

**MAN ON FIRE**

By

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Based on the novel by  
A. J. Quinnell

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"Man On Fire"

EXT. PRIVATE SCHOOL - MILAN - DAY

A chill in the air. Expensive cars line a suburban street as a school bell rings. A moment later the CHILDREN are free, spilling down the steps to those waiting outside.

One eight-year-old boy, PEPINO, heads for the welcoming arms of his NANNY. She strokes his cheek.

NANNY

Such a golden boy.

She takes his hand and starts down the street.

From out of nowhere, a HEAVYSET MAN steps up, takes Pepino's other hand. As the Nanny reacts in confusion...

A SECOND MAN comes alongside her, jams a gun into her ribs. As she gasps, lets go of Pepino's hand...

SECOND

Does he have a favorite bedtime story?

The second man steps away laughing. Heavysset is already trundling Pepino into the back of a BLUE MERCEDES.

As the second man hops in beside the driver...

The nanny's shock and pain has worn off, replaced with desperation. Screaming the boy's name, she runs alongside the Mercedes, grabs the rear door handle...

Parents, teachers, drivers watch in horror as the Mercedes tears a left turn and the nanny is flung brutally along the pavement.

The shocked stillness that follows is replaced by...

CUT TO:

EXT. FERRY - BOUND - SUNSET

CHILDREN LAUGHING. Chasing a soccer ball across the deck. One kick a bit too exuberant. The ball sails over the rail. CREASY leans there, looks down as it splashes into the wake.

CREASY has a stillness, an air of isolation. He looks over at the crestfallen boy alongside him, then back out to sea.

CREASY  
 (softly)  
 That's life. Get used to it.

Creasy continues staring off the stern, toward the past, the future holding little interest.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - PENSIONE SPLENDIDE - NIGHT

GUIDO ARRELLIO and a WOMAN cum at roughly the same time. On top, the woman pulls back, traces a long scar from the nape of his neck down to nearly his navel.

WOMAN  
 What's this one?

GUIDO  
 That's the road from Beirut to the al Biqa Valley.

She smiles, then sighs.

WOMAN  
 I have to go. My husband will start to worry.

Guido reaches up, tugs on her nose.

GUIDO  
 Wouldn't want that.

She slips away, gathers clothes discarded in the moonlight. Guido watches as she pulls a smock over her head, slips into her sandals.

She leans down, kisses him on the forehead. Only a Neapolitan girl has a face like this.

GUIDO  
 When?

WOMAN  
 Monday... Maybe Sunday, after confession.

He gives her a smile and she's out the door.

Guido stretches with satisfaction, then sighs at the expanse of empty bed alongside him. A beat and then...

She is back through the doorway, breathless.

WOMAN

On the terrace. There's a man  
out there.

Guido rolls to his feet, pulls on a pair of pants even as  
he slides a Beretta out from between the mattresses.

GUIDO

Stay here.

And as Guido pads silently out the door...

CUT TO:

EXT. TERRACE - PENSIONE SPLENDIDE - NIGHT

Moonlight. A warship at anchor in the bay below, a large  
liner lit up stem to stern. Naples.

But on the terrace... A puff of smoke. A man sitting  
silhouetted in a chair. Menacing for a moment. Guido  
moves cautiously forward. Then:

GUIDO

(realizes)

Creasy?

CREASY

Did I interrupt something?

Guido smiles, calls back over his shoulder.

GUIDO

Go home, pretty one! Until  
Sunday!

As footsteps trail away, Guido sets the Beretta on a table.  
Creasy rises and the two men embrace. Warmly.

GUIDO

What are you doing here?

CREASY

(shrugs)

Impulse.

GUIDO

You did you something on impulse?

CREASY

Everything happens once if you  
live long enough.

Guido smiles at his friend's familiar attitude.

GUIDO  
How long can you stay?

CREASY  
I have no plans, Gui, Nothing  
on. I just wanted to see you,  
how you were.

Guido studies his friend a beat, just seeing the cracks  
that weren't there last time they met.

GUIDO  
That's good. It's been too long.

CREASY  
Hey, you got anything to drink  
around here?

It's asked with just a hint of urgency.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - PENSIONE SPLENDIDE - DAY

The espresso machine steams and sputters as the lunch shift  
is under full swing. Guido carries several plates, dodges  
a WAITER as he heads out onto...

EXT. THE TERRACE - DAY

He sets them down for an animated COUPLE, his eyes  
elsewhere as he speaks to them.

CREASY - GUIDO'S POV

Sits at the far table, staring out at the bay.

We push slowly in on him. The sound of military radio  
chatter bleeds in, automatic weapon fire, men shouting to  
each other, screaming...

And then Guido sits down, joining Creasy, who isn't  
startled. It isn't delayed stress syndrome.

GUIDO  
Have you been working?

CREASY  
Not for eight months. I just  
came from Marseilles via  
Corsica, looking around, but  
nothing seemed... interesting.

Guido notes the glass of scotch in his friend's hand. A hand mottled by old burn marks.

GUIDO

So why not retire? You still have the first dollar you ever earned.

CREASY

I never thought of the money as being earned. Hmm.

And then Creasy looks back out at the bay, eyes flat, nearly lifeless. Out of the blue:

CREASY

I think I've lived enough, maybe too much. I'm sick of it.

And Guido looks very concerned for his friend.

CUT TO:

INT. PINTA'S BEDROOM - LAKE COMO VILLA - NIGHT

Eleven-year-old PINTA BALLETTTO kneels by the window, staring out at the lake beyond a bit like Creasy stares at the Bay of Naples. Only, Pinta's eyes are brimming with life. She folds her hands, closes her eyes, prays...

PINTA

Dear God. I do not ask for health. Or wealth. People ask you so often that you can't have any left. Give me God what you still have. Give me what no one else asks for. Amen.

Pinta opens her eyes. A last look at the stillness of the lake, then she grabs a battered old TEDDY BEAR and climbs into bed. Pulling the covers up under her chin, she listens. To the voices drifting up from below...

ETTORE'S VOICE

Your spending will ruin us!

RIKA'S VOICE

You expect me to alter my lifestyle because of a few difficulties!?

ETTORE'S VOICE

Difficulties?! It's bankruptcy!  
Do you know how in debt we are?

INT. SITTING ROOM - BALLETO VILLA - LAKE COMO - NIGHT

ETTORE BALLETO is at his wit's end. He watches as his wife strides away from him.

RIKA stops at the French windows. The lights of the Hotel Villa D'Este shimmer across the way. Just the sight of her back reveals a pitch perfect petulance.

RIKA

A man's worth can be judged by  
what he has or what he owes.  
Only the amount matters.

ETTORE

Rika, please...

He looks at a painting propped on an easel.

ETTORE

You must cut down on your  
extravagances.

RIKA

But it's a Klee.

She turns: a woman so beautiful it nearly hurts to look at her. She softens, plays him like Chinese Checkers.

RIKA

Don't you like it? I bought it  
for you, caro.

And his defenses begin to crumble.

ETTORE

It's very fine...

RIKA

I'm only asking for one thing.  
And it's not an extravagance.  
It's not even for me; it's for  
our daughter.

ETTORE

What now? Another horse?

RIKA

Protection.

ETTORE

What are you talking about?

RIKA

A bodyguard.

ETTORE

Rika, we've been through this.

RIKA

My child's safety is at stake.  
Look what happened to the  
Macchetti child. Right outside,  
in broad daylight. In Milan!

ETTORE

Nobody is going to kidnap Pinta.  
These people are professionals.  
They don't waste their time  
taking children whose fathers  
are virtually bankrupt.

RIKA

How could they know? We live as  
well as the Macchetti's.

ETTORE

They know. Rika, there are many  
families in Milan richer than we  
are. Their children don't have  
bodyguards.

RIKA

They are not my children. Do you  
put a price on Pinta's safety?

Ettore sighs, doesn't know what to say.

RIKA

The Arredos, the Lovatellis,  
even the Turellas have hired  
bodyguards for their children.

And then Ettore knows. It's a social concern.

RIKA

You look tired, caro.

ETTORE

I am.

She steps over, kisses him, presses her forehead to his.

RIKA

Will you talk to Vico? He knows  
about these things. Let him  
worry about it for us?

He doesn't answer. She kisses his eyes, his cheeks,  
nuzzles into him as he pulls her close.



RIKA  
Will you talk to Vico?

ETTORE  
Yes, I'll talk to Vico.

CUT TO:

INT. GRANELLI'S - MILAN - DAY

The Italians have made a sport out of dressing up. Even for lunch. Ettore and his lawyer VICO MANSUTTI eat lunch in the semiprivacy of an alcove table. Vico is smooth, well heeled, well connected and well oiled. In that order.

VICO  
Keeping up with the Joneses.

ETTORE  
What?

VICO  
That's what the Americans call it.

ETTORE  
They have no idea. Not till they've lived in Milan for six or seven generations.

VICO  
Social status or no, kidnapping has become big business. It's highly organized. The big boys control it.

ETTORE  
(nodding)  
The Mafia.

VICO  
Such a melodramatic word. It conjures Sicilian peasants stealing olive oil.

Vico beheads two cigars, passes one to Ettore.

VICO  
Some families are taking out ransom insurance with Lloyd's of London. The premium on a ten million euro policy is two hundred thousand a year.

ETTORE

I don't have it. And why should I insure against a kidnapping that isn't going to happen?

VICO

Really good bodyguards are hard to find. And the price is rising. One hundred twenty thousand euros a year..

Ettore just gives Vico a look. Vico lights his cigar.

VICO

Of course, the threat is minimum. He needn't be the best. Can you manage twelve thousand?

ETTORE

For a year?

VICO

You hire someone cheap. For a few months. Then fire him for incompetence. The important thing is Pinta will return to school...

Ettore finally follows the logic.

ETTORE

And Rika will be able to save face.

VICO

Her beauty clouds your thinking sometimes.

ETTORE

Where can I locate such a man?

VICO

First you pay for this excellent lunch. Then we'll go to my office where I have the name of an agency down in Rome.

As Ettore puffs his cigar in satisfaction...

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - PENSIONE SPLENDIDE - NAPLES - DAY

In contrast to lunch at Granelli's. After the lunch rush. Guido sits across from Creasy.

GUIDO

A bodyguard.

Creasy looks at him blankly.

GUIDO

Your Italian's good enough. You look the part. A bodyguard.

CREASY

You're crazy. In my state I couldn't guard a corpse.

GUIDO

It's rich people. It's just for show. Nothing's going to happen.

CREASY

People would hire a complete has-been? A drunk?

GUIDO

Well, you'd have to keep it under control.

CREASY

And what if, just say, there was a kidnap attempt?

GUIDO

You do your best. They won't be paying you enough to perform miracles.

Creasy just shakes his head.

GUIDO

It's not exactly a scam. Even at half speed you're pretty damn good.

CREASY

A bodyguard has to be close to someone all the time. I'm not good at that. You know it.

GUIDO

So you'll be the silent type. People will appreciate that. Just go to the agency. Have a talk with them.

Creasy grumbles to himself, looks out the window.

GUIDO

I've watched you sit out on my terrace for two weeks, Creasy. Like you're waiting to die.

Guido takes his friend by the arm. Creasy looks back over.

GUIDO

Take a job. Breathe some air. Then decide if you want to live or not.

Deciding, Creasy shakes his head, incredulous.

CREASY

A goddamn bodyguard... Okay.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD TO COMO - DAY

A deep blue Mercedes maneuvers the turns.

INT. MERCEDES - DAY

Creasy at the wheel. Ettore sits in the back. Studying.

ETTORE

You drive easily. Smoothly.

Creasy doesn't answer, just glances at his potential employer in the rear view.

ETTORE

Did they provide you with a gun?

CREASY

Yes.

ETTORE

Show me, please.

Creasy takes his right hand of the wheel, reaches under his jacket and passes back a PISTOL.

ETTORE

What is it?

CREASY

Nine millimeter. A Beretta.

ETTORE

Have you used this type before?

Creasy just nods. Doesn't like the show and tell.

ETTORE

Is it loaded?

CREASY

It's loaded.

Ettore hands back the gun.

ETTORE

You will meet my wife first.  
She would like it if you are  
presentable, polite and  
respectful. You'll be the fifth  
man she's seen this week.

They drive on a few silent moments.

CREASY

Think I got a shot?

Ettore shrugs.

ETTORE

Your resume is impressive.  
Eight years in the Army. Two in  
the Legion. Mercenary work. I  
shouldn't be able to afford you  
in my current state. What's the  
catch?

CREASY

(honest)

I drink.

ETTORE

How does it affect you?

CREASY

My coordination. Reaction time.  
If top professionals try to  
kidnap your daughter, the  
service will be on par with the  
pay.

ETTORE

And what if amateurs try it?

CREASY

I'll probably kill them. Is it  
likely?

ETTORE

No. And no one is to know of your drinking problem. That includes my wife.

As they pull up to the Balletto's impressive residence...

CUT TO:

INT. SITTING ROOM - BALLETTTO VILLA - LAKE COMO - NIGHT

Where Rika shakes Creasy's hand.

RIKA

Would you like a drink?

Creasy doesn't hesitate, doesn't look at Ettore and has no irony in his answer.

CREASY

Thank you. Scotch and a little water.

She steps to the bar to make it.

RIKA

You're American, Mr. Creasy?

CREASY

Yes.

CREASY - SOMEONE'S POV

Slightly sinister. Watching from the frame of the door.

RIKA

You've done much of this work before?

CREASY

Never.

Ettore sells, covers for Creasy's reticence.

ETTORE

He has experience in related work. A great deal of it.

And then, somehow, Creasy is aware of being watched. His eyes flicker over, just in time to see...

PINTA

Crouched low. In the doorway. She manages a little finger wave, then disappears around the corner.

SITTING ROOM

Creasy frowns. Rika steps over with Creasy's scotch.

CREASY

Thank you.

She makes a point of looking into his eyes. Creasy looks back into hers with complete indifference, something she has not experienced even from dying men.

She abruptly turns away. Confused for a moment. Finally:

RIKA

Pinta!

A few moments and Pinta arrives. Cool Hand Pinta.

PINTA

Yes, mama?

RIKA

This is Mr. Creasy.

Pinta walks over and very formally holds out her hand. Creasy shakes it.

RIKA

Why don't you show Mr. Creasy to his room?

Ettore reacts. Creasy got the job.

PINTA

This way, Mr. Creasy.

What an actress. As he follows her out...

RIKA

I think it's nice he's American. It's different.

ETTORE

It's fantastic.

RIKA

You realize that you've brought a killer into the house.

Ettore is stopped short by that one.

RIKA

But he dresses well, like a European.

She steps over and kisses her husband on the cheek.

RIKA

Thank you. I feel better now.

CUT TO:

INT. STAIRWAY - DAY

Pinta leads the way. All enthusiasm away from her parents.

PINTA

You're all the way at the top of the house. You can keep us all safe from up here.

Creasy follows her into...

CREASY'S ROOM

Not like downstairs, but comfortable enough.

PINTA

We fixed the room up two weeks ago. Mama and I. We've been waiting for someone to fill it.

Creasy takes a stroll around it, ignoring her.

PINTA

You've got a stereo if you like music. I like music very much.

Creasy looks out a window. A goddamn bodyguard...

PINTA

You'll need to drive me to school in the morning and pick me up in the afternoon. In between you can take Mama shopping and to lunch. Does that sound alright, Mr. Creasy?

Finally Creasy turns, looks at her hard.

CREASY

Creasy. Just call me Creasy.

PINTA

(big grin)

Creasy...

And then, walking on air, she's out the door.

CUT TO:



A BOTTLE OF SCOTCH

Creasy's fingers break the seal, unscrew the cap.

Pouring into a glass, a double... triple... wait, what do you call a full glass of scotch?

He ejects the shell from the breach of the 9mm, smoothly catches it on the back of his hand. He holds the hand flat, watches it tremble.

He snatches the bullet from the air to his palm. Ejecting the clip, he starts to oil the trigger mechanism.

CUT TO:

INT. PINTA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rika sits on the foot of the bed. First she tucks in a BATTERED TEDDY BEAR, then Pinta.

RIKA

School tomorrow, caro.

Pinta smiles, happy at the thought.

PINTA

I like him, Mama.

RIKA

You do?

PINTA

He's like a great big bear.  
(a secret smile)  
Creasy bear...

Rika smiles, kisses her goodnight. As she's about out the door.

PINTA

There's something about him.

Rika turns, looks back at her daughter.

PINTA

I think he's been sick. He's alright now, but I think he's been very, very sick.

RIKA

Well, think about going to sleep. Good night.

CUT TO:

## 9MM MAGAZINE

Creasy tests the spring, begins loading in the bullets.  
The clip drops down with those already loaded.

Another glass of scotch is poured.

Creasy's hands oil the holster. The Beretta is slipped in.  
The holster is hung over the corner post of the bed.

A map is flattened. Creasy's finger traces various routes,  
pencils then in. From the house to Pinta's school.

CUT TO:

INT. RIKA & ETTORE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Spent, glistened in sweat, the couple lay side by side.

RIKA  
She likes him.

ETTORE  
Hmm?

RIKA  
Creasy. Pinta likes him.

ETTORE  
Pinta loves school. She'd like  
Count Dracula if he took her  
back there.

Rika just smiles, knows her daughter better.

CUT TO:

BEDSIDE TABLE

The empty scotch glass is set down. Something ominously  
sober about it.

CUT TO:

INT. MERCEDES - DAY

Creasy sits grimly behind the wheel. Pinta exuberant  
beside him. Traveling route number one from home base to  
school. Pinta looks at Creasy's hands on the wheel. The  
back of the right one is swirled with scars.

PINTA  
Where are you from, Creasy?

CREASY  
The United States.

PINTA  
I know. But which state?

CREASY  
No state in particular.

Pinta frowns; this is going to take some work.

PINTA  
Is there a state you've spent  
the most time in? Minnesota?

CREASY  
I'm working right now, Pinta.

PINTA  
You can drive and talk at the  
same time, can't you?

CREASY  
No. I'm looking for potential.

PINTA  
Potential? I don't understand.

CREASY  
Places where the road bends,  
places away from buildings,  
places where the traffic thins  
out. But you don't have to  
understand. I do. So no  
talking. Understand?

PINTA  
You work for me, Creasy. I can  
order you to talk to me.

CREASY  
I work for your parents. Now  
zip it.

PINTA  
Zip it? What do you mean?

CREASY  
Your mouth.

Creasy demonstrates the motion over his own mouth. Pinta smiles, 'zips'. As they turn, she watches his right hand on the wheel, then looks back to him. All curiosity.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL GATES - MILAN - DAY

Creasy pulls the Mercedes up out front. He notes the high, spike-topped walls, the heavy metal gates.

PINTA

Wait here.

Pinta hops out. Creasy watches as she pulls a metal handle set in the wall. A shutter opens at eye level. Pinta carries on a brief conversation into it and a moment later the gate is being slowly pushed open by an old WATCHMAN.

Pinta walks through, motions Creasy to follow her. He drives, looks ahead at a big, rambling, ivy-clad building set in spacious grounds.

Creasy parks, gets out of the car. He looks around, appraising the lay of the land.

PINTA

Isn't it beautiful? There's a running track in the back.

They both look over as Pinta's name is called. An elderly gray-haired WOMAN walks over from the entrance. Pinta runs over, kisses her warmly on both cheeks, then leads her toward Creasy.

PINTA

This is Signora Deluca, the headmistress.

(to woman; proudly)

This is Creasy, my bodyguard.

SIGNORA DELUCA

(correcting Pinta)

Mr. Creasy.

PINTA

No, Signora, he told me just to call him Creasy.

Signora Deluca shakes his hand.

PINTA

He's American. From no state in particular.

SIGNORA DELUCA

You must look after our Pinta.

We're so happy to have her back

in school. Run along now, Pinta.

Pinta waves goodbye, bounds away. They watch her go a beat.

## SIGNORA DELUCA

It's a terrible business. I've had two of my children taken. Not from here, of course, and both returned unharmed, still... No offense, Mr. Creasy, but I'm sorry that your profession needs to exist.

## CREASY

So am I, Signora.

She smiles sadly, heads on her way. Leaving Creasy quite alone in the courtyard. As he looks about...

CUT TO:

## EXT. PIAZZA CAFE - MILAN - DAY

Creasy sits alone at a table, staring out at the piazza, eyes blank. Push in on him. Soldiers whisper. "The sniper's up there." "Where?" "There." "Send someone up." "Get Creasy..." A rifle reports. Again. Again. Women screaming, children crying. Then automatic weapon fire.

## CREASY - POV FROM BEHIND

As someone comes up behind him. Stealthily, winding between table. Almost at him...

## CREASY

Sensing it. Coming alive. Knocking the table over as he rises, wheels, Beretta halfway out of his jacket.

Staring at a wide-eyed WAITER.

Creasy mumbles an apology, throws some bills on the table. Walks away.

CUT TO:

## EXT. HIGH STREET - MILAN - DAY

Creasy striding numbly, the frivolous shoppers like another species as he moves through them. Might as well wear a shark fin. He spots something: a MUSIC STORE.

## INT. MUSIC STORE - MILAN - DAY

Creasy finds the section he's looking for, searches a rack. There! As he pulls a CD, we are not privy to what it is.

CUT TO:

EXT. COURTYARD - PINTA'S SCHOOL - DAY

Creasy waits with the other drivers, bodyguards, nannies and the odd parent or two. The doors open and the children pour out.

Pinta exits, a huge grin on her face as she spots Creasy. The frown on his face might as well be chiseled in marble.

CUT TO:

INT. MERCEDES - ROLLING - DAY

Pinta rides shotgun alongside Creasy. She looks out the window, realizes...

PINTA

We're taking a different way home.

CREASY

That's right.

Pinta thinks about it, realizes what he's doing, smiles.

PINTA

I understand.

No answer from Creasy. It's hard not to feel foolish around this kid.

PINTA

Did you like school, Creasy?

CREASY

No.

PINTA

Not at all?

CREASY

No.

PINTA

But why not?

Creasy's hoping she'll just shut up.

PINTA

Hmmm?

CREASY

It wasn't a school like yours and there was no one like Signora Deluca.

PINTA  
So you were unhappy?

CREASY  
Being unhappy is a state of  
mind. I never thought about it.

PINTA  
Oh...

Pinta watches Creasy a moment, trying to figure a way in.  
She looks at his scarred right hand on the wheel.

Then, as she reaches out...

PINTA  
What happened to...

And touches it.

PINTA  
...your hand?

Pinta startled as he jerks it away.

CREASY  
(sharply)  
Don't interfere when I'm driving!

When he speaks again he's colder; he's decided something.

CREASY  
No more questions. I'm not paid  
to be your friend. I'm paid to  
protect you. That's all.

They drive on in silence. Creasy finally glances over.  
Pinta stares straight ahead, her chin quivering.

CREASY  
(exasperated)  
And don't start crying.

PINTA  
I'm not crying.

But she is. As Creasy stops at a red light...

CREASY  
Look, this is the way I am. I  
don't like questions. I --

And she's out the door.

CREASY

Shit.

Creasy shoulders open his door, bolts out.

INTERSECTION

Creasy has barely straightened himself and Pinta is already getting back in the car. This time in the backseat.

Creasy sighs. The light goes green. Scooters whine away and horns blare.

MERCEDES

Creasy sits back behind the wheel.

PINTA

You can take me home now, Mr.  
Creasy.

Creasy looks back at her, but she just stares straight ahead. As the chorus of horns continues...

Creasy resumes driving.

CUT TO:

INT. CREASY'S ROOM - SUNSET

Creasy sits in a chair in the twilight, a glass of scotch in his hand. A knock at the door.

CREASY

Come in.

The door opens. It's Rika.

RIKA

Mr. Creasy, I wanted to make sure  
you have everything you need.

CREASY

I have everything.

RIKA

Is the food alright? Maria  
tells me that you didn't eat.

CREASY

The food is excellent.  
Sometimes I don't eat.



RIKA

Do you mind if I talk to you for a moment?

He shakes his head. Rika glides into the room like a dancer, sits down at the foot of the bed.

RIKA

How are you getting along with Pinta?

CREASY

We'll be fine once she realizes I'm not a new toy.

RIKA

(smiles)

Yes, she told me. Do you have children, Mr. Creasy?

CREASY

No.

RIKA

You should know they're tenacious when they want something. And Pinta wants to be friends.

CREASY

You're paying me to protect her, not amuse her. Yes?

A beat and then Rika nods.

CREASY

Look. Maybe this isn't going to work. Maybe you should ask your husband to hire someone... more sociable.

RIKA

No, you're right. You were hired to protect her, nothing more. I'm confident you'll do that.

Rika stands, is about to start out when she sees his gun and holster hanging from the corner of the bed. It gives her pause.

RIKA

I didn't realize you had a gun. I know that's a silly thing to say.

Creasy doesn't answer, just watches her.

RIKA

It makes it all seem so serious.

CREASY

It is serious, Mrs. Balletto.

RIKA

Please, it's Rika. I'll be coming with you tomorrow. I have lunch with friends.

Creasy just nods, has nothing more to say.

RIKA

It would have been better if we had more children. She's quite lonely, but...

Finally, Rika just shrugs and disappears out the door. Creasy slugs down a gulp of scotch.

CUT TO:

INT. PINTA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Pinta pulls up her blankets, pulls over her battered teddy bear, says her prayer.

PINTA

Give me God what you still have.  
Give me what no one else asks  
for.

Then, she listens as Linda Ronstadt's "Blue Bayou" starts to drift through the open window, down from the room above.

RONSTADT

"I'm going back someday, come  
what may, to Blue Bayou..."

INT. CREASY'S ROOM - NIGHT

He stands in the dark, in front of the glow of the stereo. The empty bag from the record store. This is the CD he bought. As the song ends, Creasy hits the back-up button. As "Blue Bayou" begins again...

INT. PINTA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Pinta's eyes drop as she falls asleep. Only the bears are awake now.

CUT TO:

INT. CREASY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Creasy sits in the dark. 'Blue Bayou' plays again, softly now, just winding down in fact. Creasy does not look right. In fact, he looks lost.

LINDA RONSTADT

Well I'll never be blue, my dreams  
come true, on Blue Bayou...

As the song ends, Creasy stands strides to the head of the bed. He takes the 9mm out of its holster.

Without hesitation, he wraps his left hand around the barrel and holds it against his forehead.

With his right thumb, he pulls the trigger. CLICK. He doesn't die. Confusion creeps in, takes over.

Creasy lowers the gun.

Creasy ejects the shell, catches it, rolls it between his thumb and forefinger. He should be dead...

But he isn't.

CUT TO:

INT. GUIDO'S BEDROOM - NAPLES - NIGHT

The phone rings. A woman's hand reaches blindly, finally finds it, passes it still ringing to...

A bleary Guido.

GUIDO

Pronto... Creasy? Where are  
you? What's wrong? What?

CUT TO:

EXT. BALLETTO HOUSE - NIGHT

Creasy stands at the edge of the lake, the house dark behind him. On his cell phone.

CREASY

I said, have you ever had a nine  
millimeter round that just  
didn't go off?

INTERCUT THE FOLLOWING:

GUIDO

You mean a misfire?

CREASY

I mean nothing. The hammer came down and nothing happened.

GUIDO

I have heard of it. It's never happened to me. Did it happen to you?

CREASY

Yeah...

Creasy is troubled about it all to say the least.

GUIDO

It's like you say: a bullet always tells the truth. When did it happen?

CREASY

Just a few minutes ago.

GUIDO

What were you shooting at?

Creasy doesn't answer. He holds the bullet up, looks at it.

GUIDO

(sits up; concerned)

Creasy? What were you shooting at?

CREASY

A target. Sorry I woke you.

Creasy clicks off the phone. He takes out his wallet, opens it. Setting the bullet in the crease, he closes it again, sticks it back in his pocket.

He starts back toward the house, but stops short again.

There she is. Pinta. Standing in the window of her bedroom. She's been watching him.

It's like Creasy seeing her for the first time. And she's been watching him forever. No easy answer for it. They're connected somehow.

CUT TO:

INT. MERCEDES - ROLLING - DAY

Silent Creasy driving. Rika and Pinta in the back. Creasy steals a look in the mirror. Pinta stares straight ahead. But when Creasy looks away, Pinta steals a look at him.

They pull up to the gates of the school.

Pinta kisses her mother on the cheek.

PINTA

Ciao, Mama.

But as Pinta's about to exit, Creasy sees that the gate, which was locked the day before, is slightly ajar.

CREASY

Stay where you are.

His voice freezes her. Mother and daughter watch as Creasy gets out, goes to the gate. As Creasy pushes the gate back further, takes a look in, the old security guard appears. He gives Creasy an irritated look.

Creasy turns, motions that all's well.

Pinta gets out, walks past him without a word.

MERCEDES

Creasy gets back in, starts away.

RIKA

You're careful.

CREASY

Habit. That gate is supposed to be locked.

RIKA

I talked to Pinta. She understands. She won't bother you anymore.

Creasy just nods, drives.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRANELLI'S - MILAN - DAY

Creasy waits in the street, standing alongside the Mercedes. He checks his watch, looks around. The minutes do not pass quickly.

He looks over as the restaurant door opens and Rika exits accompanied by Vico Mansutti and his wife GINA.

RIKA

(sees him)

Creasy!

(stepping over)  
I like you to meet Vico and Gina  
Mansutti.

Creasy nods. The Mansuttis study him with interest.

VICO  
So you're the bodyguard.

Creasy nods again.

VICO  
You used to be, what do they  
call it, a soldier of fortune?

Vico doesn't quite want to hide the disdain in his voice.

Creasy nods a final time, lets his eyes drift into their  
1000 yard stare.

GINA  
(giggles)  
Does he talk?

As Rika gives her a dirty look...

VICO  
I only know because I read your  
resume when Ettore hired you.

Not even a nod from Creasy this time. Just a blankness.  
Rika kisses Vico on the cheek.

RIKA  
Vico, thank you for the lovely  
lunch. I promise not to let  
Gina spend too much.

As she heads for the car, Creasy is there to open the door.

MERCEDES

Creasy gets behind the wheel. Pulls into traffic. As he  
goes, he checks the rear view mirror. Vico remains  
standing on the curb watching the car pull away. Something  
odd about it all.

CUT TO:

EXT. COURTYARD - PINTA'S SCHOOL - DAY

As Pinta appears, Creasy opens the back door for her.  
Pinta carries some books held together with a strap. As  
she passes him, she holds them out. Creasy takes them.

As Pinta gets in back...

CREASY

Your mother's returning to the house with your father.

PINTA

Is she still shopping?

CREASY

Yes.

PINTA

She spends too much money.

That said, Pinta looks off. Conversation over. As Creasy swings the back door shut.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - BALLETTTO VILLA - NIGHT

Creasy sits at the table with the old gardener BRUNO (we've seen him trimming hedges and such in earlier exteriors). As they finish their stracciatella, MARIA, the cook, brings the saltimbocca over.

Maria seems a bit on the grim side. As she continues to putter about the kitchen, Creasy remembers his manners.

CREASY

The food is excellent, Maria.  
You have a real talent.

Bruno grunts his agreement. Maria beams with pleasure.

MARIA

My pleasure, Creasy.

And then Pinta enters carrying a book.

PINTA

Do you know anything about Algebra, Maria?

MARIA

I know about tomatoes and olive oil. Your father would know.

PINTA

He has to go out.

Pinta looks to Bruno who responds with an embarrassed shrug. All that's left is Creasy. As she looks over, he lowers his head closer to his plate, continues eating.

Pinta waits a beat. Heaving a sigh, she exits. Creasy watches her go.

MARIA

She'll be as beautiful as her mother one day.

(scornful)

Algebra. A girl should be beautiful or know how to cook.

CUT TO:

INT. CREASY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Creasy sits in his chair drinking scotch. All alone needless to say.

From out the window, a WHISTLE, then again. Yet again.

Finally, Creasy stands goes to the window. He leans out, sees Pinta's window below his.

A long stick is held out the window. Holding on, we just see Pinta's hand. Another WHISTLE.

Creasy is curious. Finally, deciding against his better judgment, he WHISTLES in return.

~~Pinta sticks her head out, looks up. Oh, you... She ducks her head back inside, still holding the stick outside.~~

Creasy pulls back inside also. Hears Pinta whistle again. Shaking his head again, he looks back out.

CREASY

Hey... Pinta...

She looks up at him.

CREASY

What are you doing?

PINTA

Calling for a nightingale. They have a nest somewhere nearby. With babies. Can't you hear them?

CREASY

I don't think they'll land on the stick.

PINTA

It doesn't matter, I just like to hear them sing. Don't you?



Creasy listens a beat.

CREASY  
I never really noticed them.

PINTA  
There's lots of sounds out there.  
You have to keep your eyes open.

CREASY  
Your ears you mean.

PINTA  
Both. DO you want to help me  
whistle?

Creasy finally catches himself, shakes his head.

CREASY  
No. Sorry.

Creasy disappears. Pinta looks at the stick, smiles big  
before letting it drop to the ground.

PINTA  
I got you to talk, Creasy bear.

Blue Bayou plays. Pinta now listens to Creasy's sound.

RONSTADT  
"I feel so bad, I've got a  
worried mind, I'm so lonesome  
all the time, since I left my  
baby behind, on Blue Bayou."

CUT TO:

EXT. BALLETTTO VILLA - LAKE COMO - DAY

A DRIVER gets Ettore's and Rika's luggage into a car.  
They're on their way, kissing Pinta goodbye.

RIKA  
I'll call you from London, caro.

ETTORE  
Now off to school, Pinta.

Creasy waits quite a discreet distance away by the  
Mercedes. She steps over, stops to wave goodbye one last  
time, then gets in back. As Creasy shuts the door.

CUT TO:

INT. MERCEDES - COMO TO MILAN ROAD - DAY

Creasy drives, glances in the mirror at Pinta in the back seat. She wipes away a tear just as it forms.

CREASY

They'll be back in a week.

PINTA

They can stay for two weeks. I don't care.

She's got a toughness Creasy likes. As she looks out the window, he looks ahead.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - BALLETTTO VILLA - DAY

Creasy and Pinta eat at opposite ends of the table. Maria serves. No one speaks.

Suddenly old Bruno enters, quite excited.

BRUNO

I found it, Pinta. I found the nightingale nest.

She jumps to her feet, follows Bruno out the door. Creasy just forks in another mouthful of food.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDE YARD - BALLETTTO VILLA - DAY

Bruno points up. Pinta squints to see.

BRUNO

There... Behind the chimney.

One of the parents flies in.

PINTA

I see it! I see it!

Getting an idea, Pinta charges off. Shrugging to himself, Bruno heads back toward the kitchen.

CUT TO:

EXT. ATTIC WINDOW - BALLETTTO VILLA - DAY

Pinta pushes it open, climbs out onto the slope of the roof. This doesn't look like such a good idea. As she crosses, disappears over the peak.

## CHIMNEY

Pinta coming down the other slope, trying to get a look at the birds. She smiles as she spots the babies peeping over the edge of the nest.

Her smile goes as she slides along the slick moss covering this section of the roof.

Near the edge, she manages to stop. Whew!

A deep breath and she scrambles up a few feet. Then she slides again. This time right off the edge. She catches the rain gutter. Hangs there thirty feet above the ground.

Pinta looks about. Not good. As the gutter itself groans:

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - BALLETTTO VILLA - DAY

Where Creasy chews thoughtfully.

PINTA'S VOICE

CREASY!

He's on his feet, out the door in a heartbeat.

EXT. SIDE YARD - DAY

Creasy dashes around just as the gutter drops on one side. Pinta drops ten feet, jerks to a stop as the gutter stops, then drops the last twenty feet...

...landing in a hedge. Creasy dashes over.

CREASY

Pinta!

She's in a lot of pain, but moving her arms and head.

PINTA

It hurts, Creasy...

CREASY

Where?

She puts her hands to the left side of her ribs. Creasy carefully probes with his fingers. She winces.

CREASY

I don't think they're broken.  
Anywhere else?

PINTA

My ankle.

As Maria huffs and puffs her way up along with Bruno.

CREASY

I'm going to get you out, okay?

Pinta nods. Creasy eases his arms under, around her, lifts her out as gently as possible. She disappears in his arms.

PINTA

Oh, Creasy...

And she bursts into tears. Maria begins to cross herself.

CREASY

It's okay. She's just scared.

Creasy lays her in the grass. Maria cradles her head. Creasy feels her ankle.

CREASY

It's sprained. Not broken. But I'll take her to Como for an X-ray. Just to be safe.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LONDON - NIGHT

Rika on the phone. Fantastic in a black evening dress. London awaiting her out the window.

RIKA

You're sure she's alright?

Ettore enters from the bathroom, concern on his face.

RIKA

Okay, good, you're sure.

(to Ettore)

Just a bruise and a sprain.

She turns her back so Ettore can zip her dress up.

RIKA

Thank you, Creasy. Send her our love.

INT. STAIRCASE - BALLETO VILLA - NIGHT

Creasy makes his way up, enters...

## PINTA'S BEDROOM

Pinta in bed propped up by a pillow, teddy bear beside her.

CREASY

You okay?

She nods shyly. Creasy looks at the bear. An odd beat.

CREASY

Do you always sleep with him?

She nods again. Now he's doing all the talking.

CREASY

Does he have a name?

Pinta thinks just a beat, then shakes her head again.

CREASY

I spoke to your mother. They  
sends their love.

Pinta nods. Creasy stands there a beat, then heads for the door. Almost out, he looks back.

CREASY

Some bodyguard I turned out to  
be. Good night, Pinta.

He's halfway out.

PINTA

Creasy?

(he looks back)

Could you play the song?

CREASY

The song?

Pinta nods. Creasy is confused a moment, but when he sees her open window, he realizes.

CREASY

Blue Bayou. You got it.

He goes. As Pinta eases back with a sigh and a smile...

CUT TO:

EXT. MERCEDES - BALLETO HOUSE - DAY

Using crutches, Pinta hobbles down the front steps. Creasy opens the back door of the car for her. But when she gets there, she hesitates.

PINTA  
I think I'll sit in the front.  
There's more room for my foot.

Creasy nods. Of course. He takes her crutches, opens the front. As she scoots inside...

CUT TO:

INT. MERCEDES - ROLLING - DAY

Both of them up front. Pinta is happy to be there and Creasy doesn't seem to mind.

CREASY  
Did you sleep alright?

PINTA  
Yes.

She looks out the window so he won't see her smile.

CREASY  
How's the ankle? Can you put  
your weight on it?

PINTA  
It's not too bad. Will it take  
a long time before it's better?  
School sports day is in five  
weeks. I was going to run in  
the one hundred meters.

CREASY  
In a week you should be fine.

They drive on a few silent beats, until...

CREASY  
Are you fast?

PINTA  
(nods)  
Finishing but not starting. By  
the time I catch up, it's too  
late.

CREASY  
You need to practice.

Pinta looks at him hopefully, but Creasy catches himself.  
He's not going to coach a little girl. Finally...

PINTA  
I will.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - BALLETO VILLA - EVENING

Bruno, Maria and Creasy have been joined by Pinta. As Creasy places a fork of meat into his mouth...

PINTA

Creasy, what's a concubine?

Creasy opens his mouth, takes the fork of meat back out.

CREASY

Why do you ask?

PINTA

It was in a book at school.  
Concubine.

Maria and Bruno wait to see how he'll answer.

CREASY

Well, it's a sort of wife.

PINTA

But the Emperor of China had  
over one thousand of them! How  
can that be?

CREASY

In the West it's one wife for  
one husband, but different  
cultures have different rules.

Pinta seems to understand.

PINTA

It must be difficult having lots  
of wives.

CREASY

You feel sorry for the husband?

PINTA

Yes. Can you imagine my mother  
multiplied by a thousand?

Maria and Bruno burst out laughing. So funny that Creasy smiles. Pinta lights up at the sight. A huge victory.

PINTA

Creasy, you're smiling.

He reverts to a frown. Now Pinta bursts out laughing. And Creasy can't help but smile again.

CREASY

I guess I am.

MARIA

Does it hurt you to do so?

More laughs.

CUT TO:

A MAN'S HAND

Raises up against the blue sky. Like a kid playing guns.  
The finger pulls an imaginary trigger.

BALLETTO YARD

Pinta crouches in makeshift starting blocks.

CREASY

Bang!

Pinta takes off. Not to Creasy's satisfaction.

CREASY

No, no, come back. You don't  
flinch when a gun goes off; you  
react. You go. Don't listen  
for the sound; don't anticipate  
it. Concentrate on the sound  
itself.

PINTA

I don't understand.

CREASY

Don't worry. You will.

Creasy points at the blocks. As Pinta gets back in...

CUT TO:

INT. MERCEDES - ROLLING

On the way to school. Creasy changes lanes. He wasn't  
looking for it, but he notices in the rearview as a sedan  
two cars back changes lanes as well.

Pinta is unaware.

Creasy frowns, takes his next right. He watches in the  
mirror as the sedan continues straight through the  
intersection. False alarm.



As they continue, we become aware that Pinta is stealing looks at Creasy's right hand. She knows the answer must be serious, but she has to ask.

PINTA

Creasy, what happened to your hand?

He looks over at her a beat.

CREASY

You sure?

Pinta nods. Creasy checks the mirror, watches the road.

CREASY

A man asked me questions once. He smoked a lot. There was no ashtray.

That's it. End of explanation. Creasy continues watching the road. Pinta watches him. Her eyes filling with tears.

CREASY

Remember you asked me what state I was from?

PINTA

Yes.

CREASY

Where you're from isn't so much about geography; it's about events. Where you're from is what happened to you.

PINTA

Good things happen, too, Creasy.

CREASY

I know, Pinta, I know. I guess I just haven't been... so lucky.

She puts her hand out, pats his scarred hand.

CREASY

Until now...

CUT TO:

INT. ETTORE'S OFFICE - BALLETTTO VILLA - NIGHT

Ettore sits at his desk going over a list of figures. Pinta enters holding a school textbook.

PINTA  
Papa? My algebra.

ETTORE  
Not now, Pinta.

PINTA  
But I need your help.

ETTORE  
Everyone's predicament. I leave  
in the morning for business in  
Paris. I need to be ready.

His head goes back down. Finally, she turns and goes.

ETTORE  
(without looking up)  
And close the door.

CUT TO:

INT. 3RD FLOOR HALLWAY - BALLETTTO VILLA - NIGHT

Rika walking toward Creasy's room. As she moves to knock,  
she sees the door is ajar, hears voices. She peeks in.

Creasy and Pinta sit on the floor, pencils, papers and a  
book spread out before them.

CREASY  
If 16 equals Y times 4, how do  
you figure a value for Y?

PINTA  
Divide both sides by 4.  
(scribbles)  
Y equals 4.

CREASY  
Good. Enrico Fermi look out.

Rika smiles, knocks on the door as she opens it. Pinta and  
Creasy both look back over their shoulders.

RIKA  
Creasy. I was wondering if  
tomorrow, after you drop off  
Pinta, could you come back here  
to take me to the hairdresser's?

Creasy nods. They both continue to look at her. She gets  
the feeling she's interrupting.

RIKA  
 Alright, I'll leave you to your  
 math.

As she goes...

CUT TO:

EXT. MILAN STREET - DAY

A dull, overcast day. Milan traffic is heavy. Rika exits the hairdresser's. Looks... stunning.

She spots Creasy standing by the car about thirty meters away. As she starts toward him...

A flurry of movement across the street to her left.

TWO MEN jump from the side door of a DELIVERY VAN.

They run toward a MAN Rika has just passed. A man opening the door of a WHITE FIAT.

Rika freezes as the guns appear in their hands, the first shots are fired.

The man by the Fiat wheels, hand going under his jacket.

And then Creasy is there.

His arm around her waist, sweeping her off her feet. The next thing she knows she flattened on the ground in a shop doorway, Creasy on top of her. Shielding her.

She screams as the glass above and behind them shatters.

She sees the gun in Creasy's hands.

She hears the slamming of the van door, the screeching of tires.

CREASY  
 Don't move.

She watches as he rises, goes to the curb. The man is sprawled dead across the hood of the Fiat. Red blood on white metal. As Rika closes her eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. MERCEDES - STREET - DAY

Rika sits in the backseat. Through the window we can see Creasy wrap up his statement to the POLICE. Finally he gets in the car, starts to drive.

RIKA  
Animals! Shooting people down  
in the street.

The shoulders in front of her just shrug.

CREASY  
Police said it was a Mafia  
killing.

RIKA  
Animals. You had your gun, why  
didn't you shoot them?

CREASY  
Nothing to do with me. Or you.  
Besides, there was another one in  
the passenger side of the van  
with a sawed-off shotgun. If I'd  
started shooting his friends, he  
would've had me. And you.

Quiet a beat. Rika pulls a sliver of glass from her hair,  
looks from it to Creasy.

RIKA  
You were so fast, Creasy. So  
fast. I never saw you coming.

CUT TO:

EXT. ETTORE VILLA - DAY

The Mercedes parks. Creasy gets out, opens Rika's door.

RIKA  
I need a brandy. A big one.  
Come in with me.

CREASY  
Pinta.

RIKA  
Pinta?

CREASY  
It's quarter to four.

RIKA  
Oh, of course. Go.

Creasy gets behind the wheel. Rika just stands there,  
watching as he pulls away.

CUT TO:

INT. CREASY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

No music. No scotch being drunk. Creasy lies in bed barechested, the blanket halfway up his chest. He's awake staring up at the ceiling. Waiting.

Finally, a soft tap on the door. Creasy looks over, knows.

CREASY

Come in...

The door opens. Rika stands there in a simple nightdress, long and white. A large goblet of cognac cradled in her hand. Creasy doesn't say a word, just waits.

RIKA

Quite a day. I didn't call Paris to tell Ettore.

She steps in, closes the door behind her.

RIKA

The morning will be soon enough.

Silk whispers as she crosses the room, sits on the side of the bed. She offers the glass. Their fingers meet a moment as he takes it.

Rika watches Creasy as he takes a sip. He watches her back. She reaches out, traces a scar that runs along his shoulder, another along his ribs.

Finally, one that runs down his abdomen. Her hand hesitates as the scar disappears under the sheet.

With her free hand she takes the cognac, a sip. Then she sets it on the bedside table. And...

He pulls her down into a very hungry kiss.

Never leaving his eyes, Rika stands. The white silk slips to the floor and she stands there showing herself to him. Not evocative, not posing. Simply showing him the gift that only she can give.

His eyes leave hers to appreciate what he's being offered. When his eyes return to hers, she steps forward. Still standing, leaning over him. His hand sliding up around her waist.

She moves onto the bed. Her fingers in his mouth as she kisses the scar on his shoulder.

And we cut ahead to her eyes locked on his, as she lowers herself, his arms shaping the curve of her.

And we cut ahead as, holding her close, he twists, pulls her under him.

And finally her eyes close as she surrenders control. Senses lost. His mouth on her face, her lips.

A quickening of breath and movement. His grip tightening. She thrusts up, not wanting to be left behind. As his back arches, she finally opens her eyes...

Hanging on the headboard, a few inches above her, Creasy's gun. The dull blue grip, jutting from the holster. She cums, shuddering against him, against the juxtaposition.

DISSOLVE TO:

FIRST LIGHT

Just tracing outlines against the window of Creasy's room. He sleeps as Rika rises beside him.

She picks her nightdress up from the floor, looks down at his sleeping face. A slight shiver runs through her. She's frightened of him.

Then, something final in her face. She turns and leaves.

CUT TO:

PINTA

Her face set with half-disguised anger. Or is it jealousy? She sits beside Creasy in the Mercedes. Headed to school.

He looks over at her, starts to say something, then thinks better of it. Finally...

PINTA

You didn't play your music last night.

CREASY

Hmm?

PINTA

Your music. Blue Bayou. You didn't play it last night.

She's for sure pissed. Definitely aware and definitely jealous. Creasy's a bit amazed, not sure how to respond.

CREASY

I didn't need to play it last night.

Pinta thinks about it. Wants to understand. Wants to cut him some slack if she can.

PINTA

Why not?

CREASY

Well, there was another music last night. Different music.

Pinta considers this.

PINTA

Do you think my mother likes you?

CREASY

I think she's afraid of me. But not the same way most people are.

PINTA

I'm not afraid you, Creasy.

CREASY

I know you're not.

PINTA

Are you afraid of me?

Creasy looks at her, almost like he's deciding.

CREASY

I used to be. At first. But not anymore.

Her smile is huge.

PINTA

Good...

And everything is back to normal between them.

PINTA

Can we practice sprints this afternoon?

CREASY

Yes.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDE YARD - BALLETO VILLA - DAY

PINTA stands with her eyes closed. Creasy, standing beside her, brings TWO BLOCKS together with a WHACK!

Pinta flinches at the sound. She opens her eyes, shrugs an apology at him. Creasy frowns, shakes his head. Pinta closes her eyes again.

He starts walking around her.

CREASY

The gunshot holds no fear. Say it.

PINTA

The gunshot holds no fear.

CREASY

You're not afraid of the sound. You welcome the sound. The sound is what lets you go. The sound is what frees you to run. No flinching. The sound is a release. You are a prisoner in those blocks until you hear the sound.

Eyes closed, she's drifted off with his voice. And Creasy WHACKS them together right in front of her face.

And Pinta smiles at the sound.

And Creasy smiles at the sight.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDE YARD - DAY

WHACK! Pinta bolts from the blocks. Creasy shouting adjustments after her.

WHACK! WHACK! WHACK! Pinta charges. Pinta leans. Pinta digs in her heels.

Pinta crosses a makeshift finish line. Creasy checks his watch, claps.

Pinta raises her arms overhead, makes like Rocky across the back yard. Creasy shakes his head in amusement.

CUT TO:

EXT. WINDOW - BALLETTTO VILLA - DAY

Where Rika watches her daughter and Creasy in the yard. Sipping a cognac, she's hard to read. Maybe preoccupied is the safest word to use.

CUT TO:



EXT. COURTYARD - BALLETO HOUSE - DAY

As the Mercedes pulls in, another car is ahead of it. Ettore is home, a DRIVER pulls his LUGGAGE from the trunk.

Pinta hops out of the Mercedes.

PINTA

Papa!

He gives her a hug, a pat on the head.

As Creasy gets out of the car, Ettore fixes him with a look, strides purposefully over. He thrusts out his hand, shakes Creasy's.

ETTORE

I want to thank you, Creasy.  
For what you did for my wife.

Creasy wants to choke, but he just nods, looks past Ettore to Pinta who looks bemused. He doesn't even want to know exactly what she knows.

CUT TO:

INT. CREASY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Creasy's finger presses play. "Blue Bayou" begins. Plaintive, haunting. As he moves to sit in his chair, he passes the scotch bottle. It has gone unopened.

CUT TO:

INT. PINTA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Where the song drifts down. Pinta smiles, closes her eyes. Now she can go to sleep.

CUT TO:

INT. PINTA & ETTORE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Ettore makes love to his wife. But Rika looks past him, through the walls and floors to where that song plays.

LINDA RONSTADT

I'm going back someday, come  
what may, to Blue Bayou.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SCHOOL COURTYARD - DAY

School sports day. Race day. Creasy and Pinta exit the Mercedes, meet by the trunk. Pinta looks practically Olympian in her track suit. She watches wistfully as her fellow STUDENTS stream around the back with their PARENTS.

PINTA

What's so important in New York?

CREASY

Your father has business.

PINTA

Why today? And why'd she have to go with him?

Creasy shrugs. No comforting answer for her.

CREASY

Good luck. I'll be waiting here when you're done.

But she's shaking her head adamantly.

PINTA

You are coming with me. You are going to watch me.

Creasy starts to answer, but her determined grit stops him.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRACK & FIELD - SCHOOL GROUNDS - DAY

A big, striped MARQUEE has been set up alongside the track. Parents mill, socialize, drink cocktails. Richly dressed like only Italians can be.

Creasy looks completely out of place.

PINTA

Stand near the finish line.

Pinta starts away.

CREASY

Pinta.

She turns, looks back at him.

CREASY

The blocks.

PINTA

(smiles; knows)

I'm a prisoner in them. Until  
the gunshot sets me free.

Creasy nods. No smiles. He's serious now. As he watches  
her head off for the track, Signora Deluca steps up.

SIGNORA DELUCA

It's Mr. Creasy, isn't it?

And now Creasy is completely out of place.

CREASY

(apologetic)

Yes. Pinta's parents are in New  
York. I was going to wait in  
the courtyard, but...

She takes his arm, pats his hand.

SIGNORA DELUCA

No need to explain. Today you  
are her father.

As Creasy lets this sink in, looks out where Pinta is  
warming up.

SIGNORA DELUCA

Can we offer you a drink, Mr.  
Creasy?

CREASY

No. No I don't drink. Anymore.

Signora Deluca smiles, heads off to a group of parents.  
And we're left with Creasy. Confused Creasy. But clarity  
is creeping in. As the sky opens up around him...

CUT TO:

STARTER'S PISTOL

Pointed up at precisely 45 degrees. BAAAANGG!

STARTING BLOCKS

Eyes closed serenely, Pinta surges forward, leaving  
everyone behind.

CREASY

Sees it. Two feet in and he already knows she's won.

PINTA

Already ten meters in before she opens her eyes. Her head sweeping left and then right. Wherever her competitors are, it's somewhere behind her. And the future, everything ahead, is wide open.

And the finish line seems to come to her.

THE CROWD

Cheers enthusiastically as she crosses the line.

CREASY

Watches her, satisfied with what he's done.

But Pinta doesn't stop. She keeps right on running.

A beeline for Creasy. And the poor fucker doesn't even understand, until she's leaping the last few feet...

Into his arms.

PINTA

I won, Creasy! I won!

She loves him...

Creasy hugs her. He loves her back.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT - MILAN - DAY

Ettore and Rika on the moving escalator. Home from New York. They look down through the glass, see Creasy waiting for them below. And finally, Rika frowns.

RIKA

He must go, Ettore.

ETTORE

What? Who?

RIKA

Creasy.

ETTORE

Why? You were so pleased with him.

RIKA

Pinta is too fond of him.

(a beat)

She looks on him as a father.

ETTORE

That's ridiculous.

RIKA

It's not.

Ettore thinks about it, is almost apologetic.

ETTORE

I've just been so busy, Rika.  
And when I get home, all that  
childish chatter.

RIKA

He must go, *caro*. Immediately.

Ettore looks at her, wonders at her adamancy.

ETTORE

No. The three month trial ends  
in a week. I just won't confirm  
the position. That possibility  
was understood when I hired him.

Rika gives him a look. She wants it done today. But for  
once, Ettore is stronger than his wife.

ETTORE

I won't create bad feelings.  
And another week won't make a  
difference.

They come off the escalator, turn toward Creasy who waits  
unaware.

ETTORE

It will be a hard break.

RIKA

She's young. She'll get over it.

ETTORE

I wasn't thinking of Pinta.

As Rika looks over at Ettore, he's reaching out his hand,  
smiling big.

ETTORE

Creasy, how are you?

As they shake hands...

CUT TO:

INT. SITTING ROOM - BALLETO VILLA - DAY

PINTA

I don't want to play piano! I want to run!

RIKA

Unfortunately, Pinta, this is not a discussion. Mr. Lozzi is an eminent teacher. If he decides to accept you, you will play.

Pinta appraises her mother, knows she will not be moved on the subject. As the girl marches out of the room...

CUT TO:

INT. MERCEDES - ROLLING - DAY

Creasy driving. Pinta looking noble and brave. He looks over at her, smiles to himself.

Creasy swallows some air, forces it back up in a BELCH. Pinta looks over.

CREASY

That should do it.

PINTA

Do what?

CREASY

This teacher. His eminence. Plays in the symphony, teaches all the rich kids. Burp every few minutes, apologize, but keep doing it, you'll offend every sensibility he's got.

She thinks about this, suddenly calls forth a very respectable BELCH. Creasy nods.

CREASY

We'll be buying new track shoes in twenty-four hours.

CUT TO:

EXT. CORSO BUENOS AIRES - MILAN - DAY

A wide, tree-lined avenue. The Mercedes pulls up parks in the only open spot.

Creasy and Pinta get out. He walks her across the street, along the lawn in front of the apartment. They both look up at the sound of piano keys tinkling above.

Deciding something, Pinta reaches into her pocket, takes out a little velvet pouch. She holds it out to Creasy.

PINTA

This is for coaching me.

Creasy looks at her, takes the pouch from her hand. His thick fingers fumble with the delicate drawstring.

Pinta stills as she waits for his reaction. And Creasy pours a simple, but fine GOLD CRUCIFIX and chain into the palm of his hand.

PINTA

I bought it with my own money.  
I saved it.

Creasy is really affected, tries to hide it.

CREASY

I don't know if God will let me  
wear it.

Pinta rolls her eyes, takes it from his hand. As she puts the chain around his neck:

PINTA

It's for faith. Because you can  
never know for sure.

CREASY

Never?

PINTA

(shakes her head)  
You need faith.

Creasy looks at the cross, considers.

CREASY

Thank you, Pinta, it's beautiful.

PINTA

(smiles)

If you ever meet the devil,  
Creasy, you must hold it up in  
front of you.

CREASY

Speaking of the devil. You need  
to see the maestro.

She nods, goes up the steps to the door.. One last look  
back at Creasy, a resigned sigh.

CREASY

Play badly. Burp loudly.

PINTA

I will.

And she's gone.

DISSOLVE TO:

2ND FLOOR WINDOW

The curtains rustle in the breeze. The sound of badly  
played scales and then... a belch. And then...  
exclamations of shock, tinged with disgust.

MERCEDES

Creasy sits in the parked car. Waiting. Checking out the  
crucifix he still wears. He looks up as the apartment door  
bangs shut. Pinta exiting. She spots Creasy, a huge grin  
on her face. Failure. Creasy smiles back and everything  
slows down.

PINTA

Starts forward.

STREET

A BLACK SEDAN rounds the corner behind, then passes the  
Mercedes. Tires mount the curb as it rolls across grass.

CREASY

Realizing at once. His Beretta coming out of his jacket at  
the same time as he comes out of the Mercedes.

THE BLACK SEDAN

Slides to a stop in front of Pinta, blocking her path to  
Creasy. And as TWO MEN leap out from the backseat...



We slam back into real time!

CREASY  
Run, Pinta, run!

But she's rooted with fear.

And the men are almost on her. They both hold revolvers.

Creasy raises the Beretta overhead. 45 degrees. BANG!

And the sound frees her. Pinta runs!

Ducking under a flailing arm. Trying to reach her bodyguard.

Creasy walks forward, the Beretta now level.

As the THUG in the front passenger seat hops out, FIRING wildly.

Creasy plugs him twice, dead center in the chest.

And a SECOND SEDAN has hauled ass around the corner, a MAN spraying bullets from the driver's side window.

Pinta's head swivels at the sound, even as she clears the first sedan's rear quarter. Nothing between her and Creasy now. Unless you're counting bullets.

Creasy is hit in the side, returns fire. Three shots before the man is shot through the throat.

As the second sedan SLAMS into a parked car...

Creasy looks toward Pinta, then past her to her two pursuers, both their revolvers raised. He hesitates, no way to draw a clean line on them.

They don't wait. They fire.. Creasy's hit in the left shoulder. He takes a step and a lean to his right.

Clears a line to one of them. The Beretta belches flame.

The bullet hits the pursuer just below his nose, just above his teeth. As he falls...

Creasy's hit twice in the chest. The FAT DRIVER firing from inside the first sedan.

Creasy falls to his knees. Beretta clatters to pavement.

Pinta's eyes widen in horror. She's almost to him.

The second pursuer catches up, scoops Pinta from behind, starts back for the sedan.

PINTA

Creasy!

It's not a cry for help. It's anguish for him.

The pursuer crams her in the back seat, follows. As the door slams shut, Creasy pitches forward onto his face.

Wheels spin, grip and the sedan accelerates away. Creasy makes a wish. Not for himself, but for her.

CREASY

Don't die, Creasy, don't die.

And everything goes very, very,

BLACK

Sound breaks through first. The whirl and beep of medical equipment. And we fade back into:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MILAN - DAY

Creasy hooked up. Tubes running in and out of the unconscious man. His friend Guido sits beside him. Haggard. Unsure. Creasy stirs, opens one eye, then the other. Realizing, Guido leans into his friend's face.

GUIDO

Can you hear me, Crease?

Creasy just barely nods.

GUIDO

The worst is over. You're going to make it. You got three of the bastards. All dead.

CREASY

Pinta...

GUIDO

Two days gone. They're negotiating a ransom. Such matters can take time.

Creasy squeezes his eyes shut in thanks. She's alive. Then he opens them again. A huge exertion as:

CREASY

My life is behind me. Pinta has life in front of her.

GUIDO  
Shhh... Don't talk.

CREASY  
I can play a part in her life.  
No death, no destruction, just  
hope. It won't be futile.

And Creasy passes out.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BALLETTTO VILLA - SUNSET

A queasy view from the lake. A POLICE CAR is parked in front. As we creep in, we hear Pinta's prayer.

PINTA (V.O.)  
Give me God what you still have.  
Give me what no one else asks for.

Then silence. Shredded by RIKA'S SCREAM. If a sound could be ascribed to loss, to despair, this would be it.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MILAN - SUNSET

Guido stands at the window looking out. He turns as Creasy stirs, wakes again. Creasy's eyes flicker to his friend, ask the first question on his mind. Pinta...

GUIDO  
She died, Creasy.

And with those words, God takes everything away. It might as well be the fucking Old Testament. Creasy might as well be fucking Job. And we are about to get fucking Biblical.

Creasy turns his head, looks up at the ceiling.

GUIDO  
It was a fuck up. The ransom was paid two days ago. She was supposed to be released that night. They left her in the trunk of a car. Bad goddamn directions. The police couldn't find it. She was tied and they had taped her mouth shut. At some point she vomited. She choked to death...

Creasy closes his eyes. Guido sounds like he might vomit also. Creasy's gut tells him there's more. His eyes open.

CREASY

What else?

Guido looks back out the window.

GUIDO

They raped her.

Creasy continues to look up at the ceiling. And purpose suddenly fills him. And his eyes glitter with hatred.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

COLONEL SATTA of the Carabinieri walks the hall flanked by a DOCTOR and a NURSE. A second policeman, Satta's ADJUTANT, brings up the rear carrying two heavy binders.

DOCTOR

He was hit in the stomach and the lung. The lung is alright, but we need to operate on the stomach again. But first he'll need to build up some strength.

NURSE

A strange man. He has much experience of hospitals.

SATTA

Did he say so?

NURSE

(shakes her head)  
A nurse knows.

They stop outside the door to Creasy's room.

NURSE

And I don't think I have ever seen anyone look so sad and so angry at the same time.

The doctor looks heavenward. Only a woman could say that.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MILAN - DAY

Some of the tubes are gone; some of the tubes remain. Creasy looks over as Satta enters, adjutant in tow.

SATTA

Mr. Creasy, I am Colonel Satta of the Carabinieri. The organized crime unit. If you're up to it, I'd like to show you some photographs.

Creasy looks back at him, but barely registers interest. As he finally nods...

CUT AHEAD TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MILAN - DAY

Satta and the adjutant have pulled chairs up alongside the bed. The adjutant flips through one of the binders. Each page holds a single MUGSHOT. Old country wise guys.

Creasy gives each a look. Each time he shakes his head, the adjutant flips to the next photo.

SATTA

Kidnapping is run by organized crime. It's big business. These men are all street level mobsters. Hopefully you'll recognize one.

CREASY

(shakes his head)

Didn't get much of a look at the ones I didn't shoot.

SATTA

Excellent work by the way. One man was hit twice in the heart, one man in the head, a third in the throat. All accomplished by only firing seven rounds.

Creasy shakes his head at the next shot.

CREASY

Your point?

SATTA

If two of the men in my division could shoot like that, I could get rid of the other thirty-eight.

The page flips: GIORGIO RABBIA, the fat fuck behind the wheel of sedan one.

MEMORY FLASH: As Rabbia fires at Creasy. Same guy.

But Creasy betrays nothing, just shakes his head. The page is flipped.

SATTA

You served in the Green Berets.

CREASY

It's not that big a deal. Alot of guys did.

SATTA

Yes, well not all of them became mercenaries after.

CREASY

Am I a suspect?

SATTA

No.

Photo match number two: ANTONIO SANDRI.

MEMORY FLASH: As Sandri scoops Pinta up, starts back toward the car with her.

Creasy shakes his head.

CREASY

Then don't treat me like one.

As Creasy continues shaking his head...

SATTA

I'm sorry if it seemed that way. I am just, a curious man. I read the resume supplied to the agency. I --

CREASY

You'll have to forgive me. That's all I have strength for right now.

Satta nods that he understands. As he motions for his adjutant to close up the binder...

CUT TO:

EXT. TRAIN - NIGHT

Blowing through the countryside. Not many people aboard. We finally settle on a lone figure in one of the windows.

CREASY

Sitting alone, the side of his head against the glass.  
Surrendered to, swaying with the movement of the train.  
Tears stream down his cheeks. The suffering inconsolable.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - PENSIONE SPLENDIDE - NAPLES - NIGHT

Midnight hospitality. Guido drags some food from the  
fridge, sets it on the table.

GUIDO

Prosciutto?

CREASY

I can't. My stomach.

But Guido can. As he stuffs his mouth...

GUIDO

You're crazy. You'll tear  
yourself open and bleed to  
death. You should be in the  
hospital. It's like walking  
around with a bomb in your gut.

CREASY

(interrupts)

I know who did it. The police  
showed me a book of mug shots.

Guido stops in mid-chew, considers his friend a beat.

GUIDO

You didn't ID them?

CREASY

No. The man who shot me is  
called Sandri. The driver of  
the car: Rabbia.

GUIDO

It should be easy enough.

(sighs)

Are you sure about this?

CREASY

(nods)

That little girl carried the sun  
on her shoulder.

GUIDO

An eye for an eye then.

CREASY  
 More than an eye. Every goddamn  
 bloody piece of them.

Guido considers these words. Only he knows that Creasy is  
 talking about unleashing a plague.

CREASY  
 I need help.

GUIDO  
 I won't kill again. I gave that  
 up. But anything else? You  
 have it.

CUT TO:

INT. SATTA'S HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

The adjutant seen earlier marches down the hallway with a  
 fax in hand. He turns, enters:

SATTA'S OFFICE

Burning the midnight oil, Satta looks up from his desk.

ADJUTANT  
 (re: fax)  
 The file you requested from  
 Interpol. Creasy.

He hands it to Satta who scans it, his eyes widening.

SATTA  
 My God... Not just a mercenary.  
 A one man army.  
 (standing)  
 Let's go to the hospital.

ADJUTANT  
 I anticipated you would want to  
 see him. I called so they could  
 wake him. He's gone.

SATTA  
 Gone? In his condition?

ADJUTANT  
Gone. Should I release a  
 bulletin?

SATTA  
 No...



Satta goes to the window, looks out like he might see Creasy in the night.

SATTA

He's done nothing wrong... And if that one wants to make himself known, he will do so.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - NAPLES - NIGHT

Up the hill of Napoli. A termite mound of a neighborhood. The flats nearly touching each other. Laundry hanging like flags. Guido makes his way up. Creasy straggles behind. Guido goes back to help his friend.

GUIDO

Almost there.

They come to a door. Guido knocks.

OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR

Two men stand in the darkness, both with pistols barrel flush against the door.

MAN ONE

Who is it?

STREET SIDE

Guido looks at the door, smiles to himself.

GUIDO

It's me...

CUT TO:

INT. GARAGE - NAPLES - NIGHT

Fluorescents flicker on. A Fiat up on the hydraulic lift. A section of the garage is portioned off by heavy steel sheeting with a padlocked door.

One of the two men unlocks it. Creasy and Guido enter.

PARTITION

Three long steel tables. Covered with weapons.

Creasy stops by the pistols.

CREASY

I'll take the .45 and the Webley  
.32.

(to Guido)

I know it's old fashioned, but  
it's reliable.

GUIDO

That's why they sell it.

CREASY

(to man one)

With silencers and two hundred  
rounds for each.

Guido's eyes widen at the ammo request. Creasy moves on. Picks up, from a choice of six, an INGRAM SUBMACHINE GUN. With the butt folded, it's only ten inches long. Creasy's fingers move over it like he's playing the violin.

CREASY

Eleven hundred rounds a minute.  
If you could load it fast  
enough. You have a suppresser?

Man One nods. Creasy sets it back down.

CREASY

I'll need eight magazines and  
one thousand rounds.

Next he's looking at grenades. He hefts two different  
choices.

CREASY

I need less than standard  
packing. Can you knock up a  
case for fifteen of each?

Man One nods again, this time adds a smile.

MAN ONE

It's a war you're going to then?

Creasy doesn't answer, doesn't smile back. He picks up a  
double barrel shotgun, checks the line of it. He flicks  
open the breach, snaps it shut.

CREASY

(indicating)

Cut the stock here. Cut the  
barrel here. Make sure you file  
it smooth.

MAN ONE

Shot?

CREASY

A couple of boxes of S.S.G..  
Harnesses and holsters for  
everything.

He picks up a COMMANDO KNIFE, sends it end over end into a  
wooden post. THWACK!

CREASY

Couple of those.

The men exchange looks, know they have a tiger in their  
cage. Guido gives them a proud 'told you so'.

Finally, a metal tray at the end of table three. Several  
small objects. Creasy picks up a circular tube, a narrow  
needle projects half an inch from one end.

MAN ONE

Perhaps you haven't seen them  
before.

CREASY

I've used this detonator. But  
not the timer.

Man One picks up a two pronged tube, unscrews it to show  
Creasy the nickel cadmium battery and two graduated dials.  
Then he plugs the timer into the detonator. Combined, less  
than three inches long.

CREASY

Thanks, got it. And a kilo of  
plastique wherever you keep  
that.

MAN ONE

Nearby...

CREASY

That does it. How much?

MAN ONE

It will take a moment.

Man One and Two move off to confer. Creasy just stands  
there looking out over the arsenal. Finally, as Guido  
lights a cigarette.

CREASY

I heard her scream.

GUIDO

Creasy, don't. What's the point?

CREASY

It wasn't for herself. You need to understand. She saw me fall. It was for me. She screamed for me.

Guido sighs, grinds out the cigarette he just lit. Creasy finally looks to him.

CREASY

There's a chance they could trace this back to you. It's a small world out there. And if they come asking, they'll ask hard.

Guido puts a hand on his friend's shoulder, looks him hard in the eye.

GUIDO

God gave you a talent. Do him and me a favor: Tear their fucking hearts out.

CUT TO:

EXT. STRIP - EAST MILAN - NIGHT

The driver of the car. The man who shot Creasy in the stomach. Giorgio Rabbia at work.

A MONTAGE OF:

Making collections. Receiving drinks on the house. Palming envelopes fat with cash. A huge, ponderous man.

Arriving and leaving each club in his silver Lancia. We see his shoulder holster as he heaves himself out. A TOY DACHSHUND sits on the back dash, bobbing his head with the car's motion.

CUT TO:

INT. CLUB - MILAN - NIGHT

The OWNER sees Rabbia enter, snaps his fingers at the BARTENDER. Rabbia reaches the manager, shakes his hand warmly. As he pulls his hand back, it's holding another fat envelope. A HOSTESS steps over with a shot of scotch.

Rabbia sips it, watches her appreciatively as she walks away. The club owner fakes his best smile.

RABBIA

Send her over to my place.  
Monday afternoon at three.

OWNER

Of course, Signore Rabbia.

Rabbia downs the rest of the scotch, hands the glass to the owner and strides out.

EXT. STREET - IN FRONT OF THE CLUB - NIGHT

If he had been an observant man, Rabbia may have noticed that the dachshund's head was bobbing afresh.

LANCIA

Rabbia eases his bulk behind the wheel, closes the door. He feels the barrel of the .45 just under his right ear.

CREASY

Don't move...

RABBIA

(incredulous)  
Do you know who I am?

CREASY

You are Giorgio Rabbia. If you speak again, it will be the last time.

That gives Rabbia pause. Creasy leans forward, slides his hand under Rabbia's jacket, takes his gun.

CREASY

Start the engine, follow my directions. Try anything cute and you die.

Rabbia starts the engine. The gun is still against his head as he eases the Lancia out into traffic.

CUT TO:

EXT. DILAPIDATED FARMHOUSE - COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

The middle of nowhere. Gravel crunches under the Lancia's tires as it drives around back.

CREASY'S VOICE

Stop here. Turn off the ignition.

LANCIA

Rabbia leans forward to turn the key. The .45 comes down hard. WHACK! As his vision explodes...

CUT TO:

INT. DILAPIDATED FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Lantern-lit. Sitting in a chair, Rabbia stirs, wakes. The first thing he sees is that both his wrists are taped to the arms of the chair.

He looks up to see a low wooden table ahead of him.

There's a hammer, two long steel spikes, a heavy knife and a metal rod with an electrical cord snaking away from it to a CAR BATTERY. Also, a pad of paper and a pen.

Rabbia looks higher, sees the silhouetted man sitting there.

CREASY

Can you hear me?

RABBIA

You will suffer for this,  
whoever you are.

CREASY

Look carefully at what's in front of you. I am going to ask questions. If you don't answer, fully and truthfully, I will untape your left hand and hammer a spike through it.

Rabbia clocks the table spikes a second time.

CREASY

Then I'll take that knife and cut your fingers off. One by one. But you won't bleed to death. That's an electric soldering-iron. I'll use it to cauterize the stubs.

Holy sweet Jesus... Sweat drips down Rabbia's forehead.

CREASY

After that, unless you're talking, I'll start on the right hand, and then your feet.

Rabbia tries to master his fear. Swallows dry.

RABBIA

You go to hell...

Creasy picks up a roll of tape, rips off a strip, comes around, and slaps it around Rabbia's mouth.

A punch to the stomach and then a vicious whack across the mastoid. Rabbia sags in the chair. Hold on him as his left arm is undone, pulled OUT OF FRAME.

A beat and then we hear a crisp metallic WHACK!

BLACKNESS as Rabbia passes out.

FADE IN:

RABBIA

Mouth still taped. Waking up. Aware of the burning sensation. He looks at his left hand --

-- spiked down to the table. The knife ready, sticking up from the wood between two of the fingers.

And Creasy looking at him, devoid of emotion.

CREASY

I've been watching you and your friend Sandri for three days. I took you first because I only need to speak to one of you. And, after careful consideration, I decided you would break quicker.

Rabbia starts to gag. After a moment, Creasy stands, grabs a handful of hair and tears off the tape. Then he sits back down. Rabbia finally brings himself under control. But he's broken.

RABBIA

What do you want to know?

Creasy uncaps the pen, picks up the pad.

CREASY

Let's start with the Balletto kidnapping.

Rabbia looks at him, recognizing, his eyes widening.

RABBIA

You. You were the bodyguard.

Creasy just stares at him. And then, real fear.

CREASY  
Who were the dead men?

RABBIA  
Dorigo, Cremasco, and Ercolessi.

Creasy writes these names down.

CREASY  
How much was the ransom?

RABBIA  
I don't know. We were just  
ordered to take her.

CREASY  
Ordered by who?

Rabbia hesitates. As Creasy sets the pen down...

RABBIA  
By Fossella. Fossella is the  
boss in Milan.

Creasy picks the pen back up, writes the name Fossella.

CREASY  
Who was the rapist?

Rabbia answers that one immediately.

RABBIA  
Sandri. He was very angry.  
Dorigo, one of the men you  
killed, was a good friend, and,  
Sandri likes young girls.

CREASY  
And you?

RABBIA  
I never touched the girl.

CREASY  
Her name was Pinta.

RABBIA  
I never touched her. I'm  
professional. I just do my job.

CREASY  
Me, too.

Creasy closes the notebook, caps the pen. It's over.



CREASY  
What did Fossella think of it?

RABBIA  
Of what?

CREASY  
(rising)  
Of the fuck-up. Of Pinta being  
raped. Dying in the trunk of  
that car.

RABBIA  
He was very angry. He wouldn't  
pay us.

Creasy picks up the .45...

CREASY  
That was your punishment? He  
stopped your pay?

...starts to screw on the silencer.

RABBIA  
We, we were lucky. Sandri is  
Fossella's nephew.

CREASY  
(softly)  
Yes. You were lucky.

Rabbia keeps his eyes on the .45 until the barrel rests  
against his face, just below his right eye.

Rabbia leaves us as we push in on Creasy's face.

CREASY  
It's on to the next life,  
Rabbia. You won't be lonely.

Finally... BANG!

CUT TO:

EXT. DRAINAGE DITCH - DAY

Along the Milan-Turin motorway. A crime scene as several  
police cars and an ambulance are parked off the shoulder.

Colonel Satta is led over to where Giorgio Rabbia lies face  
up in the ditch, eyes open, a bullet hole in his head.

SATTA  
So the collector was collected.

## FORENSICS

Some time last night. The body  
was dumped here.

## SATTA

One bullet in the head.

## FORENSICS

Very close range. There are  
burn marks around the entry.  
Also, his left hand has been  
pierced through.

## SATTA

(shrugs)

He made somebody mad. Maybe he  
was dipping his fingers into the  
till.

CUT TO:

## EXT. MILAN STREET - DAY

Kids playing SOCCER. One of them kicks an errant pass. It  
whallops into the side of a sedan parked at the curb. A  
man sits behind the wheel.

The kids cringe, get ready to run. But the man doesn't  
react. Retrieving their ball, they hurry further up the  
street. But we stay and the camera moves in.

The window is rolled down. One elbow rests on top of the  
door. Blood drips off it into a small pool forming below.

Closer still, the man, VIOLANTE, sits perfectly still,  
straight up and down. His throat has been slit from ear-  
to-ear. BOOM UP passing over the apartment he's parked in  
front of. A man steps to a third floor window...

## ANTONIO SANDRI - IN HIS LOVE SHACK

The man who scooped up Pinta. Putting his cufflinks  
through his shirt sleeves. Wearing a shoulder holster.

He looks down at the sedan waiting below. Sees Violante's  
elbow sticking out.

A satisfied smile as Sandri looks back into the room. At  
the bed. A 15-year-old GIRL under the sheet.

## SANDRI

So, little one, did I make you  
happy?

GIRL

(nods)

When will I see you again?

Sandri steps over, takes her chin between his thumb and forefinger.

SANDRI

Tomorrow. I'll take you for lunch. Then I want you to meet a special friend of mine.

Pulling on his suit coat, Sandri steps to the door.

GIRL

Who?

SANDRI

Be surprised, my little one.

He opens the door to find himself staring square into the eyes of Creasy. He rests the twin barrels of the sawed-off shotgun square against Sandri's chest.

CREASY

Pinta Balletto.

As Sandri registers the name... BA-BOOM!

CUT TO:

EXT. MILAN STREET - DAY

The girl stands in the window SCREAMING. People look up, wonder what could've unhinged her so.

The door to the street opens and Creasy exits. Striding away, the shotgun under his jacket.

Then a WOMAN on the street, see Violante sitting bloody behind the wheel. She begins SCREAMING as well.

Creasy doesn't seem to register. Creasy who moves with a purpose that's astounding. An avatar of what is going to become an almost unfathomable justice. And as he walks past, leaving the scene behind him...

CUT TO:

INT. NINO'S - ROME - DAY

A corner of the restaurant taken over by a group of well dressed men. The cut of their suits not quite covering the danger that oozes from them.

One man, MAURIZIO CONTI, is the center of attention. He's the boss of Rome. A HENCHMAN hands him a cellular phone.

HENCHMAN

Fossella...

Conti nods, takes a deliberate sip of wine before speaking.

CONTI

Fossella, how is it?

CUT TO:

INT. FOSSELLA'S OFFICE - MILAN - DAY

Little DINO FOSSELLA on the phone. Little but tough as nails.

FOSSELLA

It's shit. I have two dead men in two days. One was my sister's son. And I don't know where the bullets are coming from.

INTERCUT THE FOLLOWING:

As Conti talks, he picks out just the right olive from a plate of them.

CONTI

You need to find out.

As Conti pops the olive in his mouth...

FOSSELLA

It's those Union Corse boys in Marseilles.

CONTI

What makes you think so?

FOSSELLA

They've been pissed off since that heroin deal. And they like shotguns. We should show them what we like.

CONTI

We're businessmen. We should make it right with them.

Fossella stews at the thought.

CONTI

Call them. But wait a day. I don't want them to think we're anxious for anything but business to be back to normal.

Fossella stews further.

CONTI

And Fossella... Maybe keep your head low for awhile.

Conti clicks off.

FOSELLEA'S

As dials tone drones, Fossella hammers the receiver against his desk.

FOSELLEA

Smug sonofawhore in Rome!

His lieutenants watch him, wait. He looks to one.

FOSELLEA

Tomorrow. I want to speak to Bats in Marseilles. Arrange it.

(checks watch)

Ay, I'm late for my mother's.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD - VILLAGE OF BIANCA - SUNSET

Outside Milan. Fossella car moves along, sandwiched between two cars full of BODYGUARDS.

The cars pull to a stop below the terraced walkway to a house. The men look about, alert. Irritated, Fossella waves them off.

FOSELLEA

I'll be two hours. Stay awake, but don't get ulcers. Even those Union Corse animals would not involve family in business matters.

As Fossella climbs the stone stairway to the small house...

CUT TO:

INT. ENTRYWAY - FOSSELLA'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - SUNSET

Fossella enters, takes a smell of the food cooking. Smiles. As he heads for the kitchen...

FOSSELLA

Ciao Mama, what's for dinner?

FOSSELLA'S MOTHER - KITCHEN

She glares at him as he enters. She doesn't speak though because there's tape over her mouth. She's also tied to a chair. Creasy rests a shotgun on her shoulder, the barrel against her ear.

CREASY

One sound and you're an orphan.

Fossella looks from Creasy to his mother and back to Creasy. He nods, understands how it is.

CREASY

Face the wall. Hands on the wall. Spread your legs.

Fossella turns, does exactly so. He can't help but notice the gnocchi on the table. It looks good.

Then Creasy knocks him senseless.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK YARD - MOTHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Attached to the house, the awning of an open potting shed. A small gray van is parked halfway under it. The van's side door is open.

The kitchen door opens. Creasy backs out dragging Fossella along, his ass and duct-taped feet dragging across the flagstones. His mouth is taped as well.

Creasy gets Fossella in the back, quietly closes the door.

VAN

Creasy gets behind the wheel, doesn't start the van, but does shift into neutral. Slowly, they begin to freewheel down the slope behind the house. Then, picking up speed.

Creasy lets it roll a long way before starting the engine and shifting into gear. By that time, he's on the road, disappearing into the deepening gloom.

CUT TO:

EXT. WHITEWASHED STONE BARN - COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

The van's headlight flashing white as it pulls up.. No one here but them and the crickets.

A beat and then Creasy is dragging Fossella out of the van.

CUT TO:

INT. STONE BARN - NIGHT

Fossella is dumped in a heap. Conscious now, he watches as Creasy drags over a hay bale.

Then, Creasy pulls Fossella's shoes off. As the gangster wonders what the hell is going on, Creasy reaches up, undoes the man's belt. Then, he's tearing the tape from his ankles.

Suddenly, Creasy rolls Fossella belly down over the hay bale. Pulls down his pants. Pulls down his underpants to reveal his bare buttocks.

Then, Creasy's hand is on one butt cheek. Fucking sodomy! Fossella's sure of it.

As Fossella struggles like a madman, a whack behind the ear sends him into oblivion.

CUT TO:

FOSELLA

Taped to a chair, the same wooden table is in front of him, but no knife and no spikes. Creasy sits there with an open notebook and a digital ALARM CLOCK. It faces him.

9:17...

Fossella registers that although his pants are gone, his underwear it still on.

CREASY

Can you hear me?

The tape is gone from his mouth, but Fossella just nods.

Creasy holds up a metal cylinder. He unscrews it in the middle and shows Fossella the two hollow halves.

CREASY

This is a charger. It's used by convicts to conceal money and drugs. It's hidden inside the body. In the rectum.

Fossella shifts in the chair, reacts to the discomfort he's feeling. Creasy raises his eyebrows. Yes, that's right.

Creasy does his show and tell. Holds up some plastique, along with several other items.

CREASY

This is high explosive. This is a detonator. This is a timer. Put it together and you have a bomb. Very small, but very powerful. That's what you're feeling up your ass right now.

Fossella shifts again, feels it again.

CREASY

It's timed to blow up at ten o'clock.

FOSSELLA

Which one of those pricks told you where to find me? Sandri? Or was it fat Rabbia?

CREASY

Neither. It was your nephew's driver.

The clock switches to 9:19.

CREASY

I have some questions. If you answer fully and honestly, and before ten o'clock, you will be allowed to remove the bomb.

Fossella shakes his head, smiles.

FOSSELLA

Forget it. You'll kill me either way.

Creasy doesn't answer, just watches him. And Fossella has nothing more to say himself. As the clock clicks 9:20...

CUT TO:

A MONTAGE

Fossella, Creasy and the clock as time ticks away. Finally, at 9:53, Fossella can't take it anymore.

FOSSELLA

What do you want to know?



CREASY

Kidnapping is big business for you, correct?

FOSSELLA

It terms of profit, no. In terms of reward for the amount of effort, yes.

(a beat)

Were you involved with someone who was kidnapped?

CREASY

Think about it.

FOSSELLA

(now he understands)

The Balletto girl.

CREASY

Why'd you pick her?

FOSSELLA

I didn't. The order came from the boss in Rome. Maurizio Conti.

CREASY

And would it be his order?

FOSSELLA

Maybe. Probably. But he would have to clear it first.

CREASY

Clear it with who?

FOSSELLA

With the big boss. In Palermo. The head man.

(after a beat)

Cantarella.

Creasy picks up the pad and pen.

CREASY

I want to know about Conti and Cantarella. Anything that comes to mind in the next six minutes.

The clock clicks to 9:54.

CREASY

Five.

As Fossella sighs...

CUT TO:

EXT. BARN - NIGHT

The crickets sing. What Fossella has to say is a mystery.

CUT TO:

INT. BARN - NIGHT

9:58... 9:59. Creasy caps the pen, picks up the pad. Fossella watches as he heads for the door.

FOSSELLA

Hey. Hey!

Creasy looks back.

FOSSELLA

What about me?

CREASY

Honor among thieves is bullshit.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARN - NIGHT

Creasy exits, gets in the van.

CUT TO:

INT. BARN - NIGHT

Fossella is going nuts as the clock reads 10:00. But nothing happens. Then, it clicks to 10:01. As Fossella cocks his head, curious.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARN - NIGHT

The van drives away. BOOM!!! Accompanied by a flash and the windows at one end of the barn blowing out.

CUT TO:

INT. SATTA'S OFFICE - DAY

A beehive of cops. Photos of dead mobsters on the wall.

ADJUTANT

Three dead men in three days.  
It must be the Union Corse in  
Marseilles.

SATTA

They don't have that kind of  
imagination. Knives, yes,  
shotguns, yes, bombs, yes, but  
not up the rectum. This is a  
different kind of mind.

The other cops all wish they had something smart to say.  
Then as Satta looks at the photos of Rabbia and Sandri, he  
realizes...

SATTA

Where are the mug shots? The  
ones we showed Creasy?

ADJUTANT

The bodyguard?

SATTA

Where?

The binder is brought over. Satta flips through. Rabbia!  
A few pages later Sandri.

SATTA

The Balletto kidnapping. We  
show Creasy who they are. He  
takes them out. Fossella was  
their boss, gave the order...

(a beat)

That bodyguard was, and maybe is  
again, a very lethal human being.

ADJUTANT

Should we put out a bulletin on  
him?

For once, Satta finds himself at a loss. It amazes him.

SATTA

I don't know.

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - BALLETTTO VILLA - NIGHT

They eat quietly. Ettore looks more or less like the last  
time we saw him. And for sure, Rika is still beautiful.  
But she looks lost.

ETTORE

We closed the deal with the  
factory in Singapore today.  
Vico was a master.

RIKA

Oh, that's, good news.

She gives him a smile, but she's not behind it. But then:

Creasy walks into the room. They both look over as he  
stops across from the table. Ettore finds his voice first.

ETTORE

What do you want?

CREASY

I'd like to speak with you both.  
We never had a chance since  
Pinta died.

ETTORE

You expected us to come hold  
your hand in the hospital?

CREASY

No.

Rika slowly stands, her eyes drilling through Creasy.

RIKA

You let them take her. She loved  
you and you let them take her.

Creasy just blinks at her as the words blast through him.

RIKA

Why are you here? Why didn't  
you die?

CREASY

Because...  
(shrugs)  
I was already dead.

Ettore sees how close his wife is to the void.

ETTORE

Please go, Creasy.

Creasy sees it as well, but he comes bearing cold comfort:

CREASY

I wanted her to know something.

Creasy turns to her, looks at her a beat before, very matter of fact:

CREASY

I've killed them, Sandri and Rabbia, the two who took Pinta. And their boss, Fossella, the one who ordered them. They're all dead.

He watches her, but her expression doesn't change. Ettore slumps back in his chair a bit.

ETTORE

It's all they talk about in Milan. The police think it's a gang war.

Finally, Rika's demeanor changes.

RIKA

It's an awful gift, Creasy. But I accept it.

Creasy lowers his eyes, more than he had hoped for.

RIKA

What will you do now?

His eyes flicker back to hers. Smoldering now.

CREASY

I'm going to kill them all.

A spark ignites in her eyes as well. Ettore looks confused.

CREASY

It goes higher than these men. I'm going to kill everyone who profited. The boss in Rome, the big boss in Palermo. Anyone who opens their eyes at me.

The connection between them is monumental.

CREASY

I wanted you to know, I am sorry.

And she forgives him, but not in a quite traditional way.

RIKA

Kill them, Creasy. Kill them all.

Creasy nods. He will. As he starts out, she is full of grim resolve. She shouts after him.

RIKA

I'll go to church and pray for it! I'll pray that you kill them all!

Ettore is horrified. It's madness.

CUT TO:

SATTA

Sitting at a table, looking up at someone we don't see.

SATTA

Never, I repeat never, have I tasted a better fritto misto.

In the Pensione Splendide, Guido standing across from him. Wishing Satta was not here, but shrugging indifferently.

GUIDO

We are not all peasants in Naples.

SATTA

Obviously not.

(wipes mouth)

But for an ex-criminal, ex-convict, ex-mercenary, a perfect fritto misto is quite a talent.

Guido just stares at him.

SATTA

Tell me about your friend Creasy.

GUIDO

You just said it. He's my friend. There's nothing else to say.

SATTA

I checked the agency records. You helped him get his job in Milan.

GUIDO

That's what friends do.

SATTA

Yes. But if I traced Creasy to you, others will do it as well. Their facilities are as good as my own, if not better.

GUIDO

I can take care of myself.

SATTA

You and Creasy both.

Satta takes a folded sheet of paper from his jacket.

SATTA

Practically a two man army.  
Ireland. Lebanon with the Druze.

(reads)

Desert Storm. Where you were  
contracted by the U.S. Army to  
hunt down elite Iraqi military  
commanders.

(laughs)

The French Foreign Legion?

GUIDO

We were instructors.

SATTA

I didn't even know the Legion  
still existed.

Guido can't quite bury his own self-regard.

GUIDO

Oh, it exists. Still quite  
deadly in a limited theater.

SATTA

There's pride in your eyes.

Guido realizes his pride is getting him sucked in.

GUIDO

Finish your lunch and get out.  
There's no charge.

Guido turns and heads into the kitchen. Satta follows.

KITCHEN - PENSIONE SPLENDIDE

Guido questions the staff about a vegetable delivery.

SATTA

Organized crime is my  
jurisdiction. I want these men  
as much as Creasy does.

GUIDO

Then stay out of his way. He'll deliver more justice in a weekend, then ten years of your courts and tribunals.

SATTA

But why? Give me that at least. Why? Professional pride?

GUIDO

(finally angry)

That little girl is just a number to you. Tragic, a public outcry, but a number. One more dead. But to Creasy, she was no number.

SATTA

What was she then?

GUIDO

Light. At the end of a long, dark tunnel. I don't understand it myself, but somehow, she showed him it was alright to live again.

SATTA

And they took that away.

GUIDO

A man can be an artist in almost anything. Stone, paint, words. Food. Anything if his heart is true to it. Even killing. Creasy's art is a deadly one, but an art nonetheless. His heart is full with it. And he's about to paint his masterpiece.

The words sink in. As Satta understands their magnitude...

GUIDO

Me? I have a minestrone to cook. So if you'll excuse me...

CUT TO:

EXT. COLISEUM - ROME - DAY

The ancient arena in the b.g.. F.g., a new sheriff in town. Marching at us, a hitch in his stride, but not in his purpose. Creasy's coming. Fucking watch out.

CUT TO:



INT. CAFE - MILAN - DAY

Satta's adjutant having an espresso at a table with one of Fossella's lieutenants. The check is placed on the table by the waiter.

LIEUTENANT

Allow me...

He picks up the checks, smiles at the amount. Then he sticks a thick wad of bills under it, maybe ten grand, and sets it back on the table by the adjutant.

The adjutant, in return, hands over a file clearly marked: Creasy. The lieutenant walks away.

The adjutant pockets the wad, leaves a few coins in its place. As he heads off in the other direction...

CUT TO:

EXT. VILLA COLACCI - NIGHT

A beautiful property but also a fortress. Floodlights illuminate the walled grounds. A few FOOT SOLDIERS patrol with shotguns. GUARD DOGS roam.

INSERT: Palermo.

CONTI'S VOICE

Our Carabinieri informant came through. It's not French, the Union Corse. It's one man.

CUT TO:

INT. CANTARELLA'S STUDY - VILLA COLACCI - NIGHT

Cantarella, fat and old behind his desk, listening to his speaker phone. Cigar smoke curling from the ashtray.

CANTARELLA

One man?

CUT TO:

INT. ROOM - HASSLER HOTEL - ROME - NIGHT

A view of Rome like none other. As Conti speaks to his superior, his Claudia Cardinale look-a-like MISTRESS prancing around in a white slip behind him.

CONTI

One man. Remember the Balletto kidnapping?

INTERCUT THE FOLLOWING:

CANTARELLA  
(incredulous)  
Not the father.

CONTI  
The bodyguard.

CANTARELLA  
(musing)  
An old fashioned vendetta.

CONTI  
Like our grandfathers reminisced  
about. When they were killing  
each other instead of making  
money together.

Conti motions his mistress over.

CANTARELLA  
Man on Fire. That's what they  
used to call it.

CONTI  
Fossella was taken out to a barn  
in the country. This man would  
have questioned him there.  
About the kidnapping.

Conti runs his hand over the contour of her back, her ass.

CANTARELLA  
Yes? So?

CONTI  
So he killed the men who took  
the girl; he killed the man who  
ordered them. I'm the one who  
ordered Fossella. It would  
stand to reason, this Creasy  
will look for me next.

CANTARELLA  
Unless he's satisfied himself.  
Take precautions, Maurizio.

Conti kisses her ass, gives her a playful shove on her way.

CONTI  
I have. The reason I'm calling  
is, you should as well.

CANTARELLA

Me? Why me?

CONTI

(simply)

The kidnapping was cleared with you before we did it. You received tribute.

CANTARELLA

(mystified)

I receive tribute on everything. On imports, exports, every time a whore lies on her back. It's business.

CONTI

To us. It may not be business to the man on fire.

CUT TO:

EXT. HASSLER HOTEL - NIGHT

Above the Spanish Steps. A military operation as Conti is led out to his car. They muscle the doorman to one side. A heavy gray Mercedes waits. Conti gets in the back with his AIDE-DE-CAMP. As the door is shut behind them.

MERCEDES

The door closes with an hermetic whump. Conti smiles at his aide.

CONTI

That's the sound of two inches of armor plating. Give me your gun.

The aide hands over a heavy pistol. Conti swings the barrel into the window. Twice. Not even a scratch.

CONTI

Saved my life twice last year. Both of them were women.

As the aide laughs at his bosses joke, the car pulls away.

CUT TO:

EXT. VIA APPIA - ROME - NIGHT

The same road Roman legions once marched. Narrow with high walls. Conti's motorcade has the same set-up as Fossella. One car drives just ahead of the Mercedes, one just behind.

A quiet night. Tires whir along.

Headlights ahead.

LEAD CAR - MOTORCADE

Where the driver is just becoming aware of the speed at which those headlights are bearing down on them. As he alerts the others...

INT. DELIVERY TRUCK - NIGHT

As the speedometer hits 70 mph. Creasy behind the wheel. Looking at headlights down the road the other way. Gauging the distance.

He throws the engine into neutral, climbs back into...

THE CARGO AREA

Nothing here, but a motorcycle up on its stand. Its engine is running. The back door has been rolled up and open.

Creasy gets on the bike, revs the engine and flies.

EXT. VIA APPIA - NIGHT

As the motorcycle's wheels hit pavement. Fighting all the momentum, Creasy is just able to stay upright. As the truck streaks away...

CUT TO:

INT. LEAD CAR - NIGHT

Eyes widening as the truck clips the wall, CATAPULTS end-over-end toward them.

INT. CONTI'S MERCEDES - NIGHT

Conti screams as his driver stands on the brakes. Ahead an EPIC COLLISION. And they're next.

EXT. VIA APPIA - NIGHT

The lead car EXPLODES and the Mercedes slams into a MAELSTROM. Metal twists and tears. Men scream.

Carnage.

Sparks fly as the Mercedes flips on its roof.

The tires on the third follow car shudder. It just stops at the edge of it all.

As the FOUR BODYGUARDS within jam out...

The motorcycle glides up...

Creasy steers with one hand, empties the clip of the Ingram sub machine-gun with the other.

Limbs flail for purchase as the men are hit.

Creasy brakes to a stop, slaps in a second clip. Shell casings strobe out. The four bodyguards are no more.

Except for the burning wreckage of the lead car, it's oddly quiet. Creasy starts forward.

CONTI

His aide dead, the driver dead. But he hangs upside down from his seatbelt. Blood pours from a cut on his forehead as he blinks at the man walking toward him.

Seen through the passenger side window. Flames burning behind him. Creasy looks literally like a man on fire.

He crouches down, looks at Conti through the glass. Creasy motions to lower the window. Conti shakes his head 'no'.

He cranes his neck as Creasy rises, disappears around the Benz's rear quarter.

Conti looks back over his shoulder as a GRENADE is slapped against the rear windshield. A strip of duct tape, holds it in place. Conti screams as Creasy's hand pulls the pin.

CREASY

Walking calmly around the car as... KA-BLOOM!

Creasy steps back, peels off what's left of the rear windshield. Then he reaches into the Mercedes, pulls a bloodier still Conti out onto the street.

CREASY

You die now, but first you answer a question.

Conti's eyes swell with fear.

CREASY

How is it that a man of your intelligence kidnapped a girl whose father had no money?

And we rise above it all. Until we're too far away to hear Conti's answer. But, though still rising, we are close enough to see Creasy aim the Ingram, the burst of flame from the muzzle as he fires.

CUT TO:

CANTARELLA  
Cut down those fruit trees!

EXT. TERRACE - VILLA COLACCI - DAY

Cantarella shouts the order from the terrace to the men working down below along the wall. As concertina wire is strung along the top, chainsaws roar to life below.

Satisfied, Cantarella turns...

CANTARELLA  
Now, how can I help you, Colonel?

Satta is there with a contingent of uniformed Sicilian CARABINIERI. Satta wears a sincere face, but gives his adversary a dig.

SATTA  
Are you aware Don Cantarella of the troubles in Milan and in Rome?

Cantarella doesn't answer, just stares at him, would shoot him if he could. Cantarella's main men GRAVELLI and DICANDIA also exchange a look.

SATTA  
We have reason to think the man responsible may be coming here to Palermo. Perhaps to see you.

A truckload of a DOZEN HARD LOOKING MEN are being dropped off in the courtyard. Cantarella smiles at the sight.

CANTARELLA  
My niece is getting married.  
(re: men)  
Musicians for the reception.  
You were saying?

SATTA  
This man, he practices violence on a scale I've never seen. A scale that may be alien even to... musicians.

CANTARELLA

I'm very busy today, Colonel.  
Why are you here?

SATTA

No matter who dies, murder is  
still a crime. I'm here to  
offer you police protection, to  
take you into police custody if  
you would like.

Cantarella cannot believe what he's hearing.

SATTA

I will personally guarantee your  
safety.

CANTARELLA

And make a laughing stock of me.  
Can you imagine what my friends  
would think of that? Don  
Cantarella running to the police?

SATTA

You'd be alive.

CANTARELLA

Not to my friends.

(smiles)

Regardless. Power grows from the  
barrel of a gun. Many guns. I  
don't believe in the power of one.  
Now, if you'll excuse me?

Satta nods, looks to the Carabinieri. As they begin to  
file out, everyone's attention is taken by the fall of the  
first fruit tree. Satta steps up beside Cantarella.

SATTA

That fruit tree was beautiful.

(righteous pause)

I'm told the Balletto girl was  
as well.

CANTARELLA

Yes. It's a shame on all counts.

Satta turns on his heel, starts to march out. One of the  
Carabinieri walks alongside, their eyes on the preparations  
going on around them.

SICILIAN CARABINIERI

He may get in, but he'll never  
get out.

SATTA  
 (grim laugh)  
 I don't think getting out is  
 part of his plan.

Just before getting into his car, Satta takes one last look  
 around.

SATTA  
 Good luck, Creasy...

CUT TO:

EXT. TARMAC - MUNICIPAL AIRPORT - OUTSIDE ROME - SUNSET

A PILOT throws a tarp over the fuselage of his plane. As  
 he prepares to batten it down, he hears a sound behind him.  
 He turns to see Creasy, pistol level.

CUT TO:

INT. CESSNA - AIRBORNE - SUNSET

4000 feet over the Strait of Messina, the lights of Sicily  
 twinkling ahead. The pilot at the controls. Creasy  
 watching over his shoulder.

CREASY  
 Turn after you cross the beacon  
 at Termini Imerese. Two  
 kilometers due east of Monreale.  
 It should be lit up like a  
 Christmas tree.

CUT TO:

EXT. GROUNDS - VILLA COLACCI - NIGHT

Shotguns in hand, Gravelli and Dicandia patrol the grounds.

GRAVELLI  
 Another week of this and war  
 will break out. Three families  
 are ready to square up in Rome.

DICANDIA  
 It's already happening in Milan.

Suddenly Gravelli grips Dicandia's arm. The men freeze on  
 the gravel pathway. Two black shadows loom soundlessly out  
 of the darkness ahead.

They come up close. Steroid-packed DOBERMANS. Noses  
 twitching, then they're off in the shadows again.



GRAVELLI  
I hate those fucking dogs.

DICANDIA  
(laughing)  
They're safe enough. As long as  
they smell what they know.

GRAVELLI  
(continuing)  
They just better have good  
memories.

CUT TO:

EXT. VILLA COLACCI - NIGHT

Seen from 7000 feet. Against the black countryside. It is lit up like a Christmas tree. They couldn't make a better target out of it if they tried.

CREASY

He stands in the open door of the Cessna. Cinching the harness on his parachute, loaded for bear, the Ingram hung from his neck along with the shotgun. Grenades attached to a webbing vest. Cargo pants actually being put to use.

PILOT

Checking his gauges, knowing they're just about at the drop point.

PILOT  
This is it!

But as he turns to look over his shoulder, Creasy is already gone.

CUT TO:

CREASY - FALLING THROUGH SPACE

The parachute blossoms. A parasail. As he glides...

CUT TO:

EXT. VILLA COLACCI - NIGHT

A GUARD steps aside to allow Gravelli and Dicandia entrance to the villa through the kitchen door.

CUT TO:

## INT. KITCHEN - VILLA COLACCI - NIGHT

A stone-flagged room turned into a canteen for the extra men. HALF-A-DOZEN 'musicians' lounge finishing dinner, watching Roma vs. Juventus on the TV. Sub machine-guns and shotguns lie near to hand.

Gravelli and Dicandia continue down...

## A PASSAGE

They glance in on a room where WOODEN BUNKS have been set up. Another SIX MEN rest before the midnight shift. Gravelli and Dicandia continue through a...

## SMALL COURTYARD

And up a staircase where... A GUARD sits outside a door. Seeing Gravelli and Dicandia, he stands, raps twice on the door and then opens it. They enter...

## CANTARELLA'S STUDY

Where Cantarella is just peaking through the corner of a drawn curtain. He turns for their report. Another GUARD sits in the corner.

GRAVELLI

Everything is secure.

Cantarella shrugs, manages a smile.

CANTARELLA

Another day in paradise.

CUT TO:

## EXT. WALL - VILLA COLACCI - NIGHT

Fourteen feet high, the concertina wire glistens in the moonlight. And Creasy flies in just over it like a great silent bat. Paradise never looked so secure.

## GROUNDS

As he hits the darkest corner, rolls the chute in moments.

CUT TO:

## EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE GROUNDS - NIGHT

The Dobermans look up. All suddenly not right in their world. They race silently away.

CUT TO:

## CREASY

Screwing the silencer onto the .45. From his pant pocket, he takes out a NIGHT SIGHT. He scans the grounds from left to right, picks up the two shapes, low, lethal and fast.

The silencer spits. The first Doberman is hit about ten yards away, the second makes it another five closer. Its momentum carries right to Creasy's feet. He moves...

CUT TO:

## GUARD

Walking the gravel pathway to the side of the house. He stops cradles his shotgun in his elbow as he lights a cigarette. As he takes the first drag, Creasy slits his throat from behind. As smoke and blood pour from the wound, Creasy is already gone.

CUT TO:

## EXT. KITCHEN DOOR - NIGHT

The kitchen door guard listens to the cheering in the kitchen. Someone scored a goal.

THWACK! He looks down at the hunting knife sticking out of his chest. As he looks back up, tries to speak, Creasy is there, breaks his neck.

CUT TO:

## INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The eight men here look up as the window smashes in, followed by a GRENADE arcing into the room. It's almost immediately followed by two more.

## CANTARELLA'S STUDY

Cantarella, the guard, Gravelli and Dicandia reacting to the nearly simultaneous explosions downstairs.

## KITCHEN

Four men dead, two badly wounded, two simply stunned.

The door is kicked open as Creasy enters.

Eyes evaluating, looking for life; finding it.

The muzzle of the Ingram puts an end to it. An empty magazine clatters to the floor. Another ratchets in.

#### PASSAGE

Shouts of inquiry, doors opening, three men appear.

Creasy slides in low, Ingram held low.

The three men taking bullets in the groin and guts. Slamming back into oblivion.

#### BUNK ROOM

Five men out of bed, armed. Two inching toward the door.

#### PASSAGE

Creasy counts two to himself, then flicks a grenade through the door.

He turns at the EXPLOSION which sends a figure sprawling out into the passage.

He steps over him and into the bunk room.

Screams blending with the stutter of gunfire and the tinkling of spent brass. Music.

Creasy exits, fires a burst into the back of the figure as he attempts to rise.

A spasm in Creasy's gut stops him. He clutches at his side, his hand coming back damp with blood. He wasn't shot. He's bleeding inside.

Gritting his teeth, he continues.

#### COURTYARD

The study door bodyguard comes charging down the staircase, is flung back as two barrels of Creasy's shotgun belch flame from the edge of the passage.

On the landing outside the study stands Cantarella, the room guard, Gravelli and Dicandia. They all return fire at the passage mouth. A good fifty rounds.

Then silence. As they look at each other...

RAT-A-TAT-TAT! The Ingram again, only this time Creasy fires at the big chandelier suspended over the courtyard.

As it crashes to the ground, it takes the light with it.

More return fire and then the realization that they can't see a goddamn thing.

CANTARELLA

(to room guard)

Get down there.

He hesitates. Cantarella aims at him.

CANTARELLA

Go!

As the guard starts down, Cantarella, Gravelli and Dicandia retreat back into the study.

#### STAIRCASE

Leading with his gun, the guard starts down. Until the stairs chew to shreds as Creasy fires up through them.

The guard dies. A beat later, Creasy's on his way up.

#### INT. CANTARELLA'S STUDY - NIGHT

Where the great Don rips down the curtains, smashes the glass with his gun and screams.

CANTARELLA

Where are you! Get up here!

Gravelli and Dicandia face the door, shoulder to shoulder, shotguns leveled.

#### LANDING

Creasy creeps in low, taps on the door with the barrel of the .45, then immediately ducks back and away.

#### STUDY

Gravelli and Dicandia hit the door with everything they've got. Ten rounds of double-ought buck. It's practically vaporized. It's also practically open.

## LANDING - SLOW MOTION

Creasy stands to one side of the door. Holding the .45 in his right hand, he pulls a grenade from the vest with his left. Lowering it toward the .45, he pulls the pin on the grenade with his right pinkie.

He releases the pin, counts to himself and opens his fingers. The grenade drops toward the floor.

Creasy swings his right boot, gently drop kicks the grenade through the door.

## STUDY

Gravelli and Dicandia watch slack-jawed as the grenade turns end-over-end toward them. It EXPLODES right in their faces.

Cantarella stands rigid, stares at the two mangled bodies.

He's not even aware that Creasy just rolled into the room. He rises to his knees, guns aimed at Cantarella.

And Cantarella just screams. His brain has stopped working.

CUT TO:

## EXT. EGGPLANT FIELD - SICILY - NIGHT

A sweep of headlights and Cantarella's car stops. In the distance. A pause and then...

A GUNSHOT. Followed by the blare of the car's HORN. It goes on for several seconds then stops.

Only then do we hear Cantarella's frantic, mumbling PRAYER.

The back door opens and Creasy gets out. The front door opens and then Creasy is pulling Cantarella along behind him, coming toward us.

Finally, Creasy shoves Cantarella down into the mud.

The old man is not well. He sputters, removes his glasses to wipe the mud off the lenses. He puts them back on, watches as Creasy paces a distance across the field.

Is he walking away? No. Creasy finally stops, digs a mark into the ground with his heel. Then he marches back over, hauls Cantarella up to his feet.

Cantarella finds his balance, cringes as Creasy takes out the .45.

CREASY

That's a hundred meters. Run  
it.

CANTARELLA

What?

BOOM! Creasy fires a round overhead, then levels the  
pistol at Cantarella.

CREASY

Run it!

Cantarella runs, not very fast, not very well, but he runs.  
Creasy walks alongside him.

CREASY

Faster... Faster.

As Cantarella slows, Creasy FIRES a round just over his  
head. Cantarella staggers forward.

CREASY

Don't flinch. You're not afraid  
when a gun goes off; you react.  
You go.

Cantarella falls. Creasy hauls him up. Pain shoots  
through Creasy's guts.

He FIRES another round, practically in Cantarella's face.  
Cantarella sobs. Creasy continues coaching.

CREASY

Concentrate on the sound.  
Welcome it. The sound lets you  
go. The sound frees you.  
(fires again)  
Run!

Cantarella staggers off, chest heaving, face going crimson.

Creasy FIRES again.

At last Cantarella reaches the mark, the finish line. He  
collapses on hands and knees, vomits into the earth.

Creasy checks his watch.

CREASY

Oh, you can do better than that.

Cantarella rolls onto his back, looks up at his tormentor.

CREASY

Get up.

CANTARELLA

(gasping)

Please, please, I'll give you anything.

CREASY

Anything...

CANTARELLA

Whatever you ask. It will be yours.

Creasy considers. Really considers. Decides. Unhinged.

CREASY

I'm going to turn around and I want to see life. I want to see Pinta walking across that field. And I want her to be smiling.

It's crazy, like he thinks it might happen. Head down, Creasy turns carefully. Slowly, he looks up.

His heart is empty inside him and the field is empty before him. He blinks just to make sure she's not there.

CREASY

You can't give me a thing...

Creasy turns, aims. But Cantarella is already dead. His tongue out, his eyes bulged.

Creasy fires a round into his heart anyhow.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOCKSIDE - PALERMO - NIGHT

Little fishing boats rock gently at the quay. A figure moves along the shadows. Creasy. Not moving well.

He eases himself down onto a boat, checks the cotton wads stuffed around his abdomen. Blood seeps here and there.

CUT TO:

EXT. HARBOR - NIGHT

As the boat eases out. Creasy at the wheel, headed back for the mainland.

CUT TO:



INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Ettore eats lunch silently. Rika takes an occasional bite. Just to stay alive I suppose.

Noise in the hallway and then Vico Mansutti, Ettore's lawyer, enters the room, his face bloody and swollen, the front of his crisp white shirt red with blood.

Ettore blinks at him. Not comprehending.

ETTORE

(rising)

Vico, my God...

VICO

(apologetic)

Ettore... Rika...

And Creasy steps in behind him. His own shirt bloody at the stomach.

ETTORE

What the hell is going on?

Ettore stops short when he sees the Beretta 9mm Creasy holds level at him.

CREASY

I'm going to talk to your wife.  
If you move or say one word, I'm  
going to kill you.

(a beat)

Sit down.

Ettore sits, looks across to Rika, who looks from her husband over to Creasy.

CREASY

These two, they planned the  
whole thing.

Rika fights back the horror that's already creeping in.

RIKA

Planned what?

Creasy doesn't answer. Instead, he jams the barrel of the gun into Vico's ribs.

VICO

The kidnapping.

CREASY

Say her name.

VICO

(flinching)

Pinta's kidnapping. It was an insurance job. I advised Ettore to take out an insurance policy with Lloyd's of London.

RIKA

Insurance?

Ettore looks from the gun to his wife, pleading for a miracle. Maybe God will strike her deaf.

VICO

Ten million Euros. Then I spoke to a friend, a Mafia friend in Rome. They were supposed to give Ettore back half the ransom. They did. I received twenty percent commission. And Ettore saved his business.

Vico, gun or no, is quite convincing. He tells the story at Rika, but can never look at her.

Rika looks over at her husband. Ettore's string is pulled. He's unraveling before her eyes.

Rika tries to process the magnitude of it all. She looks over at Creasy. He holds her with his burning eyes, an archangel now.

VICO

I swear to God, she was not supposed to die. No one wanted that.

That snaps Creasy out of the moment. He swings the gun over at Vico's head. Vico is going to die. He fumbles at his throat, starts to pull a cross and rosary from his shirt.

VICO

Please. Let me say my rosary.

CREASY

For what?

BOOM! Ettore is splattered by his lawyer's blood. The truth raining down on him. He begins to sob.

ETTORE

Rika, please. Rika, forgive me. Rika... I did it for us. For the three of us.

RIKA

Silenzio!

The hatred that flows across the table is incarnate. Ettore slumps in the chair. His mouth opens and closes as his eyes slide away.

Creasy's eyes flicker from Vico's body over to Ettore. His turn next. Creasy takes the few steps over.

RIKA

Leave him to me. Let me kill him.

Creasy shakes his head. Blood really seeping through his shirt now. Holding the cross out, the cross Pinta gave him. Shoving it in Ettore's face. Unraveling him further. What did Pinta say? Show it to the devil if you ever meet him.

Ettore finally screams. Creasy sticks the cross in his pocket.

Then, Creasy ejects the clip from the gun. Then he jacks the shell out of the breech. Then one by one he lets the shells in the clip hit the carpet.

Finally, he takes his wallet out, opens it. There's the 9mm shell in the crease, the bullet that wouldn't fire when he tried to kill himself.

He puts it into the clip, slaps the clip into the gun, chambers the round.

He uses the barrel to lift Ettore's chin. His words are cold, but almost comforting.

CREASY

A bullet doesn't lie. A bullet tells the truth. And the truth will set you free.

Creasy hands Ettore the gun. Ettore holds it, starts nodding, starts rocking back and forth in the chair.

CREASY

Set yourself free.

Creasy turns, walks to the door that leads to the staircase which goes upstairs. As he passes, Rika reaches out.

RIKA

Creasy...

He stops as she takes his right hand, strokes the burns on the back of it. She understands and forgives him.

RIKA

I know you did everything that you could.

CREASY

What was the name of Pinta's bear? She told me he didn't have one, but I knew she was lying to me.

RIKA

His name is Rampitutto. A clumsy bear who breaks everything. But you love him for it...

Creasy nods. He takes his hand away and starts up the stairs, leaving them to their dinner.

## STAIRCASE

Creasy making his laborious way up. We hear Rika's voice below.

RIKA'S VOICE

Do it! Do it, you coward!

## INT. PINTA'S ROOM - DAY

Creasy enters, scoops up the teddy bear. As he looks at it a beat. A GUNSHOT below. Creasy doesn't seem to hear it.

CREASY

(smiles)

Rampitutto...

Creasy starts out of the room.

## EXT. BALLETTTO VILLA - DAY

Rika staggers outside. Where will she find air to breathe? She sits in a lawn chair looking out at the lake. As she holds onto herself...

## INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Ettore slumped across the table. Smoke still curls up from the hole in the side of his head.

INT. CREASY'S ROOM - DAY

Creasy staggers to the stereo, hits a few familiar buttons, leaves his blood on them.

'Blue Bayou' begins to play. It might as well be an opera at this point. Creasy hangs his holster on the corner of the bed.

LINDA RONSTADT

I'm so lonesome all the time.  
Since I left my baby behind. On  
Blue Bayou.

Creasy lies down on the bed.

Holding the bear.

Waiting to die.

And as the song plays, he takes the crucifix out one last time. As he looks at it he seems almost at peace.

CREASY

Give me God what you still have.  
Give me what no one else asks  
for.

Creasy closes his eyes for the last time. And as he smiles, God gives him peace.

LINDA RONSTADT

Gonna see my baby again, gonna  
be with some of my friends,  
maybe I'll feel better again, on  
Blue Bayou...

FADE TO BLACK.

The End