like to live dangerous. I take risks the others won't take, 'cause that's what life is all about, ain't it, Macalinski?

Macalinski is disgusted by this false declaration of courage, but he grits his teeth and says:

MACALINSKI

Yeah, that's what it's all about all right.

The Tuxedo Kid leans forward and speaks into an intercom on his desk.

TUXEDO KID

Jerry, I'm sending in a Mr. Macalinski with a big bet on Florian. Take his money and give him a free drink. He's a real sportsman.

The Tuxedo Kid shows Macalinski to a door in the back of his office. The two shake hands.

TUXEDO KID

Nice to meet ya, Mr. Macalinski. Come back and see us again.

Macalinski and his boys go through the door.

171

INT. BETTING PARLOR

171

They find themselves in a plush betting parlor, complete with odds board, telephone operators, cashier's window and bar. It's similar to the one Gondorff set up in "The Sting" only on a smaller scale, and instead of pictures of horses it features pictures of fighters. Macalinski's boys are impressed.

BODYGUARD

Gee, this guy's pretty well set up.

CONTINUED

171 CONTINUED

171

MACALINSKI

He won't be after tonight.

CUT TO

172 INT. LONNEGAN'S HOTEL SUITE - DAY

172

The suitcases are snapped open. Each one is filled to the brim with hundred dollar bills. Camera back to reveal Lonnegan and Floyd.

FLOYD

There it is. A million bucks. This guy Kelley better be a sure bet. I'd hate to see that kinda green disappear.

LONNEGAN

We'll find out in a few minutes. Scanlon's on the phone in the other room.

There's a knock on the door, and immediately Lonnegan closes the cases. A Guard pokes his head in.

GUARD

Snyder's here.

LONNEGAN

Send him in.

Snyder swaggers in with the self-importance typical of him.

LONNEGAN

I assume you're here for your information.

SNYDER

That's right. Tonight's the night. I called eight agents into town for this bust. They're gonna be pretty burned up if I don't deliver.

LONNEGAN

You can relax, Snyder, I never go back on a deal. There's a Chinese market down Vermont near 6th. In the back are three meat lockers. The middle one isn't a meat locker at all. It's a meeting room. That's where they're gonna make the split.

Snyder is amazed that Lonnegan could discover such a well-organized hideout.

CONTINUED

172

CONTINUED

172

SNYDER

You mind tellin' me how you find out
stuff like this?

LONNEGAN

I got a source.

SNYDER

Think I could use it sometime?

LONNEGAN

Why don't you ask for yourself?

(calling into
the other room)

Scanlon. You off the phone yet?

We hear a Voice o.s. as another figure enters the room.

VOICE

Yeah, what is it?

The Voice is familiar. The camera moves to reveal that the
person is even more familiar. To our amazement, it's Veronica.

173

ANOTHER ANGLE

173

Lonnegan delights in Snyder's surprise that the source is a
woman.

LONNEGAN

(making the
introduction)

Camille Scanlon, Agent Snyder.
Snyder says he'd like to make use
of your services someday.

VERONICA

(the ice maiden)

All it takes is money.

SNYDER

(referring to
her shiner)

Looks like you paid a price for what
you found out.

VERONICA

(hard as nails)

I'll get whatever I paid back, and
then some.

CONTINUED

SNYDER

(taking
his leave)

Well, Lonnegan, it was nice doin' business with ya. Someday when I'm bureau chief, maybe I can return the favor.

(reluctantly)

You know, it's too bad we're on opposite sides of the law. The government could use a guy like you.

Lonnegan smiles. He's real thrilled that Snyder thinks so highly of him. Once Snyder's out the door, Lonnegan turns to Veronica.

LONNEGAN

What's the word on Macalinski?

VERONICA

He went for four hundred grand on Hooker. Hooker just told me on the phone that he's dumpin' the fight as soon as it doesn't look too phony. You can put your million on Kelley any time you want.

Lonnegan is really proud of himself now.

LONNEGAN

You see how it all works now, Floyd? At even money, we not only get back the five hundred grand we lost, but we get another half million in the bargain. Meetin' Henry Gondorff turns out to be the best thing that ever happened to us.

VERONICA

Well, I gotta get ready to go to the fight with Gondorff. You owe me a hundred grand Lonnegan. I'll be leavin' early. I don't wanta be caught with Gondorff's boys when Macalinski sees Hooker take the count.

Without hesitation, Lonnegan reaches into his desk, pulls out the money and hands it to her. She counts it quickly.

CONTINUED

173

CONTINUED - 2

173

LONNEGAN

You earned every penny of it. I
wish I had ten more like you.

Veronica smiles at Floyd, who didn't appreciate this last
comment too much.

VERONICA

(heading
for the door)
Enjoy yourselves tonight. If I'm
even in Chicago, I'll drop by and
you can tell me about it.

Lonnegan nods good-bye and Veronica is let out the door.
Floyd is struggling hard with a thought.

FLOYD

There's still one thing I don't get.
How come you told Snyder where they're
gonna be meetin'?

LONNEGAN

'Cause there's no chance they'll ever
get there. Macalinski'll see to that
once I tell him they conned him.
(savoring the
thought)

Of course, that won't be until it's
too late for him to deny it. Come on.

Lonnegan picks up one of the suitcases, Floyd the other, and
they exit.

174

INT. THE STILLMAN AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

174

Although an improvement over the Jersey Garden, the Stillman
is no fabulous forum.

175

INT. HOOKER'S DRESSING ROOM

175

Hooker is having his hands taped by The Big Ohio. Gondorff
looks on, made up as Ivory Berrigan again. Eirie is pacing
around the room, more nervous than anybody.

GONDORFF

How do you feel?

HOOKER

All right. How good do I gotta feel
to get knocked out?

CONTINUED

175

CONTINUED

175

GONDORFF

I don't want ya to go out till at least the third round if you can.

HOOKER

What if I can't last that long?

GONDORFF

Just do the best you can. You might surprise yourself and go four or five.

HOOKER

I don't wanna surprise myself. I wanta go out there and get creamed early.

GONDORFF

I told ya, Hooker, this has gotta look convincing. If you just fall over the first time he grazes ya, Macalinski will know he's been had and we'll never get outta the building alive.

176

EXT. CHANDLER IMPORT CO. - NIGHT

176

Lonnegan's limousine drives up to the building entrance and stops. Lonnegan, Floyd, and a bodyguard carrying the two suitcases filled with money exit the car and enter the building.

177

INT. CHANDLER IMPORT CO. - NIGHT

177

Billie is closing up for the night.

BILLIE

We're closed.

LONNEGAN

I know.

He continues, without slowing, across the office and into "Chandler's" inner office, followed closely by Floyd and the bodyguard. Billie picks up a telephone and presses a button.

178

INT. BETTING PARLOR - NIGHT

178

A red light winks next to a telephone which is picked up by the Tuxedo Kid.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

TUXEDO KID

Yeah...okay.

He turns to the room full of grifters.

TUXEDO KID

Look alive. We got company.

The door bangs open and Lonnegan, Floyd and the bodyguard enter. The Tuxedo Kid hangs up the phone slowly.

TUXEDO KID

My receptionist said we were closed.

LONNEGAN

I'd like to lay a bet on Kelley to win tonight. Even money.

TUXEDO KID

Too late. The fight's already started.

LONNEGAN

It's nine-fifteen. The fight won't start for another fifteen, twenty minutes.

TUXEDO KID

(to Cashier)

Check the arena.

The Cashier picks up the phone.

LONNEGAN

(to Tuxedo Kid)

Don't I know you from somewhere?

TUXEDO KID

(sweating)

I got an ordinary lookin' face, Mr...?

LONNEGAN

(carefully)

Lonnegan. Doyle Lonnegan.

The Cashier hangs up the phone.

CASHIER

Mr. Chandler? The fight hasn't started yet.

CONTINUED

TUXEDO KID

Well, you're in luck, Mr...Lonnegan?
How much did you want to bet?

LONNEGAN

One million dollars. On Kelley. To
win. Even odds.

TUXEDO KID

What?! That's impossible. I can't....

LONNEGAN

(grabbing
Tuxedo Kid's
jacket lapels)
You can. And will. And now.

The Tuxedo Kid's eyes go to Floyd's hand inside his coat
pocket -- then to Lonnegan's pugnacious expression. He wilts.

TUXEDO KID

My boss'll kill me....

He looks to the Cashier.

TUXEDO KID

Count Mr. Lonnegan's money and write
him a receipt.

LONNEGAN

(to bodyguard)
Stay here. Be first at the cashier's
window. I wouldn't want them to run
short.

INT. DRESSING ROOM OF STILLMAN AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

A badly beaten fighter is half-carried into the dressing room.
Hooker watches as the fighter is deposited on a table.

THE BIG OHIO

Time to go, kid.

The Big Ohio pushes on Hooker's gloves and we:

CUT TO

180 STILLMAN AUDITORIUM - MACALINSKI AND LONNEGAN 180

making their way to their seats in different areas of the arena. Macalinski is down close to ringside. Lonnegan is across the way and up about fifteen rows.

CUT TO

181 INT. STILLMAN AUDITORIUM - IN THE RING - HOOKER 181

as he climbs through the ropes and into the ring. He looks across at Danny Kelley, who gives him a warm sneer. Hooker sneers back, but his heart isn't in it. Both fighters do a little shadow boxing as the ring Announcer grabs the mike.

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to tonight's program of boxing at the Stillman Auditorium. We begin a seven round semimain. On my right, wearing the red trunks and weighing in at 172, that fine Irish puncher, Danny Kelley.

Cheers for Kelley as he makes his rounds.

ANNOUNCER

And to my left in the black trunks and weighing in at 171, the kid from California, Bobby Florian.

Hooker dances out into the ring, hands held above his head.

182 IN THE STANDS - ON LONNEGAN AND FLOYD 182

Floyd is disgusted.

FLOYD

Look at the bum jumpin' around. Like he was actually gonna make a fight of it, the cake-eater.

LONNEGAN

C'mon, Floyd. It's time to give Macalinski the bad news.

FLOYD

You better talk fast. Hooker may not last more than thirty seconds.

183 WITH LONNEGAN 183

The referee has finished giving instructions to the fighters, as Lonnegan makes his way over to where Macalinski is sitting.

184 IN THE RING

184

The bell rings and the fighters come out. Hooker's plan is obvious immediately -- to stay as far away from Kelley as possible. Kelley, however, bores right in and whips out two jabs which snap Hooker's head back; but Hooker narrowly manages to duck the right cross that follows.

185 IN THE STANDS - ON MACALINSKI

185

Up in the stands, Macalinski looks on tensely, as Lonnegan slides in next to him.

LONNEGAN

Howdy, Carlo.

MACALINSKI

Lonnegan. What are you doin' here?

LONNEGAN

Just takin' a little vacation in the sun. Who you got your money on?

MACALINSKI

Florian. He's a hell of a puncher.

LONNEGAN

How much you got on him?

MACALINSKI

Four hundred grand.

Lonnegan whistles in mock surprise.

MACALINSKI

(defending
his bet)

I've seen him. I know what he can do.

LONNEGAN

So do I. He conned me outta five hundred grand four years ago.

MACALINSKI

(incredulous)

What are you talkin' about?

LONNEGAN

He's no fighter. Never has been. Name's Johnny Hooker. He's been a grifter around Chicago for years.

CONTINUED

185 CONTINUED

185

LONNEGAN (Cont'd)
He's goin' on his hynie here in a couple minutes.

MACALINSKI
But what about his manager, Berrigan?

LONNEGAN
That's Henry Gondorff, one of the all-time greats. Not only is he not a manager, he's not even a Negro. That's just makeup. You been had, Macalinski.

MACALINSKI
Are you sure it's the same guys?

LONNEGAN
Positive. I'll never forget those two as long as I live. If I wasn't under indictment, I'd ice 'em myself as soon as the fight's over, which shouldn't be too long now.

Macalinski can't believe it. He just sits there in stunned silence.

186 IN THE RING

186

A pattern has developed in the fight. Hooker, surprisingly, has one advantage. He's faster than Kelley, but Kelley keeps coming at him, throwing punch after punch -- jabs, combinations, round-houses, upper cuts, hooks, everything. Hooker is able to dodge three-fourths of them but the one-fourth that manage to land are beginning to take a toll.

187 IN THE STANDS - ON LONNEGAN AND MACALINSKI

187

LONNEGAN
Looks like Hooker's gettin' ready to go home and spend some of your money.

Whatever doubts Macalinski may have had about Lonnegan's story are now dispelled. His astonishment is turning to cold fury. He turns to two of his bodyguards.

MACALINSKI
Grimes and Rossavich, get over to that bookie's and get our money back.

CONTINUED

187

CONTINUED

LONNEGAN

You're wastin' your time. The bookie is probably in with them. He won't even be there.

MACALINSKI

(to his men)

Get over there anyway. And if he is there, bring him with ya.

The two goons hustle off.

LONNEGAN

Funny, isn't it. You wouldn't think lightning would strike twice like this, I mean, especially with you knowing what happened to me an all. Ah well, I guess we all have our blind spots.

(getting up to go)

Well, I'll be seeing you, Carlo. Sorry I had to be the one to tell you.

(turning back)

Oh, and Carlo, I won't breathe a word of this to anybody. Your secret's good with me.

Lonnegan walks off up the aisle, laughing to himself. Macalinski just sits in his chair and steams.

CUT TO

188

THE RING AGAIN - HOOKER

188

is bobbing and weaving like crazy in an effort to escape Kelley's avalanche of blows. He is able to hit Kelley from time to time, but whenever he trades with him, he gets the worst of it. Hooker uses everything he knows to protect himself. He clinches, covers up, moves constantly and flurries his way out of corners, but Kelley is such a dervish that Hooker is still taking a lot of shots.

189

ANOTHER ANGLE

189

Finally, Kelley traps Hooker in a corner and begins to flail away like crazy. Hooker dodges this way and that, but he's getting tagged and he's unable to get away. A cut opens over his left eye and his legs begin to wobble a little.

- 190 AT RINGSIDE 190
 Eirie, The Big Ohio, and Gondorff (who is sitting right behind Hooker's corner with Veronica on his arm) yell at Hooker to hang in there.
- 191 ON HOOKER 191
 He battles back, throwing a wild series of punches. They do no damage, but confuse Kelley long enough to let the bell ring.
- 192 IN HOOKER'S CORNER OF THE RING 192
 Hooker slumps down on his stool. Eirie immediately gets to sponging him off, as The Big Ohio dabs collodion on the cut.
- HOOKER
 Jesus, the guy's a goddamn windmill.
- THE BIG OHIO
 That's all right, Hooker. You're doin' great. Just keep away from him for another round.
- CUT TO
- 193 EXT. ATLANTIC CITY STREET - NIGHT - MACALINSKI'S GOONS' CAR 193
 racing through the city on their way to Chandler's Import Company.
- CUT TO
- 194 INT. STILLMAN AUDITORIUM - IN THE RING 194
 The second round is under way, and once again, Kelley is all over Hooker, throwing blows from every conceivable angle. As before, Hooker tries to dance away from the combinations and dodge the haymakers, but he can't avoid them all and his face is turning puffy and red. Soon the cut is open again and he's blinking blood out of his eye. Kelley goes to the body some and begins to raise welts on Hooker's ribs.
- CUT TO
- 195 INT. THE CHANDLER IMPORT COMPANY - NIGHT - MACALINSKI'S GOONS 195
 crash through the front door, which is locked and into Chandler's office which isn't.

- 196 INT. CHANDLER'S OFFICE - NIGHT 196
Strangely enough, the Tuxedo Kid is still there. The goons stick a gun in his face and wave him toward the safe.
CUT TO
- 197 INT. STILLMAN AUDITORIUM - IN THE RING 197
Hooker's in trouble as he's slowing down and Kelly is scoring more frequently. Kelley connects with three wicked body shots and a left to the head that sends Hooker reeling into the ropes. Instead of bouncing away, he just stays there, his legs too tired to move him.
- 198 ANOTHER ANGLE - IN THE RING 198
Even his flurry tactics don't slow Kelley, who wades in and unleashes another barrage. Hooker can do nothing but try and weather it. He gives up all pretense to offense. It's purely a matter of survival now.
- 199 IN THE RING - HOOKER 199
calls on all the defensive quickness he can muster, moving his head, slowing blows with the forearms and shoulders, ducking, bobbing and leaning back over the ropes. Almost like Ali's rope-a-dope. Kelley, meanwhile, just keeps banging away. Hooker takes it and takes it and takes it, and finally just sags to the canvas. The count gets to eight and the bell rings.
- 200 IN THE RING - HOOKER'S CORNER 200
Eirie and The Big Ohio drag Hooker back to his corner and immediately apply the water and smelling salts. His nose is bleeding as well as his eye, and his chest is heaving. Gondorff comes out of his seat and up to the corner.
- 201 IN THE STANDS - ON LONNEGAN 201
Lonnegan is loving it.
LONNEGAN
Next round oughta be the one.
FLOYD
Yeah, looks like Gondorff is tellin' the pretty boy it's time to check out. You think Macalinski's mad enough to kill those guys?
LONNEGAN
I know he's mad enough.

202 IN THE STANDS - ON MACALINSKI 202

It's true. He looks like he's ready to eat his seat.

CUT BACK TO

203 HOOKER'S CORNER 203

HOOKER

I did it, Gondorff. I went two like you said.

GONDORFF

Damn right, Hooker. I'm proud of ya, pal. Now I want you to go out there and knock this guy on his butt.

HOOKER

What are you talkin' about! I'm goin' out there and lie down. This guy can hit.

GONDORFF

Not any more you ain't.

(pointing into
the stands)

You recognize that guy about fifteen rows up, fourth seat from the aisle?

Hooker looks and finds the man Gondorff is pointing to.

204 HOOKER'S POINT OF VIEW - LONNEGAN 204

in the stands with Floyd.

205 IN HOOKER'S CORNER - WITH HOOKER AND GONDORFF 205

HOOKER

Oh God, it's Lonnegan.

GONDORFF

That's right, and he just told Macalinski that we been connin' him. As a result, Macalinski is gettin' ready to fill all of us full of holes.

HOOKER

How do you know all this?

CONTINUED

205

CONTINUED

205

GONDORFF

Haven't got time to explain it now.
Look, I don't wanna put the pressure
on ya, but if you don't beat this
guy, we're all corpses.

If Hooker was groggy at the end of the round, he's wide awake
now.

HOOKER

But what about Lonnegan? He'll kill
us just as fast.

GONDORFF

Take my word for it. You win this
fight and you won't have to worry
about Lonnegan.

EIRIE

(trying to
be helpful)

You can do it, Hooker. Kelley's
gotta be tiring. A guy can only
dish out so much punishment.

The warning buzzer sounds. Hooker looks around to see
Veronica.

206

HOOKER'S POINT OF VIEW - RINSIDE SEAT

206

Veronica's not there any more.

207

IN HOOKER'S CORNER - ON HOOKER AND GONDORFF

207

HOOKER

Hey, what happened to Veronica?

GONDORFF

Don't worry about that now.

The warning buzzer sounds. The Big Ohio grabs Hooker's head
to get his attention.

THE BIG OHIO

Forget stayin' away from him, Hooker.
You gotta start gettin' some knocks
in. He's not gonna hit ya any worse
if you trade with him.

Hooker nods his head as the bell sounds for round three.

208

IN THE STANDS - ON LONNEGAN

208

joyfully anticipating Hooker's demise.

209

IN THE RING - THE FIGHT

209

Hooker comes out, and much to Kelley's surprise, doesn't back away. Hooker throws a right-left combination and actually lands one. Kelley counters with another swarm of blows, but Hooker stands his ground and comes ripping back. He smashes a right to the chest, a left to the ribs and an overhand right to the head. The fight is becoming a real slugfest. Kelley headhunting, throwing big haymakers, hooks and uppercuts. Hooker ducking inside, jolting shots to the ribs and mid-section. Kelley's blows are more spectacularly visible from even the cheap seats, but Hooker is dishing it out to the body and Kelley is beginning to feel it. Hooker gains more and more confidence, if nothing else than for the fact he's still on his feet. It's turning into a helluva fight, and the crowd is warming to it. All of them expect Lonnegan.

210

IN THE STANDS - ON LONNEGAN

210

LONNEGAN

What the hell is goin' on here?

211

IN THE RING

211

Hooker and Kelley are literally toe to toe now, trading punches as fast as their arms can work. One thing is becoming increasingly clear, however. Kelley is beginning to tire. He has trained too little and thrown enough punches for three fights, and he's way behind on motivation. Hooker senses it, and now his adrenalin really begins to flow. He's taken Kelley's best shots and Kelly knows it.

Hooker rips a left to the stomach and follows with a right to the side of the head. For the first time in the fight, Kelley begins to backpeddle, looking for a little breathing room.

CUT TO

212

IN THE STANDS - ON MACALINSKI

212

One of the goons, Rossovich, returns, a big smile on his face. He's got the leather bag full of money with him.

ROSSAVICH

The guy was still there. Grimes has got him out in the car. We got nothin' to worry about. The bet's off.

Rossavich doesn't get the show of gratitude out of Macalinski that he'd expected. At this point, Macalinski is not at all sure he wants that money back.

CUT TO

- 213 IN THE RING 213
Hooker's really into it now, blasting away with both hands. Hooker crowds Kelley and hammers away to the body. Kelley stabs out with his right, but the zip is gone from his punches. He tries to hold on, but Hooker pushes him away, and starts pounding again.
- 214 IN THE STANDS - ON LONNEGAN AND FLOYD 214
Lonnegan is speechless. Floyd looks like he's growing hemorrhoids.
- 215 IN THE RING 215
Hooker backs Kelley into a corner. Kelley's punches are just pawing the air now. Hooker, walking right through them, just keeps ripping to the body, occasionally going to the head, but mostly burning up the midsection. This is the first round he's really thrown any punches, so unlike Kelley, he's got something left despite the beating he's taken. Kelley drops his guard to protect his aching ribs and Hooker rocks him with a right to the chin.
- 216 IN HOOKER'S CORNER 216
Eirie and The Big Ohio are going crazy in the corner. Eirie is filling the air with imaginary punches in an effort to urge Hooker on. He throws one so hard he falls down. Gondorff, of course, has got to maintain his cool, having to preserve the fiction that he's being double-crossed, but we know that he's exploding inside.
- 217 IN THE RING 217
Hooker pummels away to the stomach again. Kelley's guard comes down and Hooker straightens him up with a wicked uppercut that knocks Kelley's mouthpiece clean across the ring. Kelley's arms are leaden. This time his guard stays down and his knees begin to sag. Hooker measures him, plants his feet and blasts a right to the nose, a right-left to the jaw and cheekbone, and finally a prodigious uppercut that catches Kelley full on the chin. He wavers a second and pitches forward on his face.
- 218 ON LONNEGAN AND FLOYD IN THE STANDS 218
Lonnegan leaps out of his seat, his face completely ashen. Floyd is too shocked to move.

219 ON MACALINSKI IN THE STANDS 219

He has also come out of his seat, a new kind of anger welling up in him.

220 IN THE RING 220

The referee counts Kelley out and Eirie and The Big Ohio race into the ring to embrace Hooker. Hooker tries to dance around the ring a little, but he's too exhausted. Eirie and Big Ohio have to help him out of the ring.

221 ON MACALINSKI IN THE STANDS 221

He is on fire.

GRIMES

What do we do with Chandler, that bookie guy?

MACALINSKI

Let him go. Florian and Berrigan were on the level.

(with venom)

It's Lonnegan that burned us.

CUT TO

222 INT. HOOKER'S DRESSING ROOM 222

There's general merriment as Eirie, Gondorff and The Big Ohio whoop it up, slapping Hooker on the back, tousling his hair, etc. Hooker just sorta rolls with it, a thoroughly weary man.

GONDORFF

Atta boy, Hooker. I knew you could do it!

EIRIE

(demonstrating
with his own
awkward punches)

You see them combinations, them uppercuts? You were TNT out there tonight, Hooker.

BIG OHIO

You really showed 'em what you're made of, Johnny.

HOOKER

Thanks, I hope I never get the chance again.

CONTINUED

222

CONTINUED

222

GONDORFF

If you hurry and get showered, we can still make the ten o'clock train.

HOOKER

Unless Lonnegan's guys are waitin' outside to put a few bullets in us.

GONDORFF

Believe me, they're gonna be too busy tryin' to keep Macalinski's guys from puttin' a few bullets in them.

CUT TO

223

EXT. STILLMAN AUDITORIUM - AN EXIT DOOR

223

Lonnegan, Floyd and two bodyguards come out of the auditorium. They're in a big hurry and are quite relieved to see their limousine waiting for them. Floyd opens the back door and Lonnegan slides in.

224

INT. LONNEGAN'S CAR

224

Suddenly floyd and the two bodyguards feel the chill of cold steel on their spinal columns. Three of Macalinski's men are holding .38's in their backs. Two others slide in next to the unsuspecting Lonnegan and close the doors. Lonnegan's getting the same treatment he gave Kid Twist. His face is frozen in terror as the limousine drives off to keep his date with the cement cobbler.

CUT TO

225

INT. THE CHINESE MARKET - NIGHT

225

The proprietor is closing up for the night, totaling up his receipts. Snyder and his eight fellow agents enter the store. They tell the man to continue what he's doing as the two agents hide behind the counter and the others go into the meat locker. The Chinaman goes about his business with no hint of concern.

CUT TO

226

EXT. STILLMAN AUDITORIUM - ANOTHER EXIT DOOR

226

We pick up Hooker, Eirie, Gondorff, The Big Ohio and the Tuxedo Kid coming out another exit of the auditorium. The Big Ohio and the Tuxedo Kid climb into a car driven by Singleton. Gondorff, Hooker and Eirie pile into one driven by Billie. As the cars pull out, we:

CUT TO

227 INT. SMALL MEETING ROOM IN CHINESE MARKET

227

Snyder and his men are all in place now, hiding behind various boxes and crates, their guns drawn, ready for action.

CUT TO

228 INT. GONDORFF'S CAR

228

Gondorff, Hooker, Eirie and Billie driving through the city in their car.

HOOKER

(to Gondorff)

So you knew all along what Lonnegan was doin', didn't ya?

GONDORFF

Yeah, once I found out Lonnegan killed Twist and pinned it on Macalinski, I figured it from there. I had a little help with some of the details though.

HOOKER

From who?

GONDORFF

Veronica.

Both Hooker and Eirie are stunned.

GONDORFF

I sent her up to Chicago to get next to Lonnegan the year I went into the pen. I knew he'd come after us as soon as I got out, so I figured I better have somebody watchin' him. Lonnegan hired her right away 'cause he figured she'd be a great way to keep an eye on us. He was the one that told her to get next to you. She tipped me off on everything she could, but she didn't find out about Twist until it was too late.

This is all a little much for Hooker. He just slumps back in his seat in disbelief.

CUT TO

229 INT. SMALL MEETING ROOM IN CHINESE MARKET

229

Snyder and his men are still waiting, crouched in anticipation. A couple of them are getting a little restless.

CONTINUED

229

CONTINUED

229

AGENT

You sure they're comin' here?

SNYDER

Shut up, will ya. Of course I'm sure.

CUT TO

230

INT. GONDORFF'S CAR - HOOKER

230

has recovered enough to speak.

HOOKER

Veronica. Jesus, why didn't ya tell me? All that hootchie-kootchie she was puttin' out was part of the act. I mean she's givin' me these raven eyes and....

GONDORFF

I never heard about no hootchie-kootchie and I don't want to. I woulda told ya she was in on the ground floor, but I didn't want ya to get too friendly with her. Babes and griffin' don't mix. I didn't know you were gonna go and get stuck on her anyway.

HOOKER

I'm not stuck on her. I just don't like playin' the patsy.

GONDORFF

You oughta thank her for one thing. She helped Lonnegan get Snyder off your back.

The car comes to a stop and Gondorff and the others get out. We can't tell from the angle exactly where they are.

CUT TO

231

INT. SMALL MEETING ROOM IN CHINESE MARKET

231

There's a noise at the door and all the agents spring into readiness. The door opens and one man walks in. The agents spring from their cover and surround him, guns leveled. One turns on the lights to reveal a little Delivery Boy with a bouquet of flowers.

DELIVERY BOY

There a guy named Snyder here?

CONTINUED

231

CONTINUED

231

Before Snyder can answer, one of the agents reads the card on the bouquet.

AGENT

Dear Snyder. Sorry we couldn't make it. Start the party without us.
Love, Henry Gondorff.

All the agents turn and focus their undying contempt on Snyder, a man who seems destined always to be in the right place at the wrong time. Right now, Snyder looks like he's gonna be ill.

CUT TO

232

INT. ATLANTIC CITY TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

232

Gondorff, Hooker, Eirie, Billie, Singleton, The Big Ohio and the Tuxedo Kid are walking down the island to their train.

HOOKER

Hey, wait a minute, I just thought of somethin'. If Macalinski took the money back from Tuxedo, we didn't make a dime on this thing.

GONDORFF

Well we didn't exactly come away empty handed. The guy Veronica got Lonnegan to bet his money with was one of our guys too, Freddie Lake outa Jersey City.

Hooker just shakes his head. He shoulda known it.

HOOKER

Then where's my split?

GONDORFF

Veronica's got it.

HOOKER

What for?

GONDORFF

I don't know. Why don't you ask her? She's in car ten, cabin six.

233

ANOTHER ANGLE

233

Hooker starts for car ten and then turns back to Gondorff.

HOOKER

Henry? What made you think I could beat Kelley?

CONTINUED

233

CONTINUED

233

GONDORFF

I don't know, Hooker, you got a way of ignoring the reality of things that always pulls you through. Someday, you're gonna realize what you been doin' all these years and die of fright. I was wrong about one thing, though. I used to think you led a charmed life. Now I can see that you're just the gamest grifter I ever knew.

Hooker smiles. He'll take that.

234

WITH HOOKER

234

We follow him to car ten.

235

INT. TRAIN CORRIDOR

235

Hooker finds Veronica's compartment. The door is open.

236

INT. VERONICA'S COMPARTMENT

236

Hooker's cheeks are slightly swollen and there's a bandage over his eye. He looks as bad as Veronica.

HOOKER

Gondorff tells me you got my split.

VERONICA

Yeah.

HOOKER

Then why aren't ya givin' it to me?

VERONICA

He told me you'd just blow it. I figured you could use it for better things. Like showin' me a good time.

HOOKER

(incensed)

After all you done for me? You start out by takin' my money and then you make a sap outa me for the benefit of a guy who's been tryin' to kill me for two years. I mean you coulda played your role for Lonnegan without all the lovey-dovey stuff, the

CONTINUED

HOOKER (Cont'd)

proper medical attention and all that. Jesus, you finally get me to the point where I can stand ya, and then I find out the whole thing has been a fake. Now you want me to take you places. I wouldn't be much of a guy if I went for that.

VERONICA

I didn't say you'd be much. I said you'd be enough for me. Besides, the whole thing wasn't a fake.

HOOKER

Oh yeah, which parts?

VERONICA

What do ya think, ya jerk? I don't even know what I got to offer, but you got the best of it.

Hooker looks at her a second, wondering if she really means it.

HOOKER

I can't believe a thing you say any more, Sheridan. You haven't been straight with me one time since I met you.

Veronica pulls out Hooker's money and throws it at him.

VERONICA

All right, here's your goddamn money. You don't deserve me anyway.

HOOKER

(picking it up
and heading for
the door)

Sorry, lady, I don't mind you doin' your job, but I don't like bein' played for a fool.

VERONICA

So long, Hooker. Thanks for the dance.

Hooker nods and walks on out.

As Hooker gets to the end of the car, he comes face to face with Gondorff counting a large amount of money into Kelley's hands.

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237

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237

KELLEY

Hey, kid -- you had me worried you
wouldn't make it through the first
two rounds!

(to Gondorff)

Thanks, Mr. Gondorff.

Kelley jumps off the train, stuffing the money into his pockets.
Hooker looks at Gondorff, who shrugs and grins sheepishly.
Hooker shakes his head helplessly and begins to laugh.

238

EXT. TRAIN

238

Hooker steps off the train as it starts to pull out. The cars
go slowly past him as he heads back toward the terminal, his
hands deep down in his pockets, his mood turning serious.
Just as the last car is about to go past him, he grabs the
railing and swings himself back up on the train, a burgeoning
smile on his face. Helen Forrest's "Takin' A Chance On Love"
comes up on the soundtrack and we hold on the train as it
recedes into the distance.

'I thought the cards were a frame up,
I never would try.
But now I'm taking the game up.
And the ace of hearts is high.

Things are mending now.
I see a rainbow blending now.
We'll have our happy ending now.
Takin' A Chance On Love.'

FADE OUT

THE END