

THE GANGSTER SQUAD

By
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Based on *Tales of the Gangster Squad*
By Paul Lieberman

9-16-10

Classic Black & White **WARNER BROS** LOGO

Coyotes prowl the dark, pacing back and forth, agitated.

COHEN (V.O.)
LA's virgin territory...

EXT. SAN FERNANDO VALLEY - SUMMER EVENING

COHEN (V.O.)
Everything's wide open out here.

New cars in the driveways of new 'ranch' homes. PARENTS on porches, watering lawns. CHILDREN on roller skates and bikes, chasing the last light of day. Children scatter from two CARS tearing through the idyllic neighborhood.

Coyotes bold with hunger. Mouths open in demonic grins.

Cohen's GOONS in a CHEVY pursuing MEN in a CADDY, firing at them. Screeching tires. Screams. A TRICYCLE overturned in the street, wheel spinning.

COHEN (V.O.)
*Nothin' here but a coupla redskins
runnin' some chickenshit rackets.*

The chase continues down the block, the street giving way to graded lots, surveyors stakes, and the subdivision's hedge-lined wooden BILLBOARD along the highway displaying an All-American nuclear family. **OWN A PIECE OF PARADISE!**

The coyotes' eyes glow in the night like abalone coins.

Cohen's goons FIRE into the Caddy, the driver slumps, the Caddy swerving up over a berm, SMASHING into the billboard, BURSTING INTO FLAMES. Panicked people running out into the street, watching the fire climb the billboard, consuming the painted family...

COHEN (V.O.)
And out here, I'm Cortez.

INT. SLAPSY MAXIE'S NIGHTCLUB (COHEN'S TABLE) - NIGHT

MICKEY COHEN (36) eating ROAST PEACOCK, talking between bites. He's not a large man, but his malevolence fills a room, fills your lungs like poison gas. Like you could almost choke to death just standing next to him.

CONTINUED:

COHEN

I'm somethin' they've never seen
before.

RAGAN

You been out in the sun too long.

Opposite Cohen is JAMES RAGAN (50s) Chicago Gangster who operates the Continental Wire Service. Ragan's brought his own muscle, a professional killer named ROURKE.

Next to Cohen is KARL LENNOX, a Kodiak with a crewcut, Cohen's bodyguard and Grand High Executioner. *Frazetta's *Death Dealer* in a fedora. He's a former state trooper. Cohen leans over to pull a Remington M1911 .45 from the shoulder holster in Lennox's coat. If Ragan's frightened by the .45 in Cohen's hand, he doesn't show it. Ice cold.

COHEN

You know for my money a
Remington's still the best Roscoe
on the market. Simple. Reliable.
Blow a tunnel in 'em a kid could
drive his toy train through.

Expertly locking back the slide, stripping out the mag.

COHEN

What's Remington makin' now?
Universal Automatic Computers.
Adding machines that store
information in vacuum tubes.

Ragan watches Cohen disassembling the finely-machined pistol, laying out its components with total mastery.

COHEN

See, now I got all the guns I
need. But information, that's the
future of our business.

(beat)

Your Continental Wire and Trans
America are competin' with each
other. It's a goddamned waste.

Cohen reassembles the gun. In this hands, the components almost leap back together, as though eager to please him.

COHEN

But you combine them, *consolidate*
them? You'd have one wire feedin'
us all the information.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RAGAN

A wire that you'd control.

COHEN

Your taste alone would be twice
what your wire takes in now.

RAGAN

Yeah. You know, Capone tried to
muscle me. Ten years ago. I've
seen the sour end of a gun before,
kid. More times than you been
laid. And I ain't impressed.

Ragan stands to leave. Something flickers behind Cohen's eyes, something stalking behind the bars of its cage.

HARD CUT TO:

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS - LATER THAT NIGHT

Coyotes KEEN and CRY, circling like lion-colored sharks
in the shadow of the HOLLYWOOD SIGN. Overlooking LA.

COHEN

(doing Bela Lugosi)
The cheeldren of the night. What
music they make...

Two CADILLACS facing opposite directions, engines
REVVING. Their Taillights form a huge red clover in the
dirt, where RAGAN lies between the two cars, chained to
their rear bumpers. Ragan's about to be pulled apart.

Lennox has his gun in Rourke's ribs. Cohen's GOONS form a
loose circle around Ragan. An impatient coyote darts in
for a bite but one of Cohen's goons kicks at it and it
circles beyond his reach. He picks up a rock and throws
it, scattering them. But the coyotes come right back.

COHEN

(re: coyotes)
It's the damnedest thing, Jimmy.
You know I been up here so many
times now they got this...

Searching for the term, Cohen turns to Lennox.

LENNOX

Pavlovian response.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COHEN

Yeah, they see me up here and they
know they're gettin' a treat.

RAGAN

You're a sick twist, Mickey.

COHEN

(laughing)

You were beggin' me a minute ago.

RAGAN

That's when I thought you were
human. But you're somethin' else.
Somethin' rotten.

Cohen nods. The CARS drive in opposite directions,
pulling the chains taut between them. Ragan SCREAMS.
Wheels spin, spitting dust until some crucial part of him
gives way. *We don't actually see Ragan torn in half. But
Cohen does, and it delights him. The cars drive apart.
The coyotes move in.

COHEN

*You're impressed now, aren't you,
you son of a bitch.*

Lennox steers Rourke's head, forcing him to watch the
scrum of coyotes snarling and snapping in a cloud of
dust, fighting over what's left of Ragan. Rourke vomits.

COHEN

(to Rourke)

The rest of your life. Every
breath you take from now on is a
gift from me. Understand?

Rourke nods furiously. He's in shock.

COHEN

Now, I want you to go back to
Chicago and tell 'em what you've
seen here. You tell 'em Los
Angeles belongs to Mickey Cohen.

INT. PASSENGER COMPARTMENT SUPER CHIEF TRAIN - SUNSET

A milk-skinned BLONDE (18) watching the UNION STATION
PLATFORM flow to a stop outside her window. She's a
harvest festival princess from Nowhere, USA, a cautionary
tale, stepping like Dorothy into Oz out into...

EXT. UNION STATION PLATFORM - SUNSET

LOS ANGELES: Realm of Raymond Chandler and James M. Cain. At once a glittering city of lotus-eaters and a sprawling boomtown of the quick and the dead. Fedoras. French hats. Furs and pinstripes. Postwar optimism. Predation. Peril.

LOS ANGELES 1949INT. UNION STATION - MOMENTS LATER

The vulpine MITCH RACINE (28) watches WOMEN passing through Union Station the way a croc watches toddlers wade the Ganges. Racine sidles to our blonde, smiles.

O'MARA (O.S.)
The better to eat you with.

From across the station, two plainclothes LAPD DETECTIVES slyly scope Racine handing our blonde his BUSINESS CARD.

SGT. JOHN O'MARA (30s): A thousand yard stare shaded by his fedora. Military brush cut. A square jaw you'd break your knuckles on. When George S Patton said "A hasty plan violently executed is better than a perfect plan next week," he was talking about O'Mara. He gets it done. He lives in a bicameral world where there is good and there is evil. Killed his share of Krauts. Didn't enjoy it. Didn't lose sleep over it. Doesn't give his word lightly. But he'll die to keep it. A trained commando who fights like a Viking bezerker. Fuck with him at your peril.

O'Mara's partner, DETECTIVE SGT. WILL HENDRICKS(30s) is softer, sadder. He was 4-F, stayed behind while his buddies went off to save the world. He's nobody's hero.

HENDRICKS
You figure his card says MITCH
RACINE: PIMP AND BLACK DAHLIA
SUSPECT?

But our blonde looks like she can't believe her luck.

O'MARA
Looks more like MITCH RACINE:
TALENT AGENT to me.

EXT. THE CROESUS BUILDING - NIGHT

Racine pulls her suitcase out of a CAB, and squires our blonde into the 10-story beaux-arts CROESUS BUILDING.

INT. O'MARA'S PLAIN DETECTIVE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The moment they pull up to the Croesus, Hendricks turns white, like they've crossed into a minefield. Hendricks watches in horror as O'Mara keys the mic on the radio.

O'MARA (INTO RADIO)
*William 60. We're Code 6 at the
 Croesus Building. Olympic and
 Main. Requesting additional.*

HENDRICKS
 The hell are you doing?

O'MARA
 What does it look like? He's gonna
 give her a bad time in there.

ADAM 21 (OVER RADIO)
*Adam 21. You're coming in
 broken, repeat. We've got a
 BO radio.*

ADAM 18 (OVER RADIO)
*Adam 18. We're going to
 have a delayed response due
 to a dead dog obstructing
 eastbound roadway on
 Wilshire.*

*ADDITIONAL BULLSHIT EXCUSES COME OVER THE CAR RADIO ...

HENDRICKS
 Everybody knows about this place.
 It's like an Indian burial ground.
 Nobody's comin' anywhere near it.

O'MARA
 So what? We're just supposed to
 let 'em dry-gulch the poor kid?

HENDRICKS
 Don't pull any of your Captain
 Midnight crap, Sarge. Not here.

O'Mara pulls his .38 REVOLVER, wrist-flicks the cylinder.

HENDRICKS
 I don't want any part of this.

O'MARA
 Then stay out of my way.

INT. CROESUS LOBBY - SECONDS LATER

O'Mara walks in alone. 4 THUGS by the elevator look him over as the IRON DIAL above the elevator cage STOPS at 9.

INT. 9TH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Racine and our blonde step from the elevator to head down the hallway. Mounting dread. All the doors PADLOCKED.

RACINE

We hold all our screen tests up here, kiddo. *Away from the crowds.*

INT. CROESUS LOBBY - NIGHT

The BRUISER behind the BELL DESK seems to sniff O'Mara, his hand caressing a .45, unseen behind his desk.

O'MARA

I'm here to meet someone.

BRUISER

Yeah? What's her name?

O'Mara smiles playfully, just looking for a good time.

O'MARA

I don't know yet. I was hoping maybe you could help me with that.

THUG 1

We got a someone or two upstairs. Come on. I'll introduce you.

INT. 9TH FLOOR ROOM - NIGHT

Racine knocks on the door. It opens on THREE THUGS around a table. Whiskey and cards. Eyeing her like a rare steak.

BLONDE

Thanks, Mister. Really. But I changed my *mind*-

-wincing *Oww!* as Racine vice-clamps her tricep.

INT. CAGE ELEVATOR (ASCENDING) - NIGHT

O'Mara riding up with FOUR THUGS. Brawlers with scars, cauliflower ears. The elevator's cramped. Tension mounts.

O'MARA
I mention I'm partial to blondes?

He smiles awkwardly at Thug 1, and WINCES as Thug 2 JABS the business end of a **PISTOL** into O'Mara's kidney.

THUG 1
Alright, big guy.
(snapping fingers)
Pistola. Butt-first. Or my buddy burns one through your back porch.

O'Mara reaches INSIDE HIS COAT. *O'Mara's unseen hand closing around the .38 in his shoulder holster.*

THUG 2
Nice and easy there, Dutch.

Thug 1 glimpses the **BADGE** on his belt.

THUG 1
You're a cop? Christ, buddy, you soft in the head or something?

O'Mara HEAD-BUTTS Thug 1, and simultaneously FIRES BACK under his left arm. BLAM! The bullet PUNCHES out through the back of his coat to hit THUG 2 below his collar bone. Thug 2 drops his pistol. O'Mara kicks it away, the gat clanking as it tumbles down the elevator shaft. O'Mara brings his .38 out of his coat, but Thug 1 SEIZES his wrist, the gun firing wildly through the floor-

INT. 9TH FLOOR ROOM - NIGHT

-Racine bear-hugs her. She STOMPS on his shoe, writhes away, but Thug 3 catches her, tearing her blouse. Racine SLAPS her! They hold her. MURPHY BED draw-bridging down-

INT. CAGE ELEVATOR STILL ASCENDING - NIGHT

-O'Mara's commando training kicks in and he serves them up some *Jiu Jitsu* he picked up overseas: blurring *FISTS, ELBOWS, vicious throat-CHOPS!* Not balletic, brutal.

THUG 1
How the hell did you-

CONTINUED:

Thug 1 is raising his gun, but O'Mara traps his arm, FORCING his arm OUT the bars of the cage. The 9th FLOOR comes DOWN past the rising elevator like a guillotine- - BREAKING the thug's arm! GYAAAH! His gun clanging away down the shaft.

O'Mara exits the elevator, running down the hall, following her SCREAMS.

INT. 9TH FLOOR ROOM - NIGHT

She SCREAMS, struggling on the bed while Thugs 5 & 6 hold her down. Knock! Knock! Racine opens a gleaming STRAIGHT RAZOR. Her terrified eyes reflected in the blade face.

RACINE

Make another sound and you're dead.

She nods, frozen, as they FOLD the Murphy back up into the wall with her captured inside it. Knock! Knock!

Racine opens the door and meets O'Mara's FIST. Racine CRASHING back into a table. O'Mara follows him in, hand jammed in his coat pocket, hoping it LOOKS LIKE A GUN.

O'MARA

Mitts in the air. All of you.

Racine narrows his eyes at O'Mara, smelling bullshit.

RACINE (CONT'D)

I don't think so ... Ten bucks says this guy ain't even heeled.

THUG 3

You got a bet.

THUG 4

Yeah, I'll take some of that.

A tense moment. O'Mara's bluff holding by a thread.

O'MARA

Come on over and find out.

Racine makes his move, stepping toward O'Mara, grinning now. Holding his straight razor behind his leg. O'Mara pulls his finger out of his coat, points it at Racine.

O'MARA (CONT'D)

Bang.

INT. MURPHY BED - CONTINUOUS

In the darkness BEHIND the Murphy bed, our Blonde hears FURNITURE BREAKING. FISTS POUNDING. GROWLS of BRUTALITY.

INT. ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The Murphy bed OPENS. Shattered furniture. Thugs moaning. Sgt. John O'Mara is the last man standing. Panting, he shows the girl his BADGE to let her know she's safe.

O'MARA
Welcome to Los Angeles.

I/E. SLAPSY MAXIE'S NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Klieg lights. Limousines under the portico. Neon: SLAPSY MAXIE'S. A long line of REVELERS waiting to get in the door. **SGT. JERRY WOOTERS** (30s) BADGES the DOORMAN, walks right to the front of the line. Near the entrance, PETE, 13 going on 33, living on wits and moxie, is shining a GUY's shoes. Pete looks up as Wooters passes him.

PETE
He's in there now.

WOOTERS
(tossing two bits)
Thanks, Pete.

Wooters waltzes into the club like Fred Astaire. He doesn't look like a cop, doesn't move like one, or think like one. Hair pomade-slick, a month long. He's a bon vivant, never met a woman or wager he didn't like, serious about bachelorhood and little else.

Wooters glides upstream past swift WAITERS, CIGARETTE GIRLS who give him the eye. He loves the action. Black-seamed stockings. BARBARA STANWYCK, BOGART, BACALL. Everything the traffic will allow.

At the MIC, his black tie hanging loose, DEAN MARTIN sings 'BRAZIL' backed by XAVIER CUGAT's ORCHESTRA. JERRY LEWIS cavorts in a headdress next to LINA ROMAY.

Wooters finds shylock JACK WHALEN at his regular table. Whalen's a cornfed bruiser, Jethro Bodine meets the Hulk. He's eating a steak, washing it down with whiskey.

CONTINUED:

WOOTERS

Jack Whalen. I have a warrant for
your arrest.

WHALEN

What's the charge?

WOOTERS

Usury.

WHALEN

The hell is *usury*?

WOOTERS

Loan sharking, dumbass. You going
to come along quietly?

WHALEN

Cousin, I never done anything
quietly in my life. I surely don't
aim to start now.

A stare-down, cop to crook, but neither man can keep a
straight face. And they both break out laughing.

WHALEN

Take a pew, Brother Jerry. Steak a-
la-cart-e here ain't exactly
pizen.

The waiter brings Wooters a steak and whiskey, unbidden.

WHALEN

I booked you an appointment to
raid the Cabana Club. Same as the
others. Dragna says you can round
up the usual suspects. Just don't
pinch his people or damage his
machines.

(beat)

But tread softly, hear? Word is
Jimmy Ragan's gone to his reward.
Smoke says Cohen's on the warpath.

Wooters nods inquisitively toward **MICKEY COHEN** at his
table by the stage, his Praetorian Guard in evidence,
Cohen's coterie of **SYCOPHANTS** around him, paying tribute.

WOOTERS

(re: Cohen's table)

Can't tell the players without a
program.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WHALEN

Well, let's see. Readin' left to right, we've got the *honorable* Judge Krauss, Max Solomon, Burbank Police Chief Elmer Jackson, and one Eugene W. Biscailuz, *the* high Sheriff of Los Ang-ell-eez County.

WOOTERS

(kidding Whalen)

Shame. What kind of cop would break bread with a criminal?

INT. COHEN'S TABLE AT SLAPSY MAXIE'S - CONTINUOUS

Cohen preaching his gospel to JUDGE KRAUSS, SHERIFF BISCAILUZ, ELMER JACKSON. Fear and greed in their eyes.

COHEN

See, people won't have to drag their asses out to the track anymore. The wire brings all the action to them. Up to the minute odds, right into their neighborhoods. And in a few more years, I won't even need the damn wire. They got television signals. Sid Ceasar's floatin' through the air around us right now. I can harness that, bring off-track betting right into their living rooms. Think about that.

(off greedy looks)

And all I need from you guys is a little law and order. I make the law. And I give the orders.

SHERIFF BISCAILUZ

What about Dragna?

Cohen's obsidian eyes, the eyes of a predator.

COHEN

I wouldn't worry about him.

Next to Cohen **JEAN FARADAY** rolls her eyes, a GI pinup by Alberto Vargas. World-weary, and effortlessly sexy.

A WAITER rushing through the CROWD, carrying a HOUSE PHONE trailing a long cord, across the club to Cohen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WAITER
Call for you, Mr. Cohen.

COHEN
(into receiver)
Speak.

After a moment, Cohen hangs up, turning to JUDGE KRAUSS, whispering something to him.

KRAUSS
Of course. I'll take care of it.

Krauss lifts an oyster, sucks flesh off the shell, like a reptile. Krauss' eyes all over Jean.

JEAN
(to Cohen)
I thought I told you to keep that rotten creep away from me.

COHEN
Hey. Be nice, huh?

She gets up and storms off. Krauss watching her go.

INT. SLAPSY MAXIE'S - CONTINUOUS

Wooters spots **JEAN** crossing the room. Her dress could stand up by itself. Legs about 40 feet long.

WOOTERS
Doesn't seem right, you know, that he should have so much, when others have so few.

WHALEN
You sound like a pink pamphlet, pal, but this ain't Russia. It's LA, penalty for poachin the King's deer in this town is still a permanent vacation in a pine box.

WOOTERS
Well, yeah. But I'm starving.

AT THE BAR: Jean sees Wooters coming, but doesn't let on. She opens her cigarette case, plucks out an Old Gold as he arrives, lifting his **U.S. NAVY ZIPPO** to her Cigarette. She closes her hand over his, bringing his flame closer.

CONTINUED:

JEAN

Thanks.

(looking him over)

Jean.

JERRY

Jerry.

JEAN

Say Jerry, I'll just bet you have a ducky war story behind that lighter. Come on, I thought all you guys had war stories to make a girl go weak in the knees.

WOOTERS

Hmm. Well, we were shot down once. Spent a day and a half floating in the Pacific, sharks circling us. And some of 'em? Bigger than the raft. You could feel them brushing up against it in the dark.

JEAN

Ooh. Don't tell me. You dove in with your knife between your teeth and fought them off like Johnny Weissmuller - who's right over there by the way.

WOOTERS

No, what I did? I bet my buddies a rescue plane would get to us before the sharks did. I took them for a hundred bucks a piece. Are you weak in the knees yet?

JEAN

(exhaling smoke)

Sure I am. Let's see. You're not quite big enough to be a shylock. So what's your racket, handsome?

WOOTERS

I'm a Bible salesman.

JEAN

Looking to rescue a scarlet lady from her life of sin?

(off Wooters)

Take me away from all this and make an honest woman of me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WOOTERS

No, ma'am. I was just hoping to take you to bed.

JEAN

You sound like my kind of cowpuncher, Jerry.

INT. CROESUS HALLWAYS - NIGHT

The aftermath of O'Mara's battle: O'Mara moves down the dark halls, AXES the heavy **PADLOCKS** off the **DOORS**. And the **DOORS SWING OPEN**, one after another, to reveal..

Young **WOMEN**: Vacant-eyed, pale. **NEEDLE-MARKED ARMS**, struggling on stained mattresses, bound to bed frames. Turning their heads in shame as O'Mara cuts them loose.

I/E. STAFF 1 (CHIEF PARKER'S CAR) - NIGHT

STAFF 1, the Chief's unmarked, bullet-resistant **BUICK DYNAFLOW** smoothly negotiates downtown traffic. Behind the wheel is the Chief's Driver, **OFFICER DARRYL GATES** (23).

Behind Gates, sits LAPD **CHIEF "WHISKEY BILL" PARKER** (44) a hard man from the Dakota Territory. His car's equipped with a **RADIO PHONE** and **CAR PHONE**. A **NIGHTSTICK** and **ITHACA SHOTGUN** mounted up against the bulkhead. And Parker's personal touch: a built-in bar, **WHISKEY** and **GLASSES**.

Parker pours himself a few fingers of **I.W. HARPER**, sips, grimaces. Next to him on the seat is The Los Angeles Examiner. Headline: **GANGLAND VIOLENCE PLAGUES SOUTHLAND**.

EXT. THE CROESUS BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

LAPD COPS hold back a gathering CROWD, including a DOZEN **REPORTERS** and **PHOTOGRAPHERS**. STAFF 1 cruises by the chaotic scene. Through his tinted window, Parker watches shattered **WOMEN**, now wearing cop's uniform tunics over their stained clothes, squinting against the sun as COPS lead them to **AMBULANCES**. The scene both lurid and tragic.

PARKER

This was Cohen's place. Who took it down?

GATES

Sergeant O'Mara, sir.

CONTINUED:

REPORTERS now zombie-mob Parker's car, crowding the tinted windows, cameras FLASHING. Shouting questions.

REPORTER 1
Chief, what do you think
about those girls locked up
at the Croesus?

REPORTER 2
When're you gonna do
something about Mickey
Cohen, Chief?

Parker ignores them as Gates drives away.

INT. LOS ANGELES CITY HALL (DETECTIVES' BULLPEN) - NIGHT

Wooters leaning back, his chair up on two legs, his feet braced against a desk, flirtily dictating his report to the Watch Commander's cute little SECRETARY.

WOOTERS
...After I arrested him, Whalen
managed to somehow escape from my
vehicle while I was stopped for a
red signal. Damnedest thing.

Now, O'Mara drags the cuffed Racine and company through the bullpen. UNIFORMS, CLERKS give him a wide berth. The secretary looks up from her typing and almost gasps. Then Wooters looks up, sees O'Mara's swollen face.

WOOTERS
What happened to you this time?

O'MARA
They resisted.

Racine and his goons look even worse.

WOOTERS
What happened to them?

O'MARA
They resisted.

WOOTERS
Sheesh. You're workin' too hard.

O'Mara sees **MAX SOLOMON**, pin-striped mob lawyer, walk out of the Watch Commander's Office. Racine smiles knowingly.

INT. WATCH COMMANDER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

O'Mara brings Racine before **LT. QUINCANNON** (50s) at his desk. Lt. Quincannon's face booze-blotched and baggy.

QUINCANNON

Weren't you supposed to be on a
Dahlia Stakeout?

O'MARA

I was.

QUINCANNON

So what the hell are you doing?
Hendricks tells me you went in
there without a warrant.

O'MARA

It was exigent circumstances.

QUINCANNON

Judge Krauss saw it differently.

Quincannon hands O'Mara some folded court DOCUMENTS.

O'MARA

Habeas corpus.

(flipping pages)

For all four of them. That's fast
work. If I didn't know better I'd
think somebody here stiffed in a
call.

QUINCANNON

You've been admin-transferred,
what? Five times, in six months?
That's gotta be a record. And you
keep steppin' on corns like they
give a merit badge for it. We got
rules around here, O'Mara. Do
yourself a favor and learn 'em.

INT. DETECTIVES BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara storms out of Quincannon's office. Wooters watches him go. And after a moment, Wooters follows O'Mara out.

EXT. STEPS OF CITY HALL - NIGHT

Alone in the rain, O'Mara leans against one of the columns in front of LOS ANGELES CITY HALL. He watches Racine and the others walking out free men.

A 1948 Packard Custom 8 **LIMO** pulls up, idling there on Main. Racine and the others don't look so cocky anymore.

O'Mara watches a HUGE MAN get out of the Limo. We recognize him as **KARL LENNOX**.

WOOTERS (O.S.)
Cohen's bodyguard. Former State
Trooper name of Karl Lennox.

O'Mara sees Wooters standing there, just getting some air.

WOOTERS
He was a gift from the Attorney General. Do you know the Attorney General?
(off his head shake)
Neither do I.

Racine and his men climb into the Limo. Lennox and O'Mara lock eyes through the rain. Lennox doesn't smile at him so much as bare his teeth as he touches his hat brim.

WOOTERS
Look, I'm sure I'm not the first guy to tell you this, but please don't feed or tease Mickey Cohen.

O'MARA
Doesn't it bother you?

WOOTERS
No. Not for a long time.

Watching the limo pull away, O'Mara looks like a wolf with his leg in a trap. Nothing he can do about this.

INT. O'MARA'S HOME - NIGHT

The modest home is the best they can manage on an honest cop's salary. The milk is powdered, the furniture second-hand. **The ceiling leaks into a Yuban can.**

CONTINUED:

CONNIE O'MARA, pretty, whip smart, with her own war souvenirs, hands hardened by Lockheed Martin, lounges in an easy chair, a used copy of Chandler's The Little Sister braced on her pregnant belly. Old copies of *True Detective* in the magazine rack, her girlish vice.

Connie lifts the Yuban can, dumps water in the sink. When she comes back, **O'Mara is in the doorway**, looking like a kid who's torn the knees of his church trousers.

CONNIE
Hail the conquering hero.

O'MARA
This time, Boss, I swear I didn't go looking for it. Scout's honor.

CONNIE
Don't kid me. You go looking for it every time you leave the house.

And we HEAR the Mills Brothers' *I Love You So Much It Hurts...*

INT. O'MARA'S BATHROOM - MINUTES LATER

...From a small table-top radio. O'Mara soaking in the bathtub. Raw. Vulnerable. He's powerfully built, but heroics have cost him. Battle scars lace bare skin.

O'MARA
You know, there were people over there... when the Krauts came for their neighbors, they just stood there. And they let it happen.

Connie dips her washcloth into pink water, sponges his bloody arm where Racine's razor bit through his sleeve.

O'MARA
(off her look)
Some pimp. He was going to put the hurt on this poor kid who didn't know any better. Fact, she looked a little like you. Well, you know, not nearly as pretty, but-

CONNIE
-Smooth talk isn't your line, Sarge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'MARA

-No, I'm serious. I don't know, maybe it was the way she wore her hair, reminded me of that time we went to Catalina before the war.

CONNIE

You can't keep this up, baby. I know you think you can, but you can't. Not if you want to live.

(searching his eyes)

You do, don't you? Want to live?

O'MARA

What the hell kind of a question is that? Of course I do.

But he can't meet her eyes.

CONNIE

Then I need you to do something for me. John, I need you to unlearn what you learned over there. Please.

She takes his face in her hands, steers his eyes to hers.

CONNIE

Come back to me.

He kisses her, winces, wraps his arms around her. And in spite of everything, she can't stop herself from melting into him as he climbs from the tub, soaking her clothes.

CUT TO:

TIGHT ON: *Gloved hands SNAPPING a PADLOCK over the bars of that CAGE ELEVATOR where O'Mara battled earlier.*

COHEN (V.O.)

Whores don't grow on trees.

They're like mustangs. You gotta catch 'em wild, break them before you can train them to do tricks.

INT. THE CROESUS (DESERTED HALLWAYS) - LATER THAT NIGHT

Cohen's explosives expert, '**RED' GRANT**', a former fireman turned firebug, rolls 50-gallon drums down dark hallways.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COHEN (V.O.)

*Means I need a quiet place to lock
the girls up, keep them hopped up
on Mexican dope. This cop came out
of nowhere, like an early frost.
And now my whole crop's ruined*

Grant feeding rag-ropes, tied together like magician's
kerchiefs, into the spigot of each drum. **Fuses.**

INT. CROESUS LOBBY - NIGHT

Racine and his thugs sit on the couches. They're
terrified, facing **MICKEY COHEN** and his **PRAETORIAN GUARD**:
KARL LENNOX, **NEDDY HERBERT**: A hawk-faced hitman. **JIMMY**
WREVOX: A fell creature with a scar down through his left
eye, leaving that eye milky and gibbous. And **JOHNNY**
'STOMP' STOMPANATO: All-pro murderer with looks that land
him in bed with the likes of Lana Turner.

RACINE

Mr. Cohen, I swear to God-

Cohen's obsidian eyes, like those of Kipling's King
Cobra, seem to have the power to hypnotize. Racine's
already pissed himself and still he cannot look away.

COHEN

*You're talkin' to God, Mitch. So
maybe you better swear to me.*

RACINE

*I swear to You, sir, if it hadn't
a been for that cop-*

COHEN

*-You think I'm sore at this cop?
Hell, no. He's a square Joe, this
guy, rescues a damsel in distress.
Goddamn hero is what he is. Guy
deserves a medal. In fact ...*

(to Lennox)

What's this guy workin?

LENNOX

Homicide.

COHEN

*Naw. That's rough duty. Let's fix
him up with a nice sit-down job.*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LENNOX
I took the liberty, sir.

INT. CROESUS HALLWAYS - NIGHT

Grant's ZIPPO LIGHTER FLICKS open to **LIGHT** the gas-damp rags. Then Grant *RUNS*, his face flush with fire-lust.

COHEN (V.O.)
Tomorrow, this place is all over the front page. I got to start all over somewhere else. We had a good thing goin, Mitch. But, you know what they say? All good things must one day burn to the ground for the insurance money.

Almost simultaneously, the barrels **EXPLODE**, swirling flames fill the Croesus hallways like dragon's breath.

INT. ELEVATOR SHAFT - NIGHT

Fire climbs the shaft like a chimney. We hear **SCREAMS** over the inferno...

INT. CROESUS LOBBY - NIGHT

RACINE
Mr. Cohen, I'm so sorry. I swear.
It won't ever happen again.

Cohen reaches out to ruffle Racine's hair, then gives him an affectionate punch on the jaw.

COHEN
I know it, kid.

INT. CAGE ELEVATOR - NIGHT

And we see **RACINE and his thugs have been LOCKED inside the ELEVATOR**: they pile on each other, crabs in a trap. Clawing, climbing over each other, rabid to escape the RISING FLAMES. The cable **SNAPS**. And the elevator **FALLS** down, down into the fires of hell.

QUINCANNON (PRELAP)
O'Mara! Get in here.

INT. LA CITY HALL (QUINCANNON'S OFFICE) - NEXT DAY

O'Mara stands, facing Quincannon like a firing squad. Quincannon smiles, sliding fresh-cut **ADMINISTRATIVE TRANSFER ORDERS** across his desk to O'Mara. O'Mara doesn't even need to look at them. His eyes on the Lieutenant.

QUINCANNON

I'm transferring you to
Bunco/Forgery, effective
immediately. You're all through in
homicide, O'Mara.

O'Mara shakes his head, son of a goddamned bitch.

INT. BUNCO/FORGERY SECTION - DAY

O'Mara's tucked in the corner of the backwater BUNCO UNIT surrounded by MIDDLE-AGED DETECTIVES. Washouts and burnouts, circling racing forms, crosswords, playing solitaire, tipping flasks into coffee mugs. *Christ.*

O'Mara opens the *The Los Angeles Times*. The HEADLINE: **IN WAKE OF SCANDAL, CROESUS BUILDING CONSUMED BY FIRE.** O'Mara doodles devil's horns on a front page PHOTO of MICKEY COHEN.

GATES (O.S.)

Sergeant O'Mara?

O'Mara turns to see **OFFICER DARRYL GATES (23).**

GATES (CONT'D)

I'm Darryl Gates.

O'MARA

Who the hell is Darryl Gates?

GATES

The Chief's driver. He would like
a word with you, Sergeant.

INT. CHIEF PARKER'S OFFICE - DAY

Parker's office is immaculate, Spartan, all the more imposing for its lack of adornment. The large window behind Parker's desk looks out over Los Angeles. O'Mara stands at parade-rest before CHIEF PARKER. He opens O'Mara's FILE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PARKER

Your approach to police work has not won you many friends on this department, Sergeant O'Mara. Lieutenant Quincannon tells me you're brutal and insubordinate.

(beat)

And coming from a man like him, I consider that high praise indeed.

Parker signals to Gates, who pours two whiskies.

PARKER

Please, sit.

Gates places them in front of Parker and O'Mara.

PARKER (CONT'D)

You worked with the French Resistance during the war. Trained at Camp X, did you not?

O'MARA

I've never heard of Camp X, sir.

PARKER

No. No, of course you haven't. Nevertheless, with your service record, one would assume you are not unskilled in guerilla warfare.

O'MARA

I survived. A lot of better men didn't. This why you wanted to see me, sir? To talk about the war?

PARKER

I want to talk about the war for the soul of Los Angeles, Sergeant.

Parker moves to the window, looking out over Los Angeles.

PARKER (CONT'D)

Our forebearers fought savage Indians and Mexican Banditry to win Los Angeles. And now we're losing her to an *Eastern crook*.

(off O'Mara)

Gambling houses and brothels outnumber schools in this city. Every night, people are openly gunned down on our streets.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PARKER (CONT'D)

Yet the Los Angeles Police
Department has not solved a single
gangland homicide in over ten
years.

O'MARA

Well, you've got the best cops
money can buy here, sir.

PARKER

Thank you for volunteering,
Sergeant O'Mara.

O'MARA

You're welcome, sir. To do what?

PARKER

What I cannot. Not officially.
You're going to wage a guerilla
campaign against Mickey Cohen.
This isn't a crime wave. It's an
enemy occupation. Cohen's using
arms smuggled back from the war to
terrorize our citizens. Weapons
we've never seen in Los Angeles.
And he's winning. Taking over.

O'MARA

What about the Feds, sir?

PARKER

Hoover still refuses to
acknowledge the existence of the
Syndicate. We're on our own.

O'MARA

I'll need men. And weapons.

PARKER

Recruit a small squad. Half a
dozen men at most. And keep it
quiet, is that clear? Anonymity
will be your greatest weapon
against Cohen. Secrecy will be
your sword, and your shield. If
Cohen learns of your existence, I
won't be able to protect you. So
you're to make no arrests.

O'MARA

Sir?

CONTINUED: (3)

PARKER

Cohen owns the courts. So arrests are worse than useless. Money is what brought him. And if you cost him enough money, if you shatter his operations here, he'll move on to Las Vegas or some other godless Gomorrah. I don't care. As long as he leaves Los Angeles.

(beat)

Cohen is a cancer on this town. And you, Sergeant, are going to be my Chief of Surgery. And as such, your motto must be *Primum Nocere*.

(off O'Mara, huh?)

Above all. Do harm.

JEAN (PRELAP)

**You are my kinda cowpuncher,
Jerry.**

INT. GARDEN OF ALLAH (BUNGALOW 12) - DAY

Jean and Jerry lying amid tangled sheets, spent. He rolls over and kisses her.

JEAN

Smooth talker. I bet you say that to all the girls.

(sighs)

So where have you been all my miserable life, Jerry the Bible Salesman?

WOOTERS

Surviving.

JEAN

That's an honorable profession.

What made you give it up?

(off his smile)

He'll kill you if he finds out, you know. I hope I'm worth it. What am I saying? Of course I am.

WOOTERS

What the hell are you doing with Cohen anyway? I mean, he doesn't seem like your type.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEAN

But I'm his.

INT. O'MARA'S HOME - NIGHT

O'Mara sits on the sofa with Connie. She's not happy.

O'MARA

Look, it's gonna be a secret outfit, okay? Strictly hit and run. And I'll come home to you every night. Scout's honor.

CONNIE

But why does it have to be you?

O'MARA

I got volunteered.

CONNIE

Oh, of course you did.

O'MARA

We moved out here, you said we'd found paradise. Remember? Wind was right, we'd smell the ocean through the bedroom window.

(beat)

That's what kept me going when I was over there. Getting back here to you. Raising our family here. I'm not gonna let Cohen poison it.

CONNIE

I never told you this. But once, while you were overseas, a government car came up our street. Two Army officers got out of it. I could see them checking addresses. They were coming here. To tell me you were dead. I was sure of it.

(beat)

I put myself through all that because I had to. But honey? I can't go through it again.

She walks out into the kitchen.

INT. O'MARA'S KITCHEN - HOURS LATER

O'Mara sits at their small kitchen table, pouring over a pile of PERSONNEL FILES. Connie carries grilled cheese sandwiches to the table, pours the milk.

CONNIE
Stubborn son of a bitch.

And with a sigh, she reaches across the table to open the files. O'Mara watches her sharp eyes scan them. Backing his play despite his intransigence. God, he loves her.

O'MARA
You're something else, you know it?

CONNIE
Well, you're gonna do it anyway. I might as well help you stay alive.
(takes a bite, reads)
Top of his class. Top of his class. This one made detective before his thirtieth birthday.

O'MARA
What's the matter, boss?

CONNIE
If I'm Cohen, these are the first cops I'm going to buy. They'll be Lieutenants in a few years.

O'MARA
So you're saying I need to find other bums like me.

CONNIE
There's nobody like you, Sarge.
(kissing him)
I'm saying you shouldn't be looking at boy scouts for this.

EXT. CENTRAL AVENUE - BRILLIANT NIGHT

O'Mara DRIVING down CENTRAL AVENUE, Bee-bop Babylon. ZOOT SUITERS with flashy ties and diamond stickpins, LADIES with frills and feathers, heading straight for that vertical neon beacon at 42nd and Central: **CLUB ALABAM.**

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONNIE (V.O.)
Excessive Force. Insubordination.
Brutality.

INT. O'MARA'S HOME - NIGHT

O'Mara and Connie are on their bed with a bowl of popcorn and a BOX marked **ADMINISTRATIVE DISCIPLINE**. Pilfered PERSONNEL FILES spread out on the bed around them, the officers' MUGS clipped to each manila. Connie is reading from the file of **OFFICER AARON 'ROCKY' WASHINGTON**.

CONNIE
 (passing it over)
 Sounds like a man after your own
 dear heart, Sarge.

INT. CLUB ALABAM - NIGHT

CHARLIE PARKER *blowing 'Lester Leaps In'* with JOHNNY OTIS and his 16-piece BAND. Hypnotic, ecstatic bebop. And over at the BAR, enjoying the show...

O'MARA (V.O.)
Rocky Washington. First Negro
Lieutenant on the department. Only
one to ever hand back his bars.

ROCKY WASHINGTON (30s) They call him the Sheriff of Central Avenue. A carved-oak statue in trench and fedora. The descendent of a runaway slave and a Mescalero Apache.

Right now, Washington has his eyes on a dangerous dope-peddler, name of **DUKE DEL-RED**. Across the room, Del-Red passes a BINDLE of **HEROIN** to a lovely GIRL in chiffon.

O'MARA (V.O.)
Threw his whole career away to go
back to walking a beat down on
Central Avenue.

Washington's **SWITCHBLADE** is out of his pocket, thumbing the button -shickt- the blade gleaming as Washington wrist-flicks his knife, the blade **BUZZES** through the air like a *shuriken* **THUNKING** into Del Red's palm, stigmata-pinning his bejeweled right hand to the wall. Del-Red **howls**, the music stops, and the girl scurries away.

Del-Red still pinned, reaches for the knife, hesitates.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WASHINGTON

It's okay, Del. Don't wiggle it now. Be better if you just yank it straight out.

Del-Red closes his eyes and PULLS. The crowd *gasps* involuntary sympathy.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Good boy. Now, wipe the blade on your trousers. Both sides.

Humiliated, Del-Red cleans the blade on his WHITE TROUSERS, painting them with blood. Ruined.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Now close it up. And give it here.

Washington's palm out, a teacher receiving a slingshot. Del-Red shame-crosses the room and places it carefully in Washington's waiting hand. Washington pockets the knife.

WASHINGTON

Now, git. And don't let me catch you boys in here again. You just lost your Alabam privileges.

Del-Red leaves. And CHARLIE PARKER instantly picks up where he left off. **O'Mara approaches Washington.**

O'MARA

Sergeant John O'Mara. Buy you a drink?

WASHINGTON

Well, seein' as I'm on duty, Sergeant. You better buy me two.

INT. CLUB ALABAM - BAR - NIGHT

O'Mara and Washington drinking whiskey, watching RUTH OLAY onstage singing '*How High The Moon.*'

WASHINGTON

This damn heroin's eatin' Central Avenue right down to the bone. I lost my niece to it. Year ago. But you already knew that. It's there in my file, isn't it, Sarge?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'MARA

Yes. It is. I'm sorry. I came to take you upriver, Lieutenant. All the way to the headwaters. You can plug it up right at the source.

Washington smiles.

EXT. CON KEELER'S HOUSE - SUNDOWN

OFFICER CONWAY KEELER (30s) puttering in his open garage. Smallish, wiry guy. Wife shoves chow into his mouth like feeding coal into a furnace. But his engine burns faster and brighter than most. Keeler's working on his son's bike with the same precision that he does everything.

O'Mara walks up Keeler's driveway. O'Mara glances around the garage. Military-grade **ELECTRONICS EQUIPMENT**, state-of-the-art stuff, arranged on Keeler's workbench.

O'MARA

Conway Keeler?

KEELER

Be with you in a minute, fella.

Keeler finishes. The wheel spins smooth as glass. Keeler flips the bike, righting it for his son, **CHARLIE**.

CHARLIE

Thanks, Dad.

As his son rides away, Keeler turns to face O'Mara.

KEELER

Yeah?

EXT. FRONT PORCH - LATER (NIGHTFALL)

Keeler's wife MARCIA hands O'Mara and Keeler iced tea.

KEELER

Thanks, baby.

O'MARA

Thank you, ma'am.

She gives O'Mara a look of suspicion and moves on.

O'MARA

Heard you were the best wireman on the department. And now they got you working traffic. What gives?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEELER

Vice wanted a wire on a little bookie named Robbins. A nobody.

O'MARA

They only ever pinch the nobodies.

KEELER

So I recorded the usual chatter, you know, wagers, markers. Then one night Robbins started going on about this new outfit called Guarantee Finance. Said it was going to put them out of business.

O'MARA

You take that to vice?

KEELER

They lost the tapes. And I woke up writing traffic tickets. Robbins disappeared. I think somebody put him on the submarine to Catalina.

They watch Keeler's wife and son in the front window.

O'MARA

Look, the other guys I'm askin', none of 'em have families. So if you want to think this over...

KEELER

I've been thinking it over for months. And it's not so much the traffic tickets I mind. Because, look, I can shovel shit with the best of 'em. I mean, I was in the Army for Christ's sake. But this-
(re: his home)

This right here, this is what we fought for, isn't it?

O'MARA

Yes it is.

KEELER

Well I sure as hell didn't sign up just to hand it all over to Cohen.

O'MARA

Yeah. Neither did I.

O'MARA'S KITCHEN - DAY

O'Mara and Connie at lunch. Canned tomato soup and crackers. Connie takes a breath and slides a copy of TRUE DETECTIVE MAGAZINE across the kitchen table to O'Mara.

O'MARA

What's this?

A *Stanley-Borack* painted cover of OFFICER MAX KENNARD, gun blazing. Headline: **GUNFIGHT ON GLENDALE BOULEVARD.**

CONNIE

He's shot more crooks than any LA cop in the last hundred years.

O'MARA

Connie, I can't just pull some guy out of a magazine like he's a decoder ring.

CONNIE

Well, I'm sorry, Sarge, but you don't get to turn your nose up at anybody who might save your life.

EXT. OLVERA STREET - DAY

O'Mara CROSSES HIMSELF as he walks past the ornate wooden CROSS, entering PLAZA OLVERA. *Charro* STREET MUSICIANS & white-lace *folklorico* DANCERS. And *Cafe Caliente*.

INT. CAFE CALIENTE - CONTINUOUS

Tex Ritter's 'Rye Whiskey' curling from a radio. Sitting with his back to the wall, **OFFICER MAX KENNARD** (ken-nerd) A laconic Texan. Hands-down the deadliest cop in LA.

Kennard's young partner: **OFFICER NAVIDAD RAMIREZ**, open-faced Mexican kid, former all-Valley sprinter. Immigrant's son, eager to prove himself. Kennard cautiously watches O'Mara approach his table.

O'MARA

Mind if I join you fellas?

Kennard shrugs, eating beans. O'Mara pulls up a chair. Kennard signals the dusky WAITRESS for doz *cervezas*.

O'MARA (CONT'D)

John O'Mara.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KENNARD
Max Kennard.

RAMIREZ
Navidad Ramirez.
(off O'Mara)
I know. It's a mouthful, ain't it?
Christmas Ramirez-

RAMIREZ
-Navidad.

KENNARD
Aw, it's alright for a burlesque
dancer, but I keep tellin him
that's no kinda name for a lawman.

Ramirez rolls his eyes, a teenager at the mall with dad.

O'MARA
(to Kennard)
Can I talk to you a minute?

KENNARD
Go on, Na-vee-dad. Get some air.

Ramirez gets up from the table, heading outside, but he
lingers just outside the door, unseen, listening.

O'MARA
Kid's not going to last long
riding with you.

KENNARD
Nobody'll work with him. On
account of his heritage.

INT. CAFE CALIENTE - MINUTES LATER

Kennard doctors his beer with hot sauce and lime. O'Mara
drinks, counting the NOTCHES scalloped into the butt of
Kennard's magnificent **.45 Caliber Colt Peacemaker**.

KENNARD
True Detective. Nothin' true in
it. Thanks to those chuckleheads
every *pistolero* in LA wants to be
the man who took Max Kennard.

BLAM TO: *Smoke curling from Kennard's gun. A ZOOT-SUITER*
clutches his bloody hand. His gun on the ground.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'MARA
You didn't learn to shoot like
that on the job.

O'Mara sets his bottle down at the edge of the table-

KENNARD
Well, let's just say I *misspent* my
youth.

O'MARA
I'm going after Mickey Cohen. And
I'm looking for a gun hand.

-and O'Mara's finger deliberately **pushes the beer bottle off the edge of the table**. The bottle falling through empty air on its way to the tile floor as O'Mara BRINGS his hand up from under the table, DRAWING, his finger pointed like a gun. But Kennard's faster, drawing his PEACEMAKER, beating O'Mara, even as Kennard's left hand **CATCHES the bottle without spilling a drop**. He smiles.

KENNARD
Wouldn't you know it? I just
happen to have one.

EXT. O'MARA'S HOME - DAY

O'Mara's on a ladder leaned against the house, cleaning out the gutters. Connie's lounging on the front porch swing, with a glass of lemonade and more personnel files. Connie watches him toss handfuls of gunk to the ground.

CONNIE
You're kind of a bull in a china
shop, you know it?

O'MARA
You're talkin' about sex, right?

CONNIE
(ignoring him)
You can't just kick down every
door in town. You're going to need
someone who can open a few of them
for you.

She opens the file labeled SGT. JERRY WOOTERS.

INT. SIXTH-FLOOR CORRIDOR - NIGHT

O'Mara heads for the DETECTIVE MUSTER ROOM. Inside, Wooters stands, addressing a room full of UNIFORMED COPS.

INT. DETECTIVE'S MUSTER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara stands against the wall, watching Wooters muster his troops, preparing for another 'raid.'

WOOTERS

We'll be hitting one of Dragna's joints. Little Wikiup on Wilshire called The Cabana Club. Some of you might even be familiar with it. Hell, I know I am.

Chuckles from the uniforms.

WOOTERS (CONT'D)

You'll stage your prowlers on Berendo, behind the Talmadge. The bomb bay doors open at 2100 hours.

Wooters notices O'Mara waiting against the wall.

WOOTERS (CONT'D)

Alright. See you at the front.

The uniforms file out.

INT. DETECTIVE'S MUSTER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

O'MARA

I'm going after Cohen. And I need an Indian guide, someone who knows the terrain. Figured you might want a chance to do this for real.

WOOTERS

You figured wrong, pal. You're Section 8, you know it? No wonder they keep bouncing you all over the damn city. Christ, how do you know I won't just turn around and rat you out to Cohen?

O'MARA

You won't. I checked you out. You're leading the division in arrests.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'MARA (CONT'D)
 All of 'em misdemeanors, just
 gamblers you keep pulling out of
 these bullshit raids. So I figure
 you've got a guardian angel
 somewhere in Dragna's outfit, but
 I don't think you're on the arm.

WOOTERS
 Yeah, but you don't know that.

O'MARA
 I survived over there, in part,
 because I'm a fair judge of men.

WOOTERS
 Well, hell, then you oughta know
 Parker's just using you.

Something flickers across O'Mara's eyes.

WOOTERS
 Why don't you get smart? You're
 not gonna change a damn thing.
 You're just going to wake up one
 morning walking on the wrong side
 of the grass. And for what?

O'MARA
 My home. My family. Wooters, you
 got nobody in your life worth
 fightin' for, then what the hell
 are you doin' here?

Wooters, absorbing this, conflicted. O'Mara walks out.

EXT. UNDER THE OLYMPIC BRIDGE - NIGHT

O'Mara's meager, ragtag squad is now assembled in the
 shadows on the LA river. **Kennard, Washington, Keeler.**

O'MARA
 Some of you may have heard there
 was a Syndicate rule against
 killing cops. But I am here to
 tell you this Mickey Cohen is a
 different animal. And he will not
 hesitate to take your life. That's
 what Mickey Cohen has in store for
 us if we're caught. Lead. That's
 our prize for comin' in second.

CONTINUED:

WASHINGTON

Come on, don't candy-coat it,
Sarge. Give it to us straight.

O'MARA

Anybody wants out, now's the time.

But none of them are going anywhere. O'Mara nods.

O'MARA

You want to know what first prize is? Nothing. If we succeed in our mission, and I wouldn't put money on that, but if we succeed nobody will ever know what we've done.

(beat)

Officially, this unit does not and will not exist. We wouldn't last a day trading body blows with Cohen. Our only advantage is that he won't know who we are. So I have only one rule in this outfit.

O'Mara holds up his **LAPD BADGE**.

O'MARA

You wanna ride with me, you leave these at home. Carry nothing that identifies you as a police officer. Because make no mistake, what we do from here on out will not be legal. This isn't police work. It's guerilla warfare.

(beat)

Cohen's juice comes from three sources: gambling, prostitution, and dope. That's where we'll cut him. Cohen bleeds enough profit, he'll have to pack up his circus and take it on the road.

Movement in the shadows. They all whirl on the sound, GUNS drawn.... **Navidad Ramirez** steps out, hands up.

RAMIREZ

Take it easy. I'm on your side.

O'MARA

Oh, for Christ's sake.

KEELER

Wait, who the hell is this guy?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KENNARD

He's a huge pain in my ass is what he is. In fact, yeah, why don't you boys just go on and shoot him.

WASHINGTON

You let him follow you here? Yeah, nice goin' there, Hoppalong.

KEELER

What the hell do we do? Kid's heard everything.

RAMIREZ

Yeah, I sure have. And I want in.

O'MARA

(to Kennard)

Fine. But he's your mess.

RAMIREZ

So when do we start, Sarge?

O'MARA

Tonight. We're hitting his casino across the river in Burbank.

EXT. CABANA CLUB - NIGHT

Wooters loiters at a newsstand next to the Cabana Club's awning, just across from the Ambassador, when PETE approaches with his shine box. Wooters is off his game, distracted.

PETE

Shine?

WOOTERS

Make it quick, Pete.

Pete's hard-worn hands fly over Wooters' shoes.

PETE

So, when are you planning to raid this place?

(chin-pointing)

Plainclothes over there next to the Buick? He might as well be wearing a sandwich board.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOOTERS

21 hundred. Nine o'clock. You've
got a magic eye, amigo. Ever
thought about becoming one of us?

PETE

No thanks, Jerry. No future in it.
All the money's on the other side.

WOOTERS

I guess I can't argue with that.
(beat)
You eating alright?

Pete finishes up Wooters' shoes, his palm out for a tip.
Wooters palms Pete a folded bill.

WOOTERS

Vegetables.

A **BLACK CADILLAC** pulls to the curb across the street,
steam curling from the tailpipe. Four **MEN** get out, moving
with purpose, heading straight for the Cabana Club.

PETE

Hey, I thought you didn't start
until nine o'clock.

Wooters watches the gibbous-eyed **JIMMY WREVOCK** and four
HATCHETMEN, trench coats like vampire-capes as they cross
the street, not hurrying, just taking an angle.

WOOTERS

Those aren't my guys.

Wooters SHOVES Pete behind a cab, draws his revolver.

WOOTERS (CONT'D)

Get down. Behind the engine block.

WREVOCK AND HIS HATCHETMEN (MOVING):

WREVOCK

Paint me a nice group portrait.

M-3 SUBMACHINE GUNS and **MP-40 SCHMEISSERS** swing up out of
their coats on custom swivel-rigs to unleash a **ROARING**
TORRENT of **GUNFIRE**. Lead flies through parked cars and
PEOPLE as easily as it flies through the night air.

Wooters takes a bead and **FIRE**s back, squeezing the
trigger, not jerking it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

His .38 barely audible against the HOWL of the full-auto M-3s as **Wooters puts a round into the first Hatchetman's chest.**

Wrevock watches the guy next to him flop facedown in the street. *Huh?* Then another one of Wooters' rounds buzzes by his ear. Wrevock scans the street, finding the source of the gunfire, draws a bead on Wooters with his M-3 just as... **SIRENS.** Wooters' **LAPD PROWL CARS** pulling up to the raid. Wrevock and his crew **turn their guns on the cops!**

Windows implode. Fenders ulcerate. Prowl cars panic-swerve into parked cars. One black & white leaps the curb and plows through the newsstand. **WOUNDED COPS** roll out of their cars, scramble for cover. COPS grab Ithaca SHOTGUNS and pump buckshot back at Cohen's men. A gunbattle rages.

BYSTANDERS cower, wounded and bawling. Wooters sees Pete hunched behind the cab with his palms over his ears.

Wooters **FIRE**s again, winging Wrevock, his .38 round passing through Wrevock's bicep. The sting of it **spinning Wrevock, with his finger still on the trigger.** His M-3 careening, spraying, the bullet-impacts spreading across storefronts and everything slows way down ...

... Wooters watches **Wrevock's wild gunfire**; a Tornado of flying lead, disintegrating all in its path, **heading straight for Pete**, who's still crouched behind the cab, right where Wooters told him to stay.

Now Wooters **is sprinting to reach Pete**, running hard to beat the gunfire, to get to Pete before the bullets do.

Pete's up against the cab, helplessly watching the geysers of powdered sidewalk getting closer to him. Pete turns to Wooters, all his streetwise attitude gone, scared eyes pleading. But he can't reach Pete in time.

Wooters **watches the rounds hitting Pete square.** The boy's eyes going wide with shock. Wooters' palms pressed over Pete's wounds. Wooters trying to hold the life inside him, and watching it leave the kid's eyes. Gone.

WREVOCK (CONT'D)
Come on. Let's blow.

Backing toward their Caddy, firing to cover their escape.

Wooters stands with Pete's blood on him. He SNATCHES a shotgun from one of the cops cowering behind a prowler.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

COP
Jerry, don't be stupid!

He jacks a round into it, charging out into open street. **BOOM!** Tromboning the slide. **BOOM!** Knocking one of Jimmy's Hatchetmen off his feet as Wrevock and the others pile into their Caddy and burn rubber, leaving him. Wooters chases them, **BOOM!** Firing another blast, shattering the Caddy's rear windshield as it screeches around the corner.

HATCHETMAN (O.S.)
Oh Christ, I'm bad hurt. Somebody call a doctor. You, flatfoot, come on, buddy. Ring the doc, willya?

Wooters walks over, stands over the moaning Hatchetman, who's trying to hold himself together. A full load of buckshot in his gut. Recognition in the man's eyes.

HATCHETMAN (CONT'D)
Hey, I know you, right? Yeah, yeah, you're Jerry Wooters.

Wooters jacks another round into the tube, pointing the shotgun directly at the man's face, inches from it.

WOOTERS
Used to be.

And pulls the trigger. **BOOM!**

EXT. MARIPOSA HORSE STABLES IN BURBANK - NIGHT

Here in the tight shadows, preparing for their first raid. Washington thumbs shells into his shotgun. Ramirez lifts an axe from the trunk of one of the Fords, takes a practice swing at a hitching post. Keeler pulls a sap, slaps his palm. Kennard just leans against the corral fence, picking his teeth. A paint horse stamps, whinnies. He cups his hand to the horse's nose to quiet her.

O'MARA
If you have to fire, fire over their heads. Put a few holes in the ceiling. Let 'em think we're knockin' the place over. Then we axe all the slots and tables.

EXT. MARIPOSA ROAD - SECONDS LATER

O'MARA (V.O.)
*We're in and out in ten minutes.
 And back across the river before
 they even know what hit 'em.*

An actual tumble weed drifts across Mariposa Road: just a dirt track between the LA river and Riverside Drive. From the shadows, the squad watch a war party of painted 'COMANCHES' crossing Mariposa. The scene surreal.

COMANCHE 1
 Think the Great Spirit's with us
 tonight, Chief?

COMANCHE 2
 Hell, He better be. Squaw need'm
 new pair of moccasins.

The Comanches LAUGH, on their way into Cohen's million-dollar **RIVERSIDE CASINO**: resembles a plantation, Tara on the LA River. Laughter, music leaking from the windows. Past the Casino, O'Mara can see the Warner Bros **WATER TOWER** against the night sky. Keeler grins. They're extras, just a stone's throw from the movie studio.

INT. CASINO - NIGHT

The squad walks into the smoke-choked casino, momentarily stunned by the scene on the casino floor. It looks like a costume party in here, the CROWD salted with more EXTRAS. ROMAN CENTURIONS playing slots, CONFEDERATE SOLDIERS around the roulette table, COWBOYS and INDIANS at blackjack, and a dozen UNIFORMED COPS shooting craps.

But their BADGES say **CITY of BURBANK**. They're REAL cops. The cops jostle and laugh, caught up in their craps game, each cop carries a **.38 REVOLVER** in a clamshell holster.

KEELER
Those aren't costumes, are they?

O'MARA
 No they are not.

KENNARD
 Dirty sombitches're guardin' the place for Cohen. Call it, Sarge.

O'MARA
 Abort. We're not killin' any cops.

CONTINUED:

But two cops notice these suspicious characters and break from their game, heading straight for the squad. A COCKTAIL waitress with a tray full of BEER watches them.

WASHINGTON
(backing up)
Then get ready to run.

Both Burbank cops pull their PISTOLS.

O'MARA
We're not lookin' for trouble.

COP
Well, you found some.

The other cops leave the craps table, heading this way.

Now, Kennard's right hand slips under his coat, coming out with his Peacemaker, fanning the hammer. **BLAM! BLAM!** Exploding the BEER BOTTLES in the waitress's tray. The two cops shielding their eyes from flying glass. The other Burbank cops draw on them. O'Mara and the squad **RUN-**

EXT. MARIPOSA ROAD - CONTINUOUS

-like hell across Mariposa Road. Burbank cops pouring, out, firing wild. Kennard SHOOTING back over his shoulder putting a round through a cop's FOOT, dropping him. **ARGH!**

EXT. MARIPOSA HORSE STABLES - CONTINUOUS

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! Dust geysers chase the squad through the stables. Fence posts splinter split-seconds after Ramirez runs past them. Burbank cops chasing Washington. O'Mara FIRES into the ground in front of the horses. Horses spook, LEAPING their corrals, BREAKING fences. Cops scramble, dodging the stampeding horses.

I/E. THOMAS' FORD SHERIDAN - CONTINUOUS

Keeler climbs behind the wheel, but the engine won't turn. **BLAM!** Hunching as his windshield shatters.

O'Mara and Washington run to the back of the car, putting their backs to the trunk, PUSHING it. **BLAM! BLAM!** The Burbank cops fire, hitting the fenders.

Kennard gets out of his car FIRING to cover them **BOOM! BOOM!** Explosions of dust backing up the Burbank cops.

CONTINUED:

KENNARD
Put your back into it, bwoy.

WASHINGTON
Who you callin' bwoy, peckerwood?

Keeler POPS the clutch, the engine ROARS to life, tailpipe belching smoke. TIRES spin, kicking up a blinding STORM of ROILING dust. O'Mara and Washington are now running to get into their Fords as they barrel down the cement slopes of the Los Angeles River. Chaos.

And when the dust clears, the two Fords are gone, and Washington and O'Mara are both left standing there, surrounded by BURBANK COPS, all pointing pistols at them.

COP 1
 Hands in the air!

COP 2
 Now!

Washington and O'Mara share a look and they both drop their weapons and put their hands up. They're caught.

SPEEDING DOWN THE LA RIVERBED:

The two Fords speed down the semi-dry banks of the LA River, side by side, splashing through shallow water, runaway horses galloping alongside them. Catching his breath, Keeler glances over into the Ford running next to his, and sees that **Washington and O'Mara aren't in it!**

KEELER
 (shouting across)
Where the hell are they?

KENNARD
I thought you had 'em!

KEELER
Son of a bitch!

He SLAMS on his BRAKES, both cars spinning out. **And we HEAR It's Only a Paper Moon, PRELAPPING from...**

INT. SLAPSY MAXIE'S NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Jean's up on stage, singing It's Only a Paper Moon for a packed house, everyone having the time of their lives. Whalen watches from his usual table, then he notices a WAITER with a PHONE working his way to Cohen's table.

AT COHEN'S TABLE:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The waiter stands at attention with the house phone on a platinum tray while Cohen takes the receiver, his palm over his other ear, receiving the bad news.

COHEN
(into phone)
*When? What'd they make off with?
Who're they workin' for? Well,
they gotta be workin' for
somebody. No, no...*

I/E. BURBANK POLICE STATION - NIGHT

COHEN (V.O.)
*...I'll send a 'bail bondsman'
over to pick 'em up.*

Small-town cop-shop. A few prowlers outside. Malevolent. Mayberry as written by Stephen King. *A skeleton crew working this late hour. The fewer witnesses the better.

INT. CHIEF JACKSON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

OFFICER 'CUB' FUNSTON, the sadistic jailer, and burly OFFICER WINTER haul O'MARA and WASHINGTON into the Chief's office in handcuffs. They've been worked over.

Chief of Police, the corrupt and debauched ELMER JACKSON, *who we recognize from Cohen's table at Slapsy Maxie's. Sitting behind his desk, Jackson wears an ice cream suit and chews plug tobacco. A stuffed bear stands behind him.

FUNSTON
Nigger had this on him.

Funston places Washington's stiletto on Jackson's desk.

CHIEF JACKSON
(to Washington)
You packin' a pig-sticker, *Bwana*?

Funston drops a LEATHER BELT around Washington's throat and PULLS, cutting his air, forcing him to face Jackson.

CHIEF JACKSON
You must be out here from Chicago.
Or maybe from goddamned Mars
'cause everybody down here on
Earth knows Mr. Cohen's place is
sacred ground. How 'bout you?
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHIEF JACKSON (CONT'D)
 (to O'Mara)
 Dragna put you up to this?

O'Mara gives him nothing. Chief Jackson's eyes flick to Funston. Funston smiles, drawing his TRUNCHEON. He CLUBS O'Mara to the floor. Chief Jackson leans over and spits tobacco into the spittoon. Shakes his head, lamenting.

CHIEF JACKSON
 You'd best believe I'm askin' you
 a lot nicer than Cohen's gonna.

INT. SLAPSY MAXIE'S NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Jean's singing *I've Got You On My Mind* when Wooters walks into Slapsy Maxie's, and Jean almost forgets the lyrics when she first sees him. Wooters looks nothing like he did the last time we saw him here. Gone is the bon vivant. In shock. Pete's blood is still on his clothes. Cigarette girls and revelers stare at Wooters, backing away as Wooters walks past them like a somnambulist.

Jean finds Whalen in the crowd, signaling Whalen as she sings by rolling her eyes to Wooters. *DO SOMETHING. Because now Wooters is heading straight toward Cohen's table. He's like a sleepwalker, outside his body, watching his own hand reach into his coat pocket for-

-Whalen GRABS Wooters, rough strength steering him into-

INT. MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Wooters struggles. Whalen SLAMS Wooters against the wall.

WHALEN
 Listen to me. LISTEN. I heard
 about what happened and I'm awful
 sorry about Pete, but you gotta
 screw your head back on, cousin.
 Good'n tight. There's a war on.

WOOTERS
 Yeah, no shit.

WHALEN
 But it ain't yours. None of it. So
 don't you pick it up. Don't even
 touch it, hear? Just leave it lay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOOTERS

Well, what's Dragna doin' about it?

WHALEN

Dunno yet. I guess somebody just hit Cohen's place in Burbank.

(off Wooters)

And I know they think it was Dragna's guys, but I can tell you for a natural fact it wasn't.

WOOTERS

Wait, wait. *What?*

WHALEN

Craziest thing I ever heard. Coupla strong-arm boys made like to knock over Mickey's Casino.

Crazy indeed. Wooters understands exactly what happened.

WHALEN

Elmer's boys nabbed two of 'em and Cohen's sendin' some guys over there now.... Wait. Jerry, *WAIT!*

But Wooters is already running out the door.

I/E. BURBANK POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Funston and Winter lead O'Mara and Washington down to the LOCKUP, SHOVE them sprawling on to the floor of their CELL. Moth-eaten bunks. A slop bucket. Washington and O'Mara share a look. They are *so fucked*. Funston slams the bars and he and Winter walk back up the corridor.

WASHINGTON

Always knew I'd die in Burbank.

O'Mara lifts the mattress off the bunk, tears a BEDSPRING from the frame. O'Mara steps on the spring to straighten it until he has something resembling a hook.

O'MARA

They won't kill us here. But Cohen'll send somebody to pick us up. And then you'll wish they had.

O'Mara's practiced hands working the spring into his own handcuffs, the old commando picking his cuffs in seconds.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'MARA
Watch the corridor.

O'Mara reaches out through the bars to fit the end of the spring into the lock on their CELL DOOR. Washington keeps watch while O'Mara works the spring into the lock.

Washington hears a metallic sound and turns to see hands LOCKING a CHAIN around the BARS of their cell WINDOW.

WASHINGTON
Uh, Sarge, you ain't gonna believe this. But the Ringo Kid's outside.

Outside, Kennard crouches in the bushes, test-pulling the chain. And we SEE the other end of the chain is looped around the BUMPER of the FORD SHERIDAN parked on the street. Ramirez hunched down behind the wheel.

WASHINGTON
(to Kennard)
Christ, you know that's about the dumbest thing I've ever seen.

KENNARD
Well, that's gratitude for ya.

EXT. BURBANK POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Keeler runs alongside the building, pops the JUNCTION BOX and pulls a pair of BOLT CUTTERS, ready to cut the power. Keeler looks over to see a guy get out of his car and head into the front lobby.

INT. LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

WOOTERS walks into the lobby, wearing a long overcoat, and a tough-guy sneer. The desk officer looks him over.

DESK OFFICER
Help you with somethin, pal?

Wooters leans over the desk, right in the cop's face.

WOOTERS
Yeah, you can get off your ass and bring me your prisoners.

INT. LOCKUP - MOMENTS LATER

In his haste to pick the lock, O'Mara BREAKS the end of the spring off in the lock. Now, Funston and Winter are leading Wooters back toward the cell. And O'Mara fumbles blindly to pull the broken piece of spring out. O'Mara manages to pull it out before they see him, but he drops the broken piece in the corridor as they approach.

O'Mara sits back down on the bunk, hands hidden in his lap, watching Funston fit his key into the lock. And now, **O'Mara recognizes Wooters**, but doesn't let on. *So he was a fair judge of men after all.* O'Mara's eyes show Wooters the broken spring on the floor. Funston hesitates.

FUNSTON
(to Wooters)
You got here awful quick.

WOOTERS
Well, Mr. Cohen's in a hurry. And so am I.

FUNSTON
Just one guy?

Wooters steps to Funston, his shoe covering the spring.

WOOTERS
(playing tough)
I can handle 'em. With plenty left over for you, you want some.
(beat)
Open it.

INT. LOBBY

But Cohen's two real **GOONS** walk into the lobby now, heading straight for the suspicious desk officer.

DESK OFFICER
Help you fellas?

GOON 1
Yeah, we're here to pick up some garbage. Two bags.

INT. LOCKUP

Funston fits the big key into the lock. But now the DESK OFFICER and Cohen's goons are running back toward them.

CONTINUED:

DESK OFFICER
Hold it! He's bullshit!

Funston turns to Wooters. *Wooters PUNCHES him and-Keeler CUTS the POWER, plunging them all into DARKNESS-Kennard signals. Ramirez FLOORS it. The chain tightens, but instead of pulling the bars off the building, the chain TEARS THE BUMPER OFF THE CAR!*

-Confusion. Wooters fighting in near-total darkness. Washington reaches his cuffed hands through the bars and pulls WINTER'S HEAD against them, knocking him cold. O'Mara reaches through the bars, fumbling, turning the key. The door clacks open and O'Mara lunges out, a palm-strike putting Funston down, his elbow smashing the desk officer's temple. One of Cohen's goons pulls his GUN. Wooters grabs it. BOOM! BOOM! **The muzzle FLASHES like a strobe light**, illuminating the brutal moments of the fight - panels in a graphic novel - as Wooters expertly twists the wild-firing gun away. It's over quickly. Cohen's men, the desk officer, all beaten to the ground.

INT. CHIEF JACKSON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Chief Jackson frozen in the darkness, hearing the BRAWL and GUNSHOTS outside his office. He hears his door open.

CHIEF JACKSON
Who's there?

He strikes a match. It FLARES, revealing Washington smiling, flicking open his stiletto.

WASHINGTON
Bwana's a Swahili word.

Jackson flinches. The blade moves like lightning, nicking Jackson under his chin, just a shaving cut. A reminder.

WASHINGTON
Means 'Sir.'

And blows out the match.

EXT. BURBANK POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara, Wooters and Washington run out of the police station to meet Keeler, Kennard, and Ramirez.

CONTINUED:

All of them piling into Wooters car and the Ford, squealing out of downtown Burbank. Keeler turns to O'Mara.

KEELER
(re: Wooters)
Now who's this guy?

O'MARA
Jerry Wooters. He's one of us.
(to Wooters)
And I thought you were smart.

WOOTERS
Yeah, I guess I felt like doing something dumb for a change.

O'MARA
Thanks.

EXT. AGUA DULCE CANYON - DAY

BOOM! BOOM! Gunfire echoes off the rocks where bandits once hid. **BOOM! BOOM!** The Gangster Squad has set up their own makeshift **RANGE** out here in an adobe **HOST TOWN** northeast of Los Angeles.

WOOTERS, WASHINGTON, KEELER, RAMIREZ stand on the firing line, draw **.45 AUTOMATICS**, bodies bladed to present a leaner profile as they SQUEEZE off rounds at paper Colt Police **SILHOUETTE TARGETS** set up on wooden stakes about thirty yards away. *Standard police tactics for the era.

KENNARD leans against one of the Fords, sipping from a flat-top can of *EASTSIDE BEER*. Just watching. Washington holsters up, glancing back at Kennard, fucking *annoyed*.

O'MARA
Good shooting, gentlemen. Just good enough to get you all dead.
(off their looks)
That's a duellist's stance, less about winning than it is about honor. Forget honor. Our enemy won't stand still for us. And if we are going to win a gunfight against him, we have to be faster, and meaner, than he is.

Feet square to his target, O'Mara DRAWS into a two-handed grip, squeezes the trigger. **BAM-BAM-BAM-BAM-BAM-BAM!**

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'Mara cycling the weapon so fast his .45 auto sounds like a MAC-10. O'Mara moving forward as he shoots, attacking his target. O'Mara drops his empty mag, his hands alive, intelligent, as he pulls a fresh mag, slams it home, the slide coming forward. Ready to rock again.

KEELER

What the hell was that?

O'MARA

(demonstrating)

Combat shooting. Square with your target, weapon in both hands. Keep throwing lead at him until you put him down for keeps. It isn't pretty, but it works.

And we HEAR Xavier Cugat's MONDONGO over the following rapid-fire scenes...

INTERCUT AS NEEDED:

EXT. AGUA DULCE CANYON - DAY AFTER DAY

BAM! BAM! BAM! Gunsmoke RISING against a red sunset. CASINGS falling in the dirt. Sweat-slick HANDS stripping out empty magazines, reaching for fresh ones, trying to reload, fumbling, dropping full mags into the dust. O'Mara shakes his head. They're slow, clumsy, inaccurate.

I/E. BRICK BUILDING (DOWNTOWN) - NIGHT

The Squad rushes up to a **STEEL DOOR**. O'Mara leads, carrying a SLEDGEHAMMER, Wooters and Keeler behind him with SHOTGUNS. Ramirez and Washington carry FIRE AXES. Kennard covers their rear flank as O'Mara swings his sledgehammer, SMASHING open the door. And the squad rushes into... **...AN EMPTY ROOM!** Nothing. Not even a piece of furniture. O'Mara's humiliated. Wooters shrugs.

EXT. AGUA DULCE CANYON - DAY

BAM! BAM! BAM! Each member of the squad cycles his weapon faster now. They're shooting on the move, advancing on their targets. Firing to slide-lock, dropping the empty mag and slamming a fresh one into the magazine well. O'Mara's watching them. They're more accurate now.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

The Squad moves quickly through the dark alley, stacking up at another **DOOR**. Determined, O'Mara swings his **SLEDGEHAMMER**, smashing the door. The squad **RUSHES** into...

INT. MAHJONG PARLOR - CONTINUOUS

...A **Mahjong Parlor**. Harmless middle-aged CHINESE MEN look up from their mahjong tiles to see six guys with guns. Murmuring in Chinese, they all put their hands up. And O'Mara looks like Charlie Brown missing the football.

EXT. AGUA DULCE CANYON - DAY

O'Mara stands by with a **STOPWATCH**, sending two man fire-teams into the adobe **GHOST TOWN**. Keeler and Ramirez, Washington and Kennard. *O'Mara has converted the old ghost town into a '**Hogan's Alley**' practical combat range.

INT. BACK-ROOM CASINO - NIGHT

Raucous **CASINO CHATTER**. GUYS cat-calling **COCKTAIL WAITRESSES** slinging drinks like a volunteer fire crew. Neighborhood **PIKERS** playing roulette, poker, and pool. Feeding quarters into ringing **SLOT MACHINES**. Dudes crowded around **CRAPS TABLES**. A GUY in a soup & fish tux playing jazz piano. Every night New Year's Eve. Cohen's **GOONS** on the casino floor. Sharp eyes. Shoulder holsters.

EXT. AGUA DULCE CANYON - DAY

Two by two, the squad members move through the maze of crumbling adobe, **FIRING** at hidden '**GANGSTERS**' (overcoats stuffed with pillows and sandbags) Fast and smooth.

INT. BACK-ROOM CASINO - NIGHT

Suddenly, the FRONT and REAR DOORS **SMASH** open and in sweeps The Gangster Squad, moving like a **SWAT TEAM**. Wooters and Keeler racking shotguns. O'Mara with his pistol in one hand and his sledgehammer in the other.

O'MARA
Everybody grab some sky.

But Cohen's **GOONS** draw their **GUNS** and the Casino lights up with **GUNFIRE**. Glasses, bottles, lamps explode.

CONTINUED:

Plaster punching out from the walls. Gamblers stampeding in every direction, toppling chairs to escape the battering gunfire around them. But the squad remains focused, cool.

Keeler FIRES. Two goons duck below the roulette tables, so Keeler VAULTS the railing, drops into the casino pit to FIRE under the tables, taking them out.

Another goon fires twin .45s at Wooters. Wooters moves fast, pulling a cute cocktail waitress with him behind a pillar, saving her from the path of gunfire. She gives him a thank-you kiss. And he spins out from behind the pillar, BLASTS the goon backward on to the craps table.

Kennard sees a goon wielding a SAWED-OFF 12 GAUGE stepping out behind Ramirez, ready to unload both barrels into the kid's back. With Ramirez between them, Kennard has no shot. But Kennard instantly drops to one knee and FIRES a single round through the inch of space between Ramirez's armpit and his ribs - *the bullet passing close enough to scorch Ramirez's sleeve* - striking the goon dead center. His shotgun firing up into the ceiling.

O'Mara and the last remaining goon trading gunfire on the casino floor, shooting and moving - a .45 Caliber kata. Colored chips, playing cards, and tufts of green felt geyser up from the tables around them. Both men firing to slide-lock at the same time, empty. But as the goon crouches to pop a fresh mag into his .45, O'Mara swings the SLEDGEHAMMER into his sternum, knocking him backward off his feet, gasping and croaking on the floor.

Washington sees a croupier reaching for the phone on the wall. He THROWS his AXE. The axe WHOOSHES end-over-end through the air to SPLIT the PHONE, embedded in the wall inches from the croupier's hand. Washington smiles.

Kennard glances at the bar mirror and glimpses, reflected in it, a GUY WITH A SHOTGUN crouched behind the bar. Using the mirror, Kennard SHOOTS HOLES IN THE BAR around the guy until he drops his gun, stands with his hands up.

O'Mara kicks the goon's gun away and brings his sledgehammer triumphantly down on the roulette table, smashing it with relish. He and Wooters share a smile, watching Ramirez and Washington swing their axes, chopping open the slots, *coins spilling over...*

EXT. SUNSET STRIP - NEON NIGHT

Conga-line TRAFFIC down the glamorous SUNSET STRIP. Chateau Marmont. Schwab's Pharmacy. Ciro's. A LIMOUSINE pulls up under the portico of **THE MOCAMBO**. WHALEN gets out of the car, opens the door for **IGNAZIO "JACK" DRAGNA** (58): silver-haired Sicilian "vintner" who ran the rackets for the Black Hand before Cohen moved in, Dragna's the last remnant of the old guard in LA.

INT. THE MOCAMBO - NIGHT

Carnivale decor. All the walls are GLASS, with real-live PARROTS, MACAWS, and MONKEYS on perches behind them. The dinner crowd salted with stars like SINATRA and LIZ TAYLOR. On the stage: CARMEN MIRANDA and her BAND have the whole place dancing to "South American Way." We pass JACK WARNER at a booth with RONALD REAGAN & JANE WYMAN.

Whalen leads Dragna to a CORNER BOOTH where MICKEY COHEN sits with JEAN. LENNOX stands. But Cohen doesn't get up.

COHEN

Hiya, Jack.

DRAGNA

Mickey.

There is a fearful symmetry here. Whalen is Dragna's muscle. Lennox is Cohen's. Jean in the middle. Tension. Dragna nods Whalen away. Jean gets up to follow him.

JEAN

Say boys, if it's alright with you
I think maybe I'll bend my elbow,
while you two bend your ears?

Dragna politely helps her up, then sits down with Cohen.

COHEN

There's a strong-arm crew runnin'
wild out there. Five, six guys.
Hittin' me all over town.

DRAGNA

I heard about 'em.

COHEN

They're sharp. Maybe ex-military.
And they play pretty rough.

CONTINUED:

DRAGNA

And you think they're mine?
 Mickey, you better put on your
 listening cap because I'm not in
 the habit of repeating myself. I
 didn't hit you. Not once.

(beat)

Maybe they're from Chicago. Jimmy
 Ragan came out here to meet with
 you and never came back. You think
 they just forgot about him?

Cohen laughs. And laughs.

DRAGNA

I don't get you, kid. You had the
 world by the ass out here. All the
 prestige, purse, and pussy any man
 could ask for. And you go and poke
 Chicago in the eye. For what? What
 the hell is it you want?

COHEN

More.

DRAGNA

What're you up to, Mickey? I know
 you bought the Guarantee Finance
 Building. That's my territory.

COHEN

It was.

DRAGNA

Listen, there's a way we've always
 done things out here-

COHEN

-You listen, old man. This ain't
 Chicago. This is the Wild West.
 And there's only one rule out
 here. Take what you can when you
 can. Spanish took it from the
 Injuns. We took it from the
 Mexicans. And now, I'm takin' it
 from you, Jack. Because I can.

DRAGNA

You know, Mickey, I may be old and
 slow, but I have some friends who
 are neither.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DRAGNA (CONT'D)

You're not one of us, and you never will be, or I wouldn't have to explain this to you, but if you do this...

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. JACK DRAGNA'S VINEYARD - NIGHT

Dragna's Tuscan-style ESTATE in the Santa Monica Mountains. **MEN IN BLACK** moving like wraiths through Dragna's vineyard, stalking toward his quiet home.

DRAGNA (V.O.)

... If you touch me, they'll hunt you down like a dog. If you could print your own, you'd still never come up with enough money to buy your life from them.

INT. THE MOCAMBO - NIGHT

COHEN

You wanna bet?

Dragna stands, turns his back on Cohen, and heads for the door. Whalen downs his drink, nods to Jean, follows him.

EXT. JACK DRAGNA'S VINEYARD - NIGHT

The **MEN IN BLACK** close on the house, grotesque monsters, huge eyes, proboscis snouts. They're wearing GAS MASKS, carrying M-3 GREASE GUNS fitted with suppressors. The men pull SMOKE GRENADES and toss them. Grenades SMASH through windows, hissing, and the house fills with colored smoke.

INT. DRAGNA'S ESTATE - CONTINUOUS

Dragna's armed BODYGUARDS cough and scramble, blinded by smoke. While the masked men in black move through the swirling smoke like sharks through water, firing their silenced M-3s. *Pfft-pfft-pfft-pfft!* Percussive whispers.

Jack Dragna hustles his WIFE down the hall, holding a towel over her mouth to protect her from the smoke, stepping over the bodies of his men, trying to escape.

They run right into a man in a gas mask. She SCREAMS through the towel as he raises his M-3. *Pfft-Pfft!*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Smoke clears. Standing over the bodies of Dragna and his wife, the gunman removes his gas mask. We see it's Lennox.

CUT TO:

EXT. AGUA DULCE CANYON - DAY

The squad cleans their guns on the hoods of their FORDS, trunks full of AMMO BOXES and EASTSIDE BEER. They pass around a church-key can opener, sipping cold beer while reloading their pistols. Kennard leans against a car.

WASHINGTON

(re: Kennard)

I guess Hoppalong here doesn't have to practice with the rest of us.

In response, Kennard tosses his empty CAN into the air, DRAWS his revolver in one blurring motion, FIRES - **BOOM!** - kicking the can further up in the air. Moving forward, Kennard FIRES again - **BOOM!** - and hits the spinning can. Walking swift and calm, Kennard FIRES and FIRES, keeping the can aloft, bouncing it skyward with all six bullets. Kennard plucks another empty CAN off the hood of a Ford.

KENNARD

Get on up here, Navidad.

Ramirez now stands up on the firing line, hand on his gun, anxious as Kennard TOSSES the CAN. Ramirez draws, FIRES. **BOOM!** Miss. Kennard tosses again. **BOOM!** Miss. Again. **BOOM!** Miss. Again. Chuckles from the squad.

KENNARD (CONT'D)

Don't shoot where it is, son.
Shoot where it's gonna be.

Determined, Ramirez holsters a final time. Kennard TOSSES the CAN. Ramirez FIRES. BOOM! BOOM! But he can't get it.

Now, Washington steps forward and hands Kennard an empty can. He nods and Kennard TOSSES the CAN skyward. But instead of pulling his gun, Washington lets his **SWITCHBLADE** drop from his sleeve into his palm, thumbing the button -shickt- and THROWS the knife. *The can just disappears.* Then the CAN suddenly reappears, CRUSHED against the throat of one of the PAPER TARGETS, pinned there by the switchblade. Washington smiles at Kennard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'Mara and Wooters stand a little apart from the others, talking strategy...

WOOTERS

Have you given any thought to our time limit here, Sarge?

(off O'Mara)

There is one, you know. 'Cause we could hit a dozen casinos without seriously disrupting his operation. I mean Cohen'll hardly feel it, but that doesn't mean he's going to take it lying down.

O'MARA

Cohen's gonna come lookin' for us. I know. But there's nothin' for it, Jerry. We just have to shut him down before he finds us.

WOOTERS

Well, if you want to do that we're going to have to get in his head.

I/E. COHEN'S MANSION (HOLLYWOOD HILLS) - NIGHT

Mickey Cohen's **MANSION**: mission architecture, borrowed class bristling with artillery. Powerful **FLASHLIGHTS** sweep over the grounds as **SENTRIES** patrol the perimeter with GERMAN SHEPHERDS on short leashes, **CARBINES**.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara, Wooters, and Keeler crouch. They're wearing all black. Applying charcoal to their faces. Tense.

KEELER

(to Wooters)

You sure about this?

WASHINGTON

Callin' this crazy would be an insult to crazy people.

Above them, lying panther-like on the branch of a banyan tree, Kennard PEERS through a **HUGE M1 SNIPER SCOPE**, an **INFRARED LIGHT** attached to the bottom of his rifle.

*First-generation **NIGHT VISION** brought back from the war.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KENNARD
 Ain't you gonna help 'em with
 that, Washington?

WASHINGTON
 You're a real charmer, cowboy.

Washington crouches at the base of the tree, an **SCR-536 HANDHELD TRANSCEIVER** to his ear. These guys are still dressed like characters out of a Chandler novel, but they move like modern commandos.

KENNARD'S POV (THROUGH NIGHTVISION):

A *green-tinted image* of the SENTRYES making their rounds.

KENNARD
 Takes them boys about three
 minutes to make it around the
 house. You'll have to rawhide it.

O'Mara pulls a bottle of **AMMONIA**, and sprinkling all three of them with it. It stinks to high heaven.

WOOTERS
 How's this gonna throw off the
 dogs? We just stink of ammonia.

O'MARA
 I don't know, it worked in France.

Keeler and Wooters share a look. Christ.

KENNARD
 Well, it's workin' on me. *Shoo.*
 Why don't you boys get a goin'.

O'Mara, Wooters, and Keeler shoulder their SATCHELS.

EXT. BOTTOM OF THE HILL - NIGHT

Ramirez waits in one of the Ford Sheridans, parked under an oak tree, watching the road for headlights. He receives Washington's transmission on a matching 536.

INT. CULVERT - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara leads the three of them crawling through the narrow culvert toward the dim circle of moonlight at the other end.

CONTINUED:

Then O'Mara stops near the mouth of the culvert, mouth-breathing, watching as the SENTRYIES' FLASHLIGHTS BEAMS pass over the corrugated steel opening.

A GERMAN SHEPHERD suddenly fills the mouth of the culvert, blocking the light, *sniffing*. The dog's head and shoulders inside. THE DOG LOOKS DIRECTLY AT O'MARA, sniffs, dismisses him and moves away from the culvert.

O'Mara, Wooters, and Keeler ninja-creep across the lawn, crouch at the side of the house and POP the SCREEN off the crawl-space. Wooters and Keeler slip under the house. O'Mara waits by the opening, keeping watch for sentries.

Wooters and Keeler CRAWL through the dirt to where a sliver of LIGHT comes down through the seams around the ACCESS PANEL from the crawl space to the house.

INT. HALL CLOSET (COHEN'S MANSION) - CONTINUOUS

Wooters silently opens the panel and pops out. Keeler follows. Wooters cracks the closet door, peering out.

At the end of the hall, GUNMEN sit, smoking, watching the windows, CARBINES lean against their chairs. Three of them playing cards. If any of them looked back, they'd see Wooters and Keeler dashing into the MASTER BEDROOM.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Keeler opens his satchel, unfurls his canvas tool kit on Cohen's bed. Wooters watches the hall while Keeler unscrews the back of Cohen's new EMERSON TELEVISION.

I/E. FORD SHERIDAN - NIGHT

Ramirez shifts and fidgets. He has to pee. Finally, he gets out of the car and runs down into a gully, unzips.

KENNARD'S POV (THROUGH NIGHTVISION):

The SENTRYIES with their dogs are halfway around the house now, heading back toward O'Mara.

KENNARD
The hell's takin' so long?

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Wooters watches Keeler fit a state-of-the-art BUG with a transmitter and microphone into the back of the TV.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS - NIGHT

Cohen's 1948 Packard Custom 8 LIMO heads up his street.

I/E. COHEN'S LIMO - NIGHT

The DRIVER takes them up familiar switchbacks. COHEN in back with JEAN. Cohen's silent, seething, distracted.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS - NIGHT

Ramirez is zipping up when the headlights hit his back. He crouches in the gully as Cohen's limo PASSES, then scrambles up out of the gully to the car. **IT'S LOCKED!** The keys left dangling from the ignition. His walkie-talkie on the passenger seat!

KENNARD'S POV (THROUGH NIGHTVISION):

The guard is coming around, heading right for O'Mara!

KENNARD
*Guard's gonna be right on top of
him. I'm takin' him now.*

EXT. COHEN'S MANSION - NIGHT

O'Mara sees the guard coming now, he pulls his pistol.

WASHINGTON (V.O.)
Hold it. Hold it.

I/E. FORD SHERIDAN - NIGHT

Ramirez SMASHES his window with a ROCK, grabs the walkie.

RAMIREZ
*He's coming back! Repeat. Cohen's
on his way back to the house!*

EXT. COHEN'S MANSION - NIGHT

O'Mara crouches, pointing his pistol at the approaching guard, who still hasn't seen him. **He HEARS Washington's HOOT-OWL call across the canyon.** The guard and his dog TURN at the sound. Just then, TIRES crunch up the gravel driveway. Headlights. Cohen's LIMO has returned. The guard does an about-face and heads out to greet Cohen.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

They HEAR the FRONT DOOR now. Keeler's fingers fly, screwing the panel back on the TV, dropping the last screw, picking it up, screwing it in, as Wooters GRABS Keeler and YANKS him out.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Men taking Cohen's coat. Cohen heads to the kitchen. But Jean heads back toward the bedroom to powder her nose.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Keeler RUNS across the hall, drops into the crawlspace. Wooters glances back, **sees Keeler's TOOLS left on the bed!** He grabs them and RUSHES back into the hall-

-and RUNS RIGHT INTO JEAN!!! She doesn't scream, but it's a near thing. They just stare at each other. Wooters puts his fingers to his lips. A moment. All she has to do is shout. But he can't help himself. He gives her a quick kiss. She waves him into the crawlspace. Closing the closet door behind him, delicious smile on her red lips.

CUT TO:

EXT. BURBANK AIRPORT - NIGHT

Wheels BARK against the runway as a **LOCKHEED SUPER ELECTRA** touches down. A TOWER SEARCHLIGHT swings over a backwater BURBANK AIRPORT. Mothballed B-17s and P-38s in front of Quonset HANGARS. **BURBANK COPS** on horseback clop along the PERIMETER FENCE, shotguns across their pommels.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

Lying prone in a field between the airport and HOLLYWOOD WAY, O'Mara PEERS at the plane through the **M1 SCOPE**. Next to him, Wooters holds his SCR-536 walkie-talkie.

O'MARA'S POV (THROUGH NIGHTVISION):

The GROUND CREW chocking the wheels of the Super Electra. The CARGO DOOR opens. A dozen more BURBANK COPS standing guard around the plane.

O'MARA
Here they come. Right on schedule.

WOOTERS (INTO 536)
You still think planting that wire
was nuts?

WASHINGTON
(over radio)
Yes.

EXT. SUPER ELECTRA - NIGHT

A CONVOY approaches the plane. Two **PACKARDS** leading a 3/4 Ton Canvas-topped **DODGE TRUCK**. Cohen's MEN climb out of them and begin off-loading heavy BUNDLES from the plane. Cohen's lieutenant, **CORWIN GRIMES** supervises. Grimes has a military bearing. And a murderous gleam.

I/E. BOTH FORD SHERIDANS (MOVING) - NIGHT

The FORD SHERIDANS are *transformed*, gleaming, sleek, stalking the Packards at a distance. O'Mara driving Wooters and Keeler in the lead car. Ramirez driving Washington and Kennard in the other.

WASHINGTON
(to Ramirez)
How the hell'd you fix up these
cars so damn fast?

RAMIREZ
My cousin.

KENNARD
Where'd he get all the parts?

RAMIREZ
His cousin.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOOTERS (INTO 536)
 Stand by until they cross the
 river into LA. We don't need
 another dance with Burbank PD.

The Squad follows the CONVOY, lead by two BURBANK COPS on MOTORCYCLES. A BURBANK PD PROWL CAR. And the two Packards. The burbank cops peel off as the Convoy turns onto rural SAN FERNANDO ROAD, lined with FARMS, FILLING STATIONS, a few HOMES.

O'MARA (CONT'D)
 Okay, take 'em.

The supercharged SHERIDANS accelerate after the Convoy.

I/E. PACKARD (FAST) - CONTINUOUS

Grimes sees the FORDS coming up in his REARVIEW. But instead of flooring it to escape, he lets up on the gas, dropping back to cover the dope-loaded Packard's escape.

GRIMES
 We just picked up a couple a tics.
 Burn 'em off the road.

Grimes SLAMS on this breaks, a controlled four-wheel drift, letting the two Fords roar past him. The gunmen with him leans out the window with his Carbine, FIRING.

I/E. WASHINGTON'S FORD - CONTINUOUS

BAM! BAM! BAM! Washington, Kennard, and Ramirez all duck as gunfire punches through their fender. Washington CRANKS the wheel to the left, takes his Ford off-road into a CORNFIELD. STALKS breaking over the GRILL, whipping the windshield, as they drive.

Grimes drives after them. Another Packard breaks off to follow. The two Packards pursuing Washington's Ford like orca swimming through the tall corn, gunmen FIRING.

Kennard leans out the window, FIRING back, his rounds punching through the windshield, killing the other driver, his car swerving into Grimes' Packard, taking both cars out of the game. Grimes' car on it's side.

GRIMES
Son of a bitch!

I/E. O'MARA'S FORD (FAST) - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara POURS IT ON, determined. Wooters draws his .45. Closing on them, Wooters leans out his open passenger window, FIRING. He clay-pigeon POPS a taillight.

I/E. PACKARD (FAST) - CONTINUOUS

Gunman 2 climbs over into the backseat and opens the **WINE CRATE** resting there. Inside the slots meant for wine bottles are a dozen Model 24 *Stielhandgranate* **POTATO MASHER GRENADES**. The gunman pulls one out, rolls down his window and YANKS the pull cord, igniting the **FUSE**.

I/E. O'MARA'S FORD (FAST) - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara see the gunman's torso pop out of the Packard's back window, his arm cocked, tossing the-

O'Mara **SWERVES** up on to the shoulder as the potato masher tomahawks through the night air to - *plink!* - bounce along the road past his car, **EXPLODING** just behind them.

KEELER
Jesus! We're pulling off, right?
(to Wooters)
Right?

Wooters looks to O'Mara, who shakes his head.

I/E. PACKARD AND WOOTERS CAR - CONTINUOUS

Gunman 2 SIDE-ARMS the next grenade. This one **LANDS - CLANG!** - **RIGHT ON THEIR HOOD**, rolling down into the well between the wipers and windshield! Wooters and O'Mara exchange *HOLY-SHIT* looks. O'Mara SLAMS the brakes, the car **SPINNING OUT** with Wooters hooking his arm around from his open window, fingers scrabble the hood for the grenade, but he can't reach it!

Wooters ducks back inside the car - BANG! BANG! - **FIRE**s his .45 out through the windshield - **PUNCHES** his arm out through the bullet-broken glass windshield, fingers closing around the grenade. He **FLINGS** it away. The grenade **EXPLODES** mid-air as their car rockets past it.

CONTINUED:

WOOTERS
John, stop the car!

O'MARA
You want out? There's the door.

I/E. PACKARD - CONTINUOUS

Holding them in his fingers like a juggler, the gunman now PULLS the CORDS on **TWO GRENADES** at once. He's about to throw them-

-when **WASHINGTON'S FORD** blasts out of the cornfield, trailing broken cornstalks, barreling right at them.

GUNMAN
Holy-

And Washington RAMS into the Packard, jarring both grenades from the gunman's fingers. The gunman frantically tries to pick them up off the floor-

-but he's not quick enough. **KABOOM!** The explosion PUNTS the Packard into the night sky like a coffee can with a cherry bomb under it. O'Mara DRIVES **under** the flaming car before it CRASHES back in a fiery heap on San Fernando.

I/E. O'MARA'S CAR (FAST) - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara's POURING it on, determined to catch that TRUCK.

EXT. SAN FERNANDO ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The squad's two Fords finally close in on the TRUCK and force it off the road, down into the LA RIVER. The TRUCK rolling end over end, spilling bundles of powder-

HARD CUT TO:

EXT. MULHOLLAND DRIVE - NIGHT

Both cars pull into a quiet dirt turnout overlooking LA. O'Mara gets out of his car and OPENS his TRUNK. Two THUGS crammed back there - a bloody mess, but alive.

O'MARA
Get out.

The men limp to the shoulder, overlooking Los Angeles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOOTERS
On your knees. Both of you.

Both men comply. The squad surrounding them.

O'MARA
You boys run dope for Cohen,
right?

THUG 1
You can't do this. You have to
take us in. We got rights.

O'MARA
In Chicago you got rights. In New
York you got rights. In Los
Angeles, you got us.

O'Mara puts his gun to Thug 1's head.

O'MARA (CONT'D)
You know, sometimes when those
Santa Anas start blowing up here
you get the damnedest hay fever.
You feel a sneeze coming on,
partner? A real loud sneeze?

THUG 1
Go to hell.

O'Mara moves his revolver to the left and FIRES! **BOOM!**
Inches from the thug's ear, shattering his eardrum. The
thug writhes on the ground, clutching his ear. Screaming.

KEELER
JESUS CHRIST!

He puts his pistol to the back of Thug 2's head. Keeler
moves to intervene. But Washington grabs Keeler's arm.

O'MARA
How about you? You got hay fever?

Wooters grabs O'Mara's shoulder. O'Mara shrugs him off.

THUG 2
What the hell do you want?

O'Mara gun-points LA, the lights rippling in the heat.

O'MARA
See that? It ain't New York and it
ain't Chicago.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

O'MARA (CONT'D)

This is the City of Angels. And
you don't belong here.

(beat)

I want you out of my city. I see
either of you here again you're
gonna sneeze. All over yourselves.

INT. COHEN'S MANSION - THE NEXT DAY

LETTY (50) Cohen's housekeeper, carrying Cohen's dessert:
a HUGE ICE CREAM SUNDAE and a CIGAR, on a platinum tray.

INT. COHEN'S MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cohen on his huge bed in a monogrammed silk robe,
watching THE LONE RANGER on his new TV.

LETTY

Dessert, Mister Cohen.

COHEN

Letty, you're the tops.

Cohen lets Letty tuck a napkin under his chin. She leaves
as Lennox enters with Grimes. Grimes looks terrified.

COHEN

Well, spit it out.

GRIMES

Someone hit the shipment.

A moment. Cohen removes the napkin from under his chin,
and HITS Grimes, sends him smashing backward through
FRENCH DOORS. Cohen stepping outside over broken glass.

EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

Grimes stands, wobbly, tries to run. Cohen takes him
apart with a savage combination, knocking Grimes into the
FOUNTAIN. Cohen straddles Grimes, hands at his throat,
thumbs pressing into his Adam's apple, holding his head
underwater while carp dart around him. Bubble screams.
The bubbles stop. Grimes' face slack underwater. Dead.
Cohen stands, shaking water from his hands. Calm now.
Cohen pauses, stretches, then lifts his robe to piss into
the fountain, and all over Grimes.

CONTINUED:

COHEN

I want you to find this crew. And kill 'em all. And then I wanna kill their families. I wanna kill their dogs. Hell, I wanna kill the Chinaman who cleans their shirts.

EXT. O'MARA'S BACKYARD - DAY

O'Mara and his squad having a celebratory backyard cookout. Bottles of beer on the picnic table. Keeler's wife Marcia and his son Charlie are there. Laughing and talking, the guys watch little Charlie running patterns, Ramirez tossing him the football. O'Mara notices Keeler off to the side talking to Wooters. He's not happy.

Connie leads Officer Gates into the backyard. Gates is carrying two sacks full of groceries. Steaks wrapped in butcher paper. More cold beer. The squad gathers around.

GATES

Courtesy of the Chief.

O'MARA

Stick around.

GATES

Naw, you guys enjoy yourselves.

(beat)

And Sergeant? Be careful, okay?

EXT. O'MARA'S BACKYARD - SUNSET

The party's over. The rest of the squad is gone. O'Mara and Wooters are sitting on O'Mara's back porch, drinking.

O'MARA

How's Keeler?

WOOTERS

He's worried. Thinks you're going to drive us all off a cliff.

O'MARA

What do you think?

Beat.

WOOTERS

I probably knew a dozen guys like you. I know the look.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOOTERS (CONT'D)

You caught a bad one over there
 and it hitched a ride back with
 you. Most of 'em, they crawl in a
 bottle. Or eat a gun. Or they go
 lookin' for it.

We watch O'Mara wrestle something to the ground. For now.

O'MARA

Yeah, well that ain't me. Let me
 tell you somethin', Jerry. I was
 never much of a cop. But I'm a
 hell of a soldier. It's the only
 thing I've ever been any damn good
 at. Because you don't have to be
 smart. You just have to be willin'
 to do what the other guys won't.
 You have to be willin' to make
 yourself into the thing that
 scares them.

(beat)

That's what it takes to win.
 Anything less gets you killed.

EXT. LOS ANGELES ALLIGATOR FARM (LINCOLN HEIGHTS) - DAY

Located at 3627 Mission Road, The **LOS ANGELES ALLIGATOR FARM** [*In operation from 1907 to 1953] is a popular LA attraction boasting 'over 1,000 alligators.' The grounds thick with palms and banana trees. FAMILIES everywhere.

Wooters and **Jean** stroll past KIDS holding baby alligators sold here as pets. Some of the bigger gators are fitted with muzzles, saddles. Kids actually *riding* them.

JEAN

He's looking for you, you know?
 But he thinks you're Syndicate
 guys sent from Chicago.

(off Wooters)

Why didn't you tell me you were a
 cop?

A TRAINER coaxing gators to 'chute the chutes' for the guests. The creatures climb plank-stairs up to a yellow SLIDE, belly-riding the slide into a man-made POOL.

WOOTERS

Why didn't you snitch to Cohen,
 when you caught me in the house?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEAN

Maybe I'm bored. Maybe the favorite hasn't paid off in a while and I feel like playing a long shot. Maybe I just like you that much.

WOOTERS

Then help me bring him down. No one else will testify against him.

JEAN

Hah. You're not that handsome, Jerry. And I'm not too keen on riding a railroad tie to the bottom of the Silver Lake Reservoir. I'd prefer to ride a gravy train, thank you, all the way to the end of the line.

WOOTERS

That why you're still with him?

Water froths with snapping alligators, 12-footers dog-pile while a CARETAKER in a panama hat stands on a railed wooden PIER and tosses rancid chicken to the pack.

JEAN

I'm getting hungry. Why don't you buy me lunch, flatfoot?

I/E. GUARANTEE FINANCE BUILDING (WEST HOLLYWOOD) - DAY

Cohen walks Sheriff Biscailuz, Lennox, and an entourage of 'INVESTORS' through his newly-acquired GUARANTEE FINANCE BUILDING: art-deco with an air of legitimacy.

COHEN

May not look like much now. But this is Shangri-La. El Dorado. People won't need to go to Vegas. I'll bring the action to them, right here, in the most beautiful city in the goddamned world.

The building's still empty, but MOVERS are hauling in furniture. ELECTRICIANS pulling wire. And Cohen sees the possibilities here. He's like a man possessed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COHEN

This, right here where we're standin, will be the Central Sports Book for the Western United States.

But the implications make the men around him nervous.

SHERIFF BISCAILUZ

What about Chicago? The Syndicate?

COHEN

They're the past. We're livin' in the atomic age now. We got a bomb can cook a city in less time than it takes me to tell you about it. Hell, they're buildin' jet fighters right here in El Segundo that'll run faster than the speed of sound.

(off their looks)

This is the future.

INT. CHIEF PARKER'S OFFICE (LAPD HEADQUARTERS) - DAY

Gates leads O'Mara into Chief Parker's office. The Chief stands with his back to the room, looking out his window at Los Angeles. He holds O'Mara's PERFORMANCE EVALUATION.

O'MARA

(clears his throat)

You wanted to see me, sir?

PARKER

I've just received your performance evaluation from Bunco/Forgery. Apparently, you are rarely at your desk, Sergeant.

O'MARA

(playing along)

Well, the crooks are out there, sir... Most of them anyway.

PARKER

Indeed.

Parker points to the NEWSPAPERS fanned out on his desk. *The Los Angeles Times. The Los Angeles Herald. The Daily News.* Headlines like, MYSTERY MEN STRIKE AT MICKEY COHEN. NEW FORCE IN LA UNDERWORLD. GANGSTERS OR VIGILANTES?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PARKER

Take these troublesome characters for instance. What they're doing is against the law. And yet these violent men have done more damage to Mickey Cohen than anyone under my command. I should have them arrested, of course. But *as long no one knows who they are*, I remain helpless to do so.

Parker strikes a MATCH against his desk and sets FIRE to O'Mara's PERFORMANCE EVALUATION. O'Mara watches him drop the blackening pages into his wastebasket. Gates smiles.

PARKER

Carry on, Sergeant.

INT. CLIFTON'S CAFETERIA - DAY

We HEAR Danny Kaye and the Andrews Sisters' *Civilization*. Indoor waterfalls. Faux-palm trees with neon. The BOOTHS are Polynesian grass huts. Strobe 'lightning' and recorded 'thunder' announce a tropical storm. It RAINS inside the restaurant. **WOOTERS** and **JEAN** are having lunch in a grass-topped booth.

JEAN

What do you suggest, Jerry? I've got a few frocks and three thousand bucks in a coffee can. That's not gonna get me very far.

WOOTERS

Make your choice. It's me or him.

JEAN

I'm sorry.

Morose. Wooters pours cream into his coffee, then pops the hinged **LID** of the little stainless steel cream **PITCHER**. Wooters steers the lid, scanning the restaurant until he catches the reflection of JOE SICA and his big brother FRED. Syndicate Enforcers out here from Chicago.

WOOTERS

He had you tailed.

JEAN

I don't recognize them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Sicas arrive at the table, the kind of guys who were shaving by the fourth grade and holding up liquor stores by the fifth. Jerry's hand drops under the table, but they don't seem interested in him. They leer at Jean.

WOOTERS

Can I help you with something?

JOE SICA

Mind your business. We'll get to you in a minute.

FRED SICA

We just want to talk to her is all. We got a message for Mr. Cohen... From Chicago.

Fred's HAND now drops into his **JACKET POCKET** for something. Wooters **STANDS** now.

WOOTERS

Well, I don't think the lady wants to talk to you.

FRED SICA

What lady? She's just one a Mickey's pro skirts, pal.

Wooters left hand *flashes* out, **CHOPPING** FRED'S THROAT. He **GAGS**, going down.

Wooters DUCKS under Joe's PUNCH, his right hand now coming up with his .45, **swinging the pistol like a gama, the stainless steel handle crunching his nose**, as Jerry twirls the swinging pistol into firing position.

Both thugs on the floor. Wooters standing over them, finger on his trigger, chest-heaving. He reaches into Fred's jacket where his hand was a second ago. Pulls out a **SQUEEZE BOTTLE**. Jerry sniffs the bottle, frowns.

WOOTERS

Acid.

Wooters points the bottle toward them. Both men RAISE their hands, instinctively covering their faces. But Wooters SQUEEZES the bottle out over both their CROTCHES. **Thin smoke rising from their trousers as the ACID hits them.** And they suddenly move like they're on fire, crabbing away, fumbling their belts, wriggling, scrambling out of their trousers, until they're sitting on their bare asses on the floor of the restaurant.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WOOTERS

Get out a here. I see either a you
near her again, I'll kill ya.

Jean stares, seeing Jerry Wooters for the first time.

WOOTERS

What? You never had a man fight
over you before?

JEAN

Over me. But never for me.

WOOTERS

Come on. I'll take you home.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS - THE NEXT DAY

On the mesa, two-hundred yards above Cohen's Mansion, O'Mara parks his FORD SHERIDAN in the shade well down the block from a **HALF-FINISHED HOME** with a FOR SALE sign. O'Mara gets out and heads up to the house, carrying a grocery sack. He pulls aside a section of tarp on the house, like a curtain, and steps inside.

INT. ABANDONED HOME - CONTINUOUS

Keeler has converted one of the finished rooms into his FIELD OFFICE. His LISTENING EQUIPMENT arrayed neatly, a military-grade RECEIVER, and his *Minifon* portable WIRE RECORDER, REELS SPINNING as he records conversations.

KEELER

So far today I've learned that
Johnny Stomp is balling Lana
Turner. And Frank Sinatra sounds
pretty sore about it.

O'MARA

I'm pretty sore about it myself.
Anything else?

KEELER

Judge Krauss is a world-class
whoremonger. Bastard can't get
enough of Cohen's girls.

O'Mara places the sack on the desk. Keeler reaches in, pulls butcher paper off an egg salad sandwich and hands half of the sandwich back to O'Mara. Two bottles of coke.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEELER

Hold on. He's talking about us.

Keeler hands O'Mara an earpiece.

COHEN (OVER WIRE)

...Well, *somebody* knows who these sons of bitches are. They're not local. So somebody's gotta be harborin' 'em out here. Check the hotels. The YMCA. I don't care if you have to burn the whole damn city down. But I don't want them anywhere near *Guarantee Finance*.

O'Mara and Keeler share a look.

EXT. GUARANTEE FINANCE BUILDING (WEST HOLLYWOOD) - DAY

A runner pulls his 1948 Chevy Fleetmaster Woody in front of the **GUARANTEE FINANCE BUILDING**.

Parked across the street, WOOTERS and O'MARA watch the runner disappear through REVOLVING DOORS. O'Mara and Wooters watch **RUNNERS** come and go, like bees returning to the hive. We get a sense of scope and scale.

THEATER ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Across the street from *Guarantee Finance*, O'Mara, Wooters and Keeler crouch behind a NEON marquee. From here, they can see both the FRONT and the LOADING BAY at the rear. At the bay, menacing MEN supervise Brinks SECURITY GUARDS loading locked CANVAS BAGS onto a BRINKS TRUCK.

Keeler scans the bundle of **WIRES** running from telephone poles to the rooftop of *Guarantee Finance*.

KEELER

Okay. Those two look like they're incoming.

(spying a **third**)

But THAT one's definitely outgoing. And I bet it doesn't ring to the cops.

(to O'Mara)

You sure about this one, Sarge? No way do we pull one this big and stay secret. It might get kinda hard to stay alive around here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'MARA
We hit him here he's gonna feel it.

WOOTERS
Yeah, but so are we.

INT. CAFE CALIENTE - NIGHT

The whole Gangster Squad seated around a table.

O'MARA
I want you all to understand something. We do this, we'll be exposed. There's no way around it. Cohen will find out who hit him. And he'll come after us. And we'll be six guys up against an army.

(beat)

Not just strong-arm boys either. I'm talkin' about trained killers packin' military hardware. I've seen firsthand what those weapons will do to a man.

Off Ramirez, hiding his fear.

O'MARA
This is further than I asked any of you to go. And I won't fault anyone who wants out now.

The men exchange looks. Wordless promises to stand together. Ready to step into the breach together.

KEELER
We're not going anywhere, Sarge.

INTERCUT AS NEEDED:

O'MARA
Kennard and Washington will cover the second floor. Wooters and I will handle the third. Keeler's on the roof to cut the silent alarm.

EXT. TELEPHONE POLE - EVENING

Keeler, dressed as a Pacific Bell worker, climbs the pole next to the Guarantee Finance Building like a lumberjack.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'MARA

When the shooting starts, I figure
 we're going to have about five
 minutes to un-ass the location
 before the Sheriffs respond.

RAMIREZ

What about me, Sarge?

KENNARD

You're gonna mind the horses.

Off Ramirez, seriously bummed.

EXT. MUSSO & FRANKS - THE NEXT DAY

A **RUNNER**, sunglasses and bomber jacket, strolls out and climbs into his CHEVROLET WOODY.

O'MARA (V.O.)

We go at seventeen hundred.

Keeler looks down ninety feet to pedestrians on the sidewalk. He GRIPS the WIRE, crossing his legs around it, to pull himself along the wire toward the roof of GF.

INT. CHEVROLET WOODY - CONTINUOUS

But as the runner starts the car, **O'MARA** sits up out of the backseat, his PISTOL pressed to the back of the runner's head. Smiling into the rearview mirror.

O'MARA

Don't mind me. Just drive.

EXT. GUARANTEE FINANCE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Parked down the street from the building, Wooters, Kennard, and Ramirez wait in their **Ford Sheridan**.

I/E. FORD SHERIDAN

Ramirez behind the wheel. Next to him, Kennard picks his teeth, cactus calm. Wooters and Washington in back.

RAMIREZ

(laughing)

Hey, don't we need a warrant for this, sir?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOOTERS
No, no. Exigent circumstances.

RAMIREZ
What exigent circumstances?

WOOTERS
The building's on fire.

Wooters passes Washington a TIN of **SHELL LIGHTER FLUID** as they watch the Woody pull up to Guarantee Finance. The 'runner' gets out of his Woody, wearing his sunglasses, bomber jacket, heads through the REVOLVING DOORS.

Keeler lands lightly on the gravel roof, jogs across to the bundle of wires, pulls his bolt-cutters-

INT. GUARANTEE FINANCE BUILDING (LOBBY) - CONTINUOUS

The 'runner' steps inside and approaches the DOORMAN -

DOORMAN
You're early.

-The doorman now SEES it's O'MARA behind the sunglasses-

DOORMAN (CONT'D)
Hey, who the f-

The doorman reaches down to push the HIDDEN BUTTON under his desk-

-As KEELER SNIPS the SILENT ALARM. Satisfying sparks.

*-the doorman pulls his PISTOL! But before he can clear his holster, O'Mara cracks his jaw with the butt of his **WALTHER P38** (with suppressor), cold-cocking the doorman.*

O'Mara is dragging the unconscious doorman out of sight when three other GUARDS walk in. They see him, pulling their guns. O'Mara doesn't hesitate. He raises his P38. **Pfft! Pfft! Pfft!** Killing three men in two seconds flat.

I/E. FORD SHERIDAN - CONTINUOUS

Kennard turns to Ramirez, deadly serious now.

KENNARD
Under no circumstances are you to exit this vehicle, get me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAMIREZ

Yes, sir.

Wooters, Kennard, and Washington jog across the street and follow O'Mara into the Guarantee Finance building.

INT. GUARANTEE FINANCE

O'Mara finishes handcuffing the doorman as Wooters, Kennard, and Washington step inside, seeing the bodies.

KENNARD

God-damn.

Wooters tosses an ITHACA SHOTGUN across the lobby. O'Mara CATCHES the weapon, RACKS the action without breaking stride as the four men Wild-Bunch charge up the wide MARBLE STAIRCASE. O'Mara SIGNALS to Kennard and Washington to PEEL OFF to the **SECOND FLOOR**.

INT. GUARANTEE FINANCE (SECOND FLOOR) - CONTINUOUS

Kennard and Washington enter a HUGE ROOM. **Awestruck**. It's like the phone company. FEMALE OPERATORS. SWITCHBOARDS.

OPERATOR 1

Guarantee Finance.

OPERATOR 2

Fifty on 637? You got it.

The Operators SCRIBBLE NAMES, NUMBERS, INCOMING BETS from all over Southern California. And place the SLIPS into LAMSON CYLINDERS, which they feed into PNEUMATIC TUBES.

WASHINGTON

Pardon me. Ladies. LADIES! May we have your attention please?

Forty operators look up from their switchboards, seeing Kennard and Washington, their guns. What the hell?

KENNARD

Y'all can take the rest of the day off. Have a good one.

INT. THIRD FLOOR (LANDING) - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara and Wooters peer around the corner, awed by...

INT. THIRD FLOOR (COUNTING ROOM) - CONTINUOUS

Cohen's Counting Room, Holy of Holies: Row upon row of heavy steel **TANKER DESKS**, a Kafka sea of them across a room as big as a basketball court. **COUNTERS** sitting at each desk, raw fingers flipping thousands of dollars.

Wooters and O'Mara watch them bundle the **BILLS** and place them into canvas bags. The bags carted to an industrial **FREIGHT ELEVATOR** big enough for a garbage truck.

Prowling the perimeter of the counting room are **EIGHT** of Cohen's **FLOORMEN**, watchdogs, scanning each desk for any slight of hand. Each floorman wears an **ARMY .45** in a holster and a **STEN Mark II** submachine gun, with a side-mounted 32-round mag, slung on a shoulder strap.

WOOTERS
(whispering)
We're outgunned, Kemosabe.

O'MARA
You're the one who said you wanted
to do something dumb.
(smiling)
I can't think of anything dumber
than this.

A MAN pushes a **CART** full of **CANVAS BAGS** past O'Mara and Wooters. He glances to his left and **SEES THEM!** O'Mara CLAPS one hand over the man's mouth and hooks the other arm around his throat, choking him unconscious.

O'Mara drags the man around the corner. And Wooters pulls the **CART** out into the **LANDING**. Unsnaps one of the canvas bags. O'Mara sees the **THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS BUNDLED INSIDE**: New homes. A new start. O'Mara and Wooters look like Frodo gazing upon the ring. This is Cohen's might. Not machine guns, but the promise of everything you've ever wanted...

O'MARA
Do it.

Wooters pulls his bottle of lighter fluid...

WOOTERS
And you couldn't think of anything dumber.

...and DOUSES ALL THE MONEY in the cart!

INT. SECOND FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Operators hustle to the stairwell, head downstairs.

WASHINGTON

(shhh)
Quietly, ladies, if you please.

As Kennard and Washington step into the SORTING ROOM ...

INT. SECOND FLOOR (SORTING ROOM) - CONTINUOUS

... Where CYLINDERS drop from PNEUMATIC TUBES. MEN scramble up/down track-rolling, library LADDERS *pinning* each **BETTING SLIP** to a gigantic, TOTALISATOR BOARD.

WASHINGTON

Everybody out. Nice and quiet.

Washington pulls his TIN of Shell lighter fluid, SQUIRTS fluid across the papered TOTALISATOR BOARD. The board becomes a **WALL OF FLAME**. Betting slips blacken, peel away to REVEAL a hidden panel behind the totalisator board, a **SECRET DOOR** with a speakeasy **EYE-SLIT**. Now, the EYE-SLIT slides open, a pair of **EYES** behind it stare right at him!

KENNARD

Oh shit.

Kennard pulls Washington out of the way just as a dozen **BULLETS** PUNCH OUT THROUGH THE DOOR. **The door KICKS open and FOUR GUNMEN with MAUSERS come out BLASTING.**

Kennard FIRES, hits the first guy dead center, dropping him. Washington SHOVES a ladder, sending it rolling along its track, knocking a guy sideways, fouling his aim. Kennard plugs another guy as he and Washington retreat to the stairwell, FIRE SPREADING FAST UP THE WALLS!

INT. THIRD FLOOR (COUNTING ROOM) - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara and Wooters hear gunfire coming from downstairs. The FLOORMEN hear it too and hit the ALARM on the wall.

O'MARA

Ready?

WOOTERS

Hell no.

Wooters LIGHTS the MONEY and he and O'Mara SHOVE the FLAMING CART out into the COUNTING ROOM!

CONTINUED:

Panicked COUNTERS leave their desks, stampede for the exit. But one counter can't resist GRABBING a canvas sack on his way out. A floorman SEES him - **BAM!** - puts one between the thief's shoulder blades. Rules are rules.

And O'Mara and Wooters charge out into the counting room, Ithaca Shotguns up, **Butch and Sundance BLASTING fast as they can PUMP out twelve-gauge shells. BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!**

The floormen unsling their STEN submachine guns, and - **brackabrackabrackbra!** - UNLEASH a devastating field of fire across the counting room. Bullets whizzing like particles in a super collider. Desk lamps EXPLODE. Canvas sacks burst open, kicking money into the air.

The tanker desks are the only cover available in the open room. Wooters and O'Mara low-crawl through rows and rows of them, crouching behind and moving from desk to desk as the floormen stalk them, STENs up, **a deadly shell game.**

Floorman 1 BRACES his Florsheim on the edge of the desk, straightens his knee, and **SHOVES**, sending the heavy steel desk across the waxed floor, rolling on squeaky casters.

He makes his way down the aisle, **KICKING** the **DESKS** as he goes, each desk ROLLING on casters across the slick floor. The other floormen start SHOVING desks. The big tanker desks **BASH** against each other, SPINNING, RICOCHETING around the floor like BUMPER CARS.

Staying low, O'Mara **LUNGES** out of the way of a desk coming at him like a runaway freight car. He **VAULTS** another oncoming desk, **SHOULDER-ROLLS** over the top of another coming right behind it, pops up with his SHOTGUN and **BOOM! BOOM!** O'Mara pumps double-ought buck into a floorman's chest, blasting the guy off his feet, causing him to flip backward over the desk behind him-

-As Wooters **JUMPS** off a desk, DROPPING to his knees to get under gunfire, **SLIDING** across the wax-slick floor on his knees. He **YANKS** the STEN from the floorman's just-dead fingers as he SLIDES past the body on his knees, **FIRING** the STEN full-auto. **Brackabracka!** Stitching bullets through a floorman as he slides past him into a desk, sliding into home, **KICKING** with both legs, SHOVING the desk into a floorman like a battering ram, **sending BOTH the desk and the floorman CRASHING out the window!**

EXT. GUARANTEE FINANCE - CONTINUOUS

CRASH! Ramirez watches the TANKER DESK and a flailing FLOORMAN sail out through the third floor window, trailing broken blinds like stiff streamers. The desk LANDS - **CRUNCH** - caving in the hood of a parked Studebaker. People running, screaming. Black SMOKE boiling out of the windows of the GF building.

RAMIREZ
Son of a bitch!

Fuck it. That's it. Ramirez can't take it anymore. He puts the FORD in GEAR and FLOORS it!

Keeler CUTS another wire and uses it to rappel down the side of the building.

INT. SECOND FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Pursuing gunmen fire after them as Kennard and Washington take cover on opposite sides of the stairwell. Powdered plaster GEYSERS off the wall as Kennard calmly reloads.

WASHINGTON
(sarcastic)
Why don't you just shoot the guns out of their hands, Hoppalong?

Kennard holsters his revolver and steps out, facing their gunfire. He DRAWS, fanning the hammer. Lighting. **BLAM!** **BLAM!** Mausers **LEAPING** from their stinging hands!

Another gunman appears BEHIND KENNARD! Washington flicks his switchblade. Throwing the knife into the man's chest.

KENNARD
Much obliged.

INT. THIRD FLOOR (COUNTING ROOM) - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara SLIPS his foot under a desk, and soccer-jerks his knee up to FLIP the desk UPRIGHT. **Using the steel desk as a shield, FIRING his PISTOL from behind it.** BAM! BAM! BAM! BAM! Dropping a floorman. His pistol clicks empty. The last floorman fires back. **Brackabracka!** O'Mara SPINS away from the desk as the bullets collander through it. He DIVES behind two desks, next to Wooters.

O'MARA
I'm out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOOTERS
(coughing)
Same.

SMOKE. Burning dollars float like cherry blossoms. The last floorman stalks them through flakes of burning cash, slamming a fresh magazine into his STEN, **FIRING as he closes in on their hiding place, barricaded behind desks.**

We hear **HUMMING**. The huge **FREIGHT ELEVATOR** coming. The Floorman looks back, squinting through the smoke, trying to see who's behind the elevator's wooden gate.

HEADLIGHTS shine out through the slats. An engine **REVS**. And the **FORD SHERIDAN SMASHES out through the elevator gate!** The floorman tumbles under the oncoming car. Dead.

O'Mara and Wooters watch the Ford skid across the fiery Counting Room, scattering desks. **Ramirez at the wheel!**

WOOTERS
He didn't get out of the car.

Ramirez kicks open the door.

RAMIREZ
Get in.

O'Mara and Wooters clamber over desks and climb in. Ramirez hits the gas. **And the FORD SMASHES THROUGH A WALL and barrels down the wide marble stairs...**

EXT. GUARANTEE FINANCE - CONTINUOUS

COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPUTIES and FIRE TRUCKS arriving, LA COUNTY FIREMEN swing off the running boards, scrambling.

I/E. THE OTHER FORD SHERIDAN - NIGHT

Washington and Kennard rush to the other Ford. Keeler climbs into the car with them, sooty and out of breath.

WASHINGTON
Where's O'Mara and Wooters?

KEELER
(coughing)
still inside.

CONTINUED:

KENNARD
*And just where in the goddamned
 hell is Ramirez?*

Ramirez's Ford **SMASHES** out through the front of the building, grill obliterating the revolving doors. DEPUTIES DIVING out of the way as the car fishtails into the street, flames on the hood. For just that moment, the two Fords are not ten feet apart. Kennard, Washington, and Keeler, Ramirez, O'Mara, Wooters, all together.

DEPUTY
Who the hell are those guys?

RAMIREZ
We're the Gangster Squad.

With that, the Fords SMASH through the SAWHORSES, ROARING away up the street before the deputies can react.

EXT. GUARANTEE FINANCE BUILDING - LATER

Burning ASH falls like snow. As FIREMEN scramble to axe open the ground floor windows, the third floor windows suddenly BLOW OUT. The **LAFD CHIEF ENGINEER** turns to...

CHIEF ENGINEER
It's comin' down, Sheriff.

...The duly-elected Los Angeles County High Sheriff **EUGENE W. BISCAILUZ** (*who we recognize from Cohen's table at Slapsy Maxie's). Biscailuz can only watch this apocalypse. He's helpless to stop it now.

SHERIFF BISCAILUZ
Mother of God.

There's a commotion at the sawhorses. LENNOX and JOHNNY STOMP shove gawkers aside to make way for **MICKEY COHEN**. The Sheriff's Deputies immediately move the barricades aside to let Cohen pass. And as Cohen stalks through falling ash, we see the fiery carnage in Cohen's eyes. Cohen coming at him, Sheriff Biscailuz shifts his feet.

COHEN
*Now, what the hell is a Gangster
Squad, Eugene?*

SHERIFF BISCAILUZ
*We don't know. Mr. Cohen. Right
 now, I'm coordinating the-*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COHEN

He's coordinating. That's my Golden Goose, Eugene. Least you could do is get a bucket.

Cohen, the old pugilist, KNOCKS Biscailuz on his ass with a swift RIGHT! 20 Uniformed Deputies see it, but no one lifts a finger to intervene. Biscailuz lifts his fingers to touch his bloody mouth. Cohen KICKS HIM IN THE FACE.

COHEN

Coordinate this, you putz!

Deputies turn their heads, looking away, as Cohen *stomps the shit* out of the High Sheriff of Los Angeles County.

INT. FORMOSA CAFE - NIGHT

The raucous **Gangster Squad** is gathered down at the end of the bar, smoking, laughing, drinking together to celebrate their victory. Ramirez the hero of the hour, slams a shot, coughs. Washington claps him on the back.

O'Mara finds Kennard with Keeler, sipping his beer, always with his back to the wall. PATRONS periodically getting up to head back into the crowded **BETTING ROOM**.

KENNARD

Our young Senor Ramirez's drunker'n a peach orchard sow.

O'MARA

He did alright today.

KENNARD

Yes he did. You know, his dad had a pushcart in Boyle Heights. Wouldn't pay protection to the Black Hand. They beat him to death. Ramirez saw it happen.

The men watching Ramirez and the squad jostle and laugh.

O'MARA

What the hell did you do before you came on the job, Max?

KENNARD

A lot I ain't proud of, can't be put right again. When Gabriel blows his horn, I don't imagine he'll invite me up.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KENNARD (CONT'D)

I know puttin' the badge on ain't gonna settle my account with him. But it does comfort me some. And I guess I missed wearin' it today.

KEELER

He's right. We crossed a line today. I signed up for this so I could tell my boy, so I could tell him, damn it at least I tried to do something about it. But I hope he never finds out about this.

O'MARA

Well, what do you suggest we do with an illegal wire tap and no witnesses willing to talk? Cohen owns every judge from here to Fresno. We're in occupied territory. There's no justice in this town. There's just us. We're the goddamned line. And we're not going to win this in a courtroom.

Keeler doesn't have an answer. Wooters walks over.

WOOTERS

O'Mara. You gotta see this.

INT. FORMOSA BETTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Wooters leads O'Mara back into the betting room. MEN shouting. Placing Bets. Playing CRAPS in the corner. Wooters points to the TOTALISATOR BOARD, among the RACEHORSES and BOXERS is a section marked **GANGSTER SQUAD**.

WOOTERS

Twenty to one we don't make it through the week.

O'Mara steels himself, turning to the BOOKMAKER.

O'MARA

Hey, gimme twenty bucks on the GANGSTER SQUAD.

A few heads turn. The gamblers thinking he's nuts.

BOOKMAKER

That's a sucker bet, pal.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'MARA
Yeah, but I got a good feeling.

Wooters pulls O'Mara aside. The two men nose to nose.

WOOTERS
What do you think this is?

O'MARA
It means we're getting to him.

WOOTERS
We were lucky today. Don't you get it? He's hunting us now. And we know he's got people inside the department. So how long do you think our luck'll hold?

(off O'Mara)
I ever tell you my old man was a gambler?

O'MARA
No. How'd that work out for him?

WOOTERS
No idea. Guy went out for a pack of smokes, never came back. Lived to the ripe old age of who gives a shit. But he always said the trick is knowing when to pick up your chips and call it a night.

(beat)
You see what I'm saying. Today was as good as it's ever gonna get for us. We hurt Cohen. And we can walk away right now with our heads up.

O'MARA
You wanna walk, I can't stop you. But I'm not going anywhere, Jerry. Hear me? This is my city. Not his.

INT. O'MARA'S HOME - LATER THAT NIGHT

O'Mara sits on his couch. Connie is curled up next to him, her fingers in his hair. They're listening to DRAGNET on the radio, but O'Mara's miles away.

CONNIE
(feeling a kick)
Oh. Here, give me your hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She places O'Mara's hand on her tummy, trying to bring him back.

O'MARA
He's strong.

CONNIE
She's strong.

He smiles. But it fades quickly, breaking her heart.

CONNIE
You weren't the same after the war. It scared me. It was almost like you'd taken a lover. I kept waiting for you to come back. But you never did. You left me, John.

O'MARA
I didn't change. This city did. While I was fightin' monsters over there, they were layin' down for one here. *Don't make him angry. Don't get in his way.* Well, I've seen what's at the end of that road. And you wouldn't like it.

CONNIE
You've been waiting for this, haven't you? I know part of you has. This whole time you've just been waiting for the chance to take it up again. When will it be over, John? You need to tell me.
(off O'Mara)
Then I'm sorry. I can't wait for you anymore.

And he watches her walk out of the room.

EXT. COHEN'S MANSION - NIGHT

A CHAIR smashes out through a window, landing on the lawn. German Shepherds strain their leashes, bark.

INT. COHEN'S MANSION - CONTINUOUS

Cohen, roaring and gibbering curses, his homicidal rage like lycanthropy. He's lost it. **Jean cowers in the kitchen**, watching Cohen tear his beloved home apart.

CONTINUED:

COHEN

*Gangster Squad. After what I pay
the cops in this town. Those dirty
sons of bitches made off with
half a million bucks, easy.*

His henchmen hang back, trying to avoid his gaze, afraid to leave and afraid to stay as Cohen SMASHES GLASSES, PLATES, FURNITURE. He grabs a FIREPLACE POKER, swinging.

COHEN

*Now, I KNOW somebody PEACHED to
'em! SOMEBODY talked! One of you
putzes gave away the goddamned
store. Who was it???*

Tearing PAINTINGS off the wall and PUNCHING HOLES in them. In the kitchen, Jean cringes at the savage sounds.

Only Lennox, Cohen's executioner, is immune to suspicion. He moves stolidly through the mansion with a **BUG SWEEPER**, passing the device over the walls, furniture, phones.

Letty, the housekeeper, now ducks into the kitchen to where Jean is hiding, and grabs Jean by her arm.

LETTY

*Come on. We need to get you out of
here, Miss Jean. 'Fore he runs out
of pretty things to break.*

I/E. COHEN'S MANSION - MINUTES LATER

German shepherds BARK as Letty helps Jean into the LIMO.

LETTY

*Now, you don't need to come back
here. Not ever. He likes nice
things. But he's not a nice man.*

Cohen stalks around the house looking for her, charging into his bedroom to find Lennox, finger to his lips. Lennox squats in front of Cohen's TELEVISION, passing the device over it. **Needles JUMP**. Lennox smiles at Cohen.

INT. WOOTERS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

POUNDING on Wooters' door. He opens the door. It's Jean.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEAN

He's gone crazy, Jerry. He's gonna
kill me.

(tears)

You need to get me out of here.
Please.

INT. WOOTERS' CAR (MOVING) - MINUTES LATER

Wooters drives through town, taking a serpentine route
one eye on the mirror. Jean sits next to him, in shock.

WOOTERS

You're gonna be okay. Jean-
(off Jean)
Look at me. You'll be fine.

Jerry takes another fast turn. She takes a deep breath.

JEAN

My name isn't Jean. It's Jenny
McLane. He had me change it. For
professional reasons.

(beat)

I came out here to be a star.

(bitter tears)

This face, I figured I couldn't
lose. I thought I was going in for
a screen test. They locked me up.
When they found out I was a virgin
they gave me to Judge Krauss.

(off Wooters)

Krauss got me in trouble. So
Cohen's guys took me to Mexico to
take care of it, but it messed me
up, Jerry, so I, I can't...

He takes one hand off the wheel to hold hers.

INT. JACK WHALEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The RADIO plays Roy Brown's *BUTCHER PETE*, Whalen's in his
kitchen with a bottle of beer, frying up some eggs for
dinner. There's a KNOCK at his door. Whalen pulls a
pistol out of his bread box, holding it behind his leg.

WHALEN

We don't want any!

WOOTERS

Jack, it's Jerry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Whalen opens the door to find Wooters and Jean standing outside. He can see by their faces they're in trouble.

WHALEN

Come in. Come in, kids. I was just fixin' some eggs.

WOOTERS

Jack, I need a favor. You know I wouldn't ask, but I need someone to get her out of town. Tonight.

WHALEN

You relax now, cousin. Hear me? Jack Whalen's on the case. I'll get her out of here safe.

Whalen and Wooters shake hands, buddies for life in spite of it all. Wooters and Jean embrace, their last kiss.

INT. CAFE CALIENTE - NIGHT

The gangster squad, minus Wooters, is gathered around their table. O'Mara briefing them on their next raid.

O'MARA

Keeler just picked up something on the wire. Something big.

(off Wooters' dismay)

Cohen's gambling ship, THE S.S. REX. It's his floating casino. Operates outside the three-mile limit, where we can't touch it.

KEELER

But tomorrow night, around midnight, she's docking in San Pedro for supplies.

O'MARA

And we're going to be there when she does.

KENNARD

How many guns on board?

O'MARA

I figure there can't be that many.

WASHINGTON

You figure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The squad exchanges heavy looks.

O'MARA

The ocean's been their defense.
They're not expecting to be
raided. Listen, Keeler's going to
be monitoring the wire the whole
time. He hears anything funny,
he'll get on the radio to warn us.
(off their unease)

This is the last one. We take the
Rex and it's finished. Cohen's
through. He'll have to pack it in.

EXT. SAN PEDRO SHIPYARDS - NIGHT

Fog. Buoys clang somewhere in the dark. Sea Lions bellow.
A Lighthouse BEAM sweeps over Los Angeles Harbor like
Sauron's eye as huge, mechanized CRANES off-load wooden
CARGO CONTAINERS from the decks of massive FREIGHTERS.

A foreboding labyrinth of wooden CONTAINERS, stacked two
and three stories high, covers a half-mile of the
concrete docks, like the warehouse at the end of *Raiders*.

Two **FORD SHERIDANS** parked on the dock. A stakeout.

I/E. FORD SHERIDANS - NIGHT

O'Mara and Wooters in one. Washington, Ramirez, Kennard
in the other. Ghostly fog around them. Waiting, tense.
The cranes off-loading cargo around them. LONGSHOREMEN
shouting, waving the crates over, and guiding them in.

WOOTERS

John, if that ship comes in loaded
for bear, we're done, you know it?

O'MARA

We'll be alright.

The CONTAINERS are stacking up all around them, piling
higher, filling gaps, cutting off potential routes of
escape, but it's all happening so slowly, so organically,
that no one in the squad realizes they're deliberately
boxing them in. Forming a real 'box canyon.' A kill site.

Kennard holds a long-loop Winchester 92 across his lap.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They don't notice shadowy FIGURES stalking ninja-like among the containers all around them, efficient killers leaping soundlessly from container to container.

The figures moving to flank the two cars now, crawling across the tops of the containers like Apaches closing in on covered wagons. They carefully unsling Bergman MP-18 Submachine guns, quietly unfold the bipods on FG-42 automatic rifles, and hunker down, sighting in. Patient.

WOOTERS

Time is it?

O'MARA

After one.

Abruptly, all the cranes shut down and the Longshoremen quickly disappear, not wanting to be anywhere near this.

WOOTERS

We've been had, amigo.

O'Mara looks around, seeing the trap for the first time.

O'MARA

Christ, it's an ambush-

EXT. SAN PEDRO SHIPYARDS - NIGHT

The gunmen on the containers **OPEN FIRE**. 7.92 mm rounds pocking the concrete and slamming into their vehicles.

Ramirez throws it in REVERSE and FLOORS it, the car roaring backward, smashing back through a wooden CARGO CRATE and BLASTING out the other side of it, into the labyrinth. And the wall of containers COLLAPSES over the shattered (load-bearing) one, toppling like child's blocks. Gunmen fall among the tumbling, shattering boxes, firing wildly, some of them crushed under heavy crates.

'RED' GRANT, Cohen's firebug, kicks open one of the crates, stepping out with a *Flammenwefer 41 FLAMETHROWER*. **He fires a 100-foot jet of flame**. Chemical fire mauls O'Mara's car, covering every inch of it, the windows, the hood, stealing oxygen from O'Mara and Wooters trapped inside. Grant laughs, watching the Sheridan burn.

INSIDE THE CAR:

O'Mara FLOORS it, gunman firing after them as he steers the flaming car toward the end of the dock.

CONTINUED:

The car LEAPS off, plunges into the dark water, dousing the flames, sinking 20 feet to the silty bottom.

ON THE BOTTOM:

Water sprays in through broken windows, flooding the passenger compartment. O'Mara and Wooters breathing from a shrinking pocket of air in the passenger compartment.

IN THE CRATE MAZE:

Gunmen pursue Washington, Ramirez, and Kennard. GUNFIRE chewing the crates around them to splinters. **Ramirez is hit.** A round tearing through his bicep. Kennard turns, FIRES his Winchester FAST, taking out three gunmen. They fall off the crates, Washington picks up their MP-18s, one in each hand, FIRING to cover their escape.

EXT. SAN PEDRO HARBOR - NIGHT

Grant runs to the end of the dock and sprays a jet of flame across the water, napalm-flame that stays on the surface, turning all the water around the dock into a lake of hellfire. And to Grant, it's all so beautiful.

O'Mara KICKS out the windshield and he and Wooters swim out, but they can't come up for air, because the surface is literally on fire: globular continents of flame, like replicating cells. They swim, silhouetted by the fire.

Gunmen run to the end of the dock next to the spellbound Grant, stand next to him, and fire their MP-18s down into the water, raking them back and forth across it, bullets cutting through the flaming surface...

Bullets fizzing down through the water around O'Mara and Wooters as they kick out beyond, surfacing inside a large BOATHOUSE, containing a GRUMANN amphibious plane.

ATOP THE CRATES:

The gunmen run across the tops of the crates, rushing to catch up with their prey. Crouching among the boxes, Washington pops up behind one of them, palm over his mouth, knife in his back, tossing him off the crates. Kennard and Ramirez pop up, blasting two others. Kennard draws his COLT, FIRING it as he tosses Washington his Winchester, Washington FIRING it the moment it's in his hands. BLAZING GUNFIRE. And when the smoke clears, Washington, Kennard and Ramirez are still standing.

INT. BOATHOUSE - NIGHT

O'Mara and Wooters pull themselves out of the water, gasping, flopping into a SKIFF. Wooters grabs the emergency kit, pops it open, searching...

Grant and one of the gunmen enter the boathouse, running along the wooden catwalk. O'Mara and Wooters spider-cling to the bottom of the catwalk, water dripping.

After they pass them, O'Mara climbs the ladder, holding the skiff's outboard motor. He pulls the starter cord: *rummmmm!* Swings the outboard like a chainsaw, samurai-slashing down across the gunman's back. The gunman drops his MP-18 and pitches forward into the drink.

But even before the gunman hits the water, O'Mara's charging Grant. Grant brings the nozzle of the flamethrower around at O'Mara as O'Mara swings the roaring outboard, the prop slashing both Grant's arm and his fuel hose. Grant clutches his arm. The hose whips around, spraying fuel over the catwalk.

O'Mara raises the outboard over his head, but Wooters grabs him and pulls him back along the catwalk as Grant staggers, fumbles after the hose. Wooters raises an emergency FLARE PISTOL and FIRES at Grant. **WHOOMP!** They run from the flaming boathouse.

EXT. SAN PEDRO SHIPYARDS - MINUTES LATER

The shipyards are a war zone. FIRE BOAT shoots water into the flaming boathouse. O'Mara, Wooters, Kennard, Washington, Ramirez, lean against crates. They're alive, but shaken. SIRENS approach. LAPD PROWLERS pull up to surround the squad. They drop their guns, hands up.

WOOTERS
It was a set-up.

O'MARA
Jesus. He knows about the wire.

I/E. ABANDONED HOME - NIGHT

Keeler sits in his makeshift FIELD OFFICE, listening, jotting notes. The tarp behind him flapping in a breeze.

INTERCUT AS NEEDED:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COHEN (OVER WIRE)
*I want you to know that I'm past
 the anger. That part is over.*

*Shadows stalking toward the abandoned house, toward the
 lantern's light glowing behind the tarpaulin.*

COHEN (OVER WIRE)
*It's important that you understand
 that. What's left now is business.*

Cohen holds Keeler's bug in his hand, speaking directly into it like a microphone. Cohen has mimeographs of PERSONNEL FILES on O'MARA and KEELER on the table in front of him. *Hendricks is sitting across from Cohen, looking uncomfortable, like he has no stomach for this.

A SHADOW at the tarp behind Keeler.

COHEN
 Just business, Keeler.

HARD CUT TO:

POV: For this claustrophobic second, we SEE only **DARKNESS** through the cotton. We HEAR CRICKETS, and Keeler's BREATHING sifted through the pillowcase.

LENNOX (O.S.)
 Hear that? Middle of the god
 damned city and you can still hear
 the crickets.

EXT. UNKNOWN - NIGHT

The LA sky full of stars we'd never be able to see above Los Angeles today. The downtown skyline in the distance, but we still don't know exactly where we are. We can just make out four **FIGURES** near the edge of a **WOODEN PLATFORM**. Lennox is there, hands in the pockets of his overcoat, while thugs flank Keeler, wrists HANDCUFFED behind his back. Pillowcase over his head. The cotton pillowcase SUCKS against his mouth with each panicked breath.

LENNOX
 I love that sound. It's, I don't
 know, it's peaceful, isn't it?

Lennox NODS and the thugs REMOVE the pillowcase to REVEAL a terrified KEELER, his nose broken, eye swollen. Lennox now IGNITES a Magnesium **FLARE**, a GREEN GLOW as Lennox HOLDS the flare up to Keeler's face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The bright FLAME fizzes between them, acrid chemical smoke spooling from it. Keeler clinches his eyes shut, twists his sweat-slick face away from the hot flare. But the thugs HOLD him.

LENNOX

Now, I won't lie to you. A bullet's the best deal in town tonight. It's quick. Easy.

Lennox smiles, pulling the flare AWAY from Keeler's face. Keeler blinks, chest heaving.

LENNOX

At this point, a bullet's, well, it's my personal gift. Because hell I admire a man with sand. And you got more than your share.

Lennox now DROPS the flare off the pier and we FOLLOW it down, splashing into DARK WATER, the hearty magnesium staying lit. The flare hisses and bubbles as it sinks to the bottom of a LARGE POND, and the pulsing flare instantly causes the water around the pier to GLOW with its gelatinous GREEN LIGHT. And for the first time we know where we are, the alligator farm, because the huge **ALLIGATORS** are now visible in sharp relief, lit from below, snaking through the glowing water, waiting...

LENNOX

And all you have to do to get it is tell me where the money is.

KEELER

The money?

Keeler laughs. It's infectious. Lennox chuckles a little.

LENNOX

The hell's so damn funny?

Keeler's handcuffs fall to the deck. Clank.

KEELER

I always keep a spare key.

He reaches into the coat of the thug to his left, pulling out the guy's gun and **BAM! BAM!** BLOWING HIM BACKWARD, splintering through the rail, off the PIER! The thug SLASHES into the water, screaming as the WATER COMES ALIVE, BOILING with JAWS and MOTTLED GREEN SKIN as Keeler SPINS to fire at Lennox, **BAM! BAM! BAM!** Lennox GRABS the other thug, using him as a human shield.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Click. Keeler's gun empty. Lennox TOSSES the body aside and PULLS his 1918 **TRENCH KNIFE** with the brass-knuckle "D" Guard handle as Keeler RUSHES him. Lennox coming up with the knife, driving it up into Keeler, **killing him**.

EXT. GARDEN OF ALLAH - NIGHT

Whalen pulls into the Garden of Allah: Hotel and Villas. It's late. The guests are asleep. Shadows. Crickets.

JEAN

I don't just want out of town,
Jack. I want out of the life. And
that money's my grubstake. It's
all I have to get started with.

Whalen can relate. He'd himself leave if he could. Whalen stows her in a fragrant slice of shadow, out of sight.

WHALEN

Wait here.

Whalen hurries past the main building, Hollywood's largest **SWIMMING POOL**, heading down a path of paver tiles into a Hobbit-village of little Bungalows.

EXT. BUNGALOW 12 - SECONDS LATER

Whalen kneels by the planter, digs out a coffee can. Whalen waits, watching the path of pavers between villas.

Whalen walks back down the dark path of pavers between the bungalows. Then Whalen **SEES** them, **COHEN, HOOKY ROTHMAN**, and **JOHNNY STOMP** coming around the main building! They haven't seen Jean yet, but they see him.

Jean holds her breath, watching Cohen and his men walk past her hiding place. They can't see her in the dark. They're walking past the pool now, heading for Whalen.

She can hear Whalen whistling as he walks down the path to face Cohen and his boys, like Gary Cooper walking out to meet Frank Miller and his gang. She doesn't dare move.

EXT. GARDEN OF ALLAH (POOL AREA) - NIGHT

Cohen, Rothman and Johnny Stomp watch Whalen come whistling out of the shadows, not a care in the world. Underwater pool lights put blue ripples over their faces.

CONTINUED:

COHEN

Where is she, Jack?

WHALEN

You brought your trouble boys with
you just to see Jean?

Whalen takes off his jacket, lays it neatly across a chaise lounge. Rothman and Johnny Stomp step closer.

WHALEN (CONT'D)

Were you expecting some kinda
trouble, Mickey?

Whalen unbuttons his cuffs, rolling up his sleeves now.

WHALEN (CONT'D)

Or maybe you're lookin' for some.

COHEN

My dog shits more trouble than
you're gonna give me, Jack.

WHALEN

Well, come an' get you a piece.

Rothman and Stomp launch at Whalen and Whalen plays Mickey's trouble boys a little improvised chin music, heavy on the snare drum. Whalen's never fought better in his life. And part of him knows he never will again. *Hoka-Hey, sons of bitches. Today is a good day to die.* Wrevock and Johnny Stomp go down hard, but Whalen's not finished. He steps over them, coming at Cohen now.

WHALEN

You're up next, you little creep.
I got somethin' here I been savin'
up special for you, Mickey.

Whalen stalks Cohen around the pool, Hulk hands opening and closing. Jean watches, helpless, Cohen pulls a **PISTOL**. Whalen just smiles, knowing he's won.

JOHNNY STOMP

No, Mickey. DON'T!

But Cohen ignores him. He's too far gone now. And Jean watches as Cohen **SHOOTS** Whalen in the chest. **BOOM!** Whalen falls backward, arms out-flung, crashing down through the still surface of the lighted pool, **sinking**. The pool light changing, now bathing Cohen's FACE in DEEP RED.

INT. O'MARA'S HOME - NIGHT

Connie asleep. Moonlight coming through the shades. The baby KICKS, waking her. A SHADOW passes across the window. Instinct. She swings her feet off the bed and gets down on all-fours just as... **Brackabrackabrackabra!** BULLETS PUNCH THROUGH WINDOWS AND WALLS around her.

Connie crawls down the hallway, hauls herslf into the bathroom as the **Brackabrackabrackabracka!** Glass and splinters raining down. **Brackabrackabrackabracka!** The mirror and tiles shatter around her. Connie SCREAMS.

I/E. O'MARA'S HOME - MINUTES LATER

O'Mara pulls up to his home in a PROWL CAR, the street choked with **LAPD PROWL CARS** and an **AMBULANCE**. Their little house is shot to pieces. UNIFORMS on the front lawn with shotguns. O'Mara RUNS past them, SHOVING the uniforms aside, up the porch. He runs through the living room, where more uniforms are milling somberly, down the hallway, **past the bloody paramedics**, into the bathroom...

INT. O'MARA'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara approaches the bathtub. He sees her blood on the rim. And everything, every atom, changes for him. O'Mara kneeling next to the bathtub, his wife curled inside, unharmed. **Their newborn baby girl suckling at her breast.**

EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE (HOLLYWOOD HILLS) - DAWN

Wooters pulling up to the front of the abandoned HOUSE, Keeler's FIELD OFFICE, jogs up the slope to the half-finished home. Mounting dread.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE

Wooters pull aside the tarp to find Keeler's chair TOPPLED. LISTENING EQUIPMENT **SMASHED**. TAPES **GONE**. Movement. Wooters SPINS, gun up. A page of stained NEWSPAPER is wrapped around something on Keeler's makeshift desk. The paper bulges and crinkles. Something moving inside it. Wooters unwraps it. The thing wrapped inside the paper BITES his finger.

WOOTERS
Arrgh. Damn it.

CONTINUED:

The BABY ALLIGATOR scrambles off the desk into a corner, leaving the front page of the *Los Angeles Times* open in the desk, the headline: **WHO ARE THE GANGSTER SQUAD?**

I/E. COHEN'S MANSION - MORNING

O'Mara FLOORS it, taking the PROWLER straight up Cohen's driveway at ramming speed, *SMASHING* through Cohen's gate, the car skidding laterally across Cohen's lawn. And O'Mara's stepping out, FIRING at Cohen's GUNMEN as they come charging out the front door. **BAM! BAM! BAM!** Killing three gunmen as soon as they clear the doorway. Cohen's gunmen shudder and collapse bloody on the front steps. One death-firing his M-3 as he falls, *brakabrackabracka!* Shattering terra-cotta pots, spilling soil and roses. No one even makes it to the front lawn.

O'Mara charges into the house, FIRING at another GUNMAN who dives into the **DINING ROOM**.

GUNMAN
(calling out)
Hey! HEY! Uncle! I give, okay?

He tosses his GUN out on to the carpet and steps out, hands up, shaking. O'Mara's pistol tracks his every step.

GUNMAN
Don't shoot. Jesus. *Olly olly oxen free*, okay?

O'MARA
(re: the tossed gun)
Pick it up. Please.

O'Mara can't kill an unarmed man. Wants to. Can't.

O'MARA
Then give your boss a message for me, willya?

O'Mara lowers his gun ten degrees and **FIREs**, shooting the man through the leg. *Arrgh!* He collapses in pain. O'Mara stands over him, gun pointed at his other leg.

O'MARA
You sure you got all that? Or do you need me to repeat it?

WOOTERS (O.S.)
JOHN!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'Mara looks up at Wooters, and down at the man clutching his leg, cowering beneath him. O'Mara sees his own hands around his gun. He's lost. And they both know it.

INT. LAPD PROWLER (MOVING) - MOMENTS LATER

O'Mara and Wooters in their prowler, O'Mara driving them out of the Hollywood Hills.

WOOTERS

You kill Cohen there's no end to it. Widow your wife. Orphan your baby. And the Syndicate sends somebody else here to replace him.

O'MARA

Maybe.

WOOTERS

There's no maybe about it. This is where I get off, John. I'm done.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD GREYHOUND STATION - DAY

A line of TRAVELERS carrying suitcases file into a GREYHOUND BUS bound for PORTLAND. Jean takes her place in line, no luggage, ticket in hand. She's leaving Los Angeles the same way she arrived, by bus, with nothing.

Jean looks over her shoulder at the skyline, torn.

EXT. UNION STATION - SUNSET

Washington, Kennard, Ramirez like secret service agents, watching the platform as O'Mara helps the fragile Connie on to the TRAIN. The baby in a bassinet.

INT. TRAIN CAR - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara helps Connie to her seat. Connie lifts the baby from her bassinet, holds her.

O'MARA

You both deserve better than what this city's become.

She glances out the window at the squad on the platform.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONNIE

Is that what you want me to tell her? When she asks me what happened to her father?

O'MARA

I'll tell her myself. Listen to me. I don't want to die, Connie. I want to build us a life here.

(beat)

But I have to finish this.

CONNIE

Good luck, John.

EXT. KEELER'S FRONT PORCH - DUSK

O'Mara walks out the front door. Behind him MARCIA KEELER sits on her sofa, handkerchief, eyes red. Grief like a physical creature pinning her to the sofa.

Keeler's son CHARLIE sits alone on the porch, chin in his hands. Eyes far away. O'Mara sees Charlie's bike leaned up against the porch, the one his father fixed for him.

CHARLIE

My dad's dead, isn't he?

O'MARA

Yes.

Before O'Mara can react. Charlie lunges off the porch, grabs his bike, SLAMS it against the tree, STOMPING the spokes out of the wheel his dad fixed for him. O'Mara wraps Charlie in a bear hug, pinning the boy's arms to his sides. Charlie twists, struggles, tears of rage.

O'Mara holds him as Charlie turns, hugging O'Mara tight. The boy's silent tears staining O'Mara's shirt.

INT. CITY HALL (BUNCO FORGERY) - NIGHT

O'Mara sits at his desk alone. Reports have piled up. Gates approaches, looking like an undertaker.

GATES

We need to talk.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

GATES

You've been disbanded.

O'MARA

What? Why?

Gates sighs before telling the patient it's cancer.

GATES

The chief has obtained assurances that Cohen will confine his operations to the unincorporated county and surrounding municipalities.

O'MARA

Assurances? You're telling me men died just so he could cut a deal with Cohen? He used me. All along.

O'Mara rages, PUNCHING his locker again and again, caving in the door. His knuckles bloody. Other COPS come running to the commotion, but seeing O'Mara's face, they move on.

GATES

I didn't know.

O'MARA

(chest heaving)

He won, Gates. Cohen beat us.

EXT. OLVERA STREET - NIGHT

A Mariachi BAND plays in the bandstand. COUPLES dancing, whooping, laughing in the plaza. Kids carrying sparklers.

INT. CAFE CALIENTE (CROWDED FOR DINNER) - NIGHT

Inside, what's left of the GANGSTER SQUAD: O'Mara, Washington, Kennard, and Ramirez sit at a big table in the back of the restaurant. Ramirez arm bandaged.

KENNARD

So that's it. We're done.

O'MARA

Parker called it off. It's over.
I'm sorry. This is my fault.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then O'Mara looks up to see MICKEY COHEN making his way over to their table, along with Lennox.

Cohen approaches O'Mara's table. Hand dropping to his side, Washington flicks his switchblade open, holding it upside down against his wrist, ready to throw it. Tense. Ramirez reaches for his gun, but Kennard stills him. Nobody's doing anything in the middle of this crowd.

COHEN

So this is the Gangster Squad. You guys are somethin' else, ya know it. I don't know whether to shoot you or ask for your autographs.

Cohen grabs a chair and flips it around to straddle it.

COHEN

Listen, I gotta be honest here. I wanna kill all a' ya right now. I mean bad. Bad as I've ever wanted any woman.

(to O'Mara)

And I know you wanna kill me, dontcha, soldier boy?

He's right. We see O'Mara fighting to contain his rage.

O'MARA

I would like that very much.

COHEN

Trouble is you're already dead. All of you. You just don't have the sense to lay down.

(beat)

And let me tell you, I'm the only one who can bring you back from the dead. So here's the deal. Hand over the money and I'll let you leave town with your heads still attached. Give back what you stole and get out of my city.

O'MARA

The hell are you talkin' about?

COHEN

The money you took from Guarantee Finance. I make it half a million.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

O'MARA

We burned it. We burned it all.
We didn't want your money, Mickey.
We just want you gone. We're cops.

COHEN

You can't shit a shitter. You're not cops. Way you came at me. You killed a dozen guys. Burned my place to the ground. No, I know gangsters when I see 'em. You guys must think I'm stupid. And don't any a you mugs talk to me about the law. I bought your whole department. And you know what? It came cheap. So I'm the only law there is around here.

(beat)

I want what's mine. I'll give you 'til tomorrow to cough it up.

O'MARA

How do we find you?

COHEN

(getting up)
Ah, don't worry. I'll find you.

Cohen walks out. Lennox follows.

EXT. CAFE CALIENTE - MOMENTS LATER

O'Mara, Kennard, Washington and Ramirez walk out of the restaurant to the plaza, watching Cohen and his men walk across, moving like sharks through DANCERS. Fireworks. Catherine wheels SPIN. Sparks rain down on the plaza.

EXT. PLAZA - CONTINUOUS

On his way past the bandstand, Lennox climbs the stairs and whispers to the MARIACHI BAND LEADER. The man looks frightened, but he nods, and they stop mid-song and begin to play the *DE GUELLO*, a haunting dirge. Hearing it, the DANCERS stop dancing and hustle out of the plaza, superstitious. Lennox looks back across the plaza and **salutes them**, following Cohen and Wrevock to their limo.

O'MARA

What's that about?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RAMIREZ

It's the *De Guello*. They call it
the throat-slitting song.

KENNARD

Messicans played it before they
took the Alamo. Means there's no
quarter. Means every one of us'll
be put to the sword.

O'Mara looks at his men: Kennard, Washington, Ramirez.
Sparks raining on them. *My God, what have I done?*

INT. O'MARA'S HOME - NIGHT

O'Mara sits alone, unshaven, in his ruined, empty home. A
bottle in one hand, his gun in the other. His front porch
CREAKS. A knock. He raises his .45 halfheartedly at the
door. Hell, it might as well end here.

O'MARA

Who's there?

WOOTERS

Jerry Wooters.

EXT. O'MARA'S FRONT PORCH - MOMENTS LATER

The two men pass the bottle back and forth between them.

WOOTERS

To Conway Keeler.

O'MARA

To Jack Whalen.

They drink. It's bitter.

O'MARA

You were right. Parker was using
me. I didn't change a damn thing.
I'm just going to wake up walking
on the wrong side of the grass.

WOOTERS

Well, we all are.

Long beat while O'Mara fights the urge to unburden
himself, and loses...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'MARA

We were supposed to drop into Castlenau, but we came in too low, clipped a tree, went down in the forest south of a village called Forces. Smith and Malik wounded. Broken femur. Broken back. So we rigged a trellis for each of 'em, hid out in a farmhouse.

(beat)

It was supposed to be safe. The family was with the resistance. But they got scared. Sold us out.

(beat)

Smith and Malik couldn't walk. We couldn't bring 'em with us. And I couldn't risk leaving 'em. See because, because, you know, the krauts, they...they would've gotten it out of 'em. Who's in the resistance. Safehouses. All of it.

(beat)

They knew it was coming. And they looked away, you know, to spare me that at least. They looked away so I wouldn't have to see their eyes.

WOOTERS

Sounds to me like you did what you had to do. But maybe you figure dyin's gonna square it for you. I think you're wrong. Think you're a good man, John, but hey what the hell do I know?

Off O'Mara.

INT. BULLPEN - LAPD ADMINISTRATIVE VICE - DAY

Wooters is packing up his desk. The Secretary approaches Wooters, cheerful and oblivious.

SECRETARY

You have a visitor, Jerry.

Wooters looks across the bullpen to see **JEAN** walking hesitantly toward him. She's uncomfortable in the police station. Wooters runs to her, holds her. She's alive.

WOOTERS

After they found Jack, I thought you were-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEAN

I know. I thought I was too. But
 Jack saved my life. He fought like
 crazy, until Cohen killed him.

WOOTERS

What the hell are you doing here?

JEAN

I was gone. Exit stage left. But I
 couldn't. I caught a bad case of
 stupid. From some dumb cop.

(beat)

I saw it happen, Jerry.

WOOTERS

Well, that's all the more reason
 for you to get out of Dodge, kid.

JEAN

No, dummy. Listen to me, willya? I
 saw Cohen kill Jack. I saw it. I'm
 a witness... I'm your witness.

Holy ... Shit.

INT. JUDGE KRAUSS'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Judge Krauss sips his coffee, reading the paper. He looks up, startled to see O'Mara and Wooters standing over him.

O'Mara is restored, transformed, clean-shaven and clear-eyed. In fact, both he and Wooters look razor sharp, their ties straight, shoes polished to a high gloss, hat-brims just so. LAPD BADGES gleaming on their belts.

JUDGE KRAUSS

Who the hell let you in here?

O'Mara holds a WARRANT AFFIDAVIT in his hand.

O'MARA

We need a favor, Judge.

JUDGE KRAUSS

Get out of my chambers. I don't do
 favors.

WOOTERS

You sure about that, Your Honor?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jean steps into his office, her jaw set, facing him. Seeing her, Krauss pales, his hands shake.

WOOTERS

There. Now that's more like it,
you son of a bitch.

O'MARA

See, we've been up on Cohen's phone for a while now. So you're gonna step down.

O'Mara places the Affidavit on the desk in front of him.

O'MARA

But before you do, just this once, you're gonna do the right thing.

Krauss shakily scribbles his signature. O'Mara looms.

WOOTERS

Now, where is he?

KRAUSS

Somewhere in town. He didn't trust me enough to tell me where.

O'MARA

Smart. Day I arrested Racine and those other assholes? Time I got to the station, you already had writs waitin' for all of 'em. So who was it stiffed in the call?

INT. CITY HALL (DETECTIVE'S BUREAU) - NIGHT

The bureau is empty. HENDRICKS waits at the ELEVATORS. Ding! Hendricks' elevator arrives, going down. Doesn't notice O'MARA and WOOTERS step up behind him. They grab him by the shoulders, holding him there.

WOOTERS

You can catch the next one, fatso.

INT. OBSERVATION DECK (27TH FLOOR) - MOMENTS LATER

Ding! The elevator doors open and Wooters HAULS Hendricks out on the observation platform of LA CITY HALL, the tallest building in LA, and the one on the LAPD badge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENDRICKS

*Take your hands off me you son of
a bitch. I know people. Hear me?*

Wooters SLAMS Hendricks against the railing, overlooking the gorgeous Los Angeles SKYLINE. Twinkling neon.

WOOTERS

I'm counting on it.

He has Hendricks by the collar, forcing Hendricks to arch his back against the railing. 27 floors down.

WOOTERS

Where's Cohen?

O'MARA

Slow down, Jerry.

HENDRICKS

You won't drop me.

Wooters forces him further out over the ledge.

WOOTERS

You sold us out. Killed Keeler.
Same as if you pulled the trigger.

Hendricks doesn't see the WINDOW WASHER'S PLATFORM, neither does O'Mara, but Wooters does. He SHOVES.

Hendricks flips backward, screaming 10 feet down to land in a heap on the window washer's platform. Wooters VAULTS the railing to drop down next to him. Pulleys CREAK. Wooters handcuffs Hendricks' right wrist to the pipe frame of the platform and KICKS him off! Hendricks dangles.

HENDRICKS

Ah, CHRIST! JESUS! JESUS!

WOOTERS

Where's Cohen?

HENDRICKS

I can't!

Wooters RELEASES THE BRAKE. THE PLATFORM DROPS A FLOOR! Hendricks screams. He pulls the brake again. The platform stops abruptly, dislocating Hendricks' shoulder. *Arrgh!*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HENDRICKS

He's at the Roosevelt! Jesus
Christ! John, help me up!

WOOTERS

Don't worry. Somebody'll find you
up here. Eventually.

Wooters grabs one of the lines, swiftly climbing the rope
back up to the observation platform. O'Mara helps him up.

O'MARA

(smiling)

You're Section 8, you know it?

GATES (PRELAP)

*I know it's not much. But I wanted
to give you something. Might help.*

INT. LAPD EVIDENCE ROOM (SUB-BASEMENT) - NIGHT

Gates unlocks the cage and leads Wooters and O'Mara into
the dark storeroom, to a TABLE covered by a TARPAULIN.

GATES

Robbery confiscated these months
ago. Case went nowhere, of course.

Gates haul back the heavy tarp to reveal **THOMPSON**
"ANNIHILATOR" SUBMACHINE GUNS. O'Mara hefts his old war
buddy, the weapon an extension of himself, like a *katana*.
Sandalwood butt, vertical fore-grip, finned Barrel capped
with a blued Cutts compensator. Hundred-round drum mag.

GATES (CONT'D)

Cohen's a cockroach, Sergeant.

Gates opens a trunk and hauls out U.S. ARMY ammunition
box marked **CAUTION: INCENDIARIES**. Wooters opens one of
the ammo boxes and plucks out a red-tinged **TRACER BULLET**.

GATES

Swat him like one.

EXT. LOS ANGELES CITY HALL - NIGHT

Clouds gather over the city. A storm is coming. O'Mara
and Wooters stand in front of City Hall, where they
watched Racine and his goons get into that limo a
thousand years ago.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Kennard appears out of the shadows. Then Washington. Then Ramirez. The Gangster Squad standing together again.

WASHINGTON
What's the plan, Sarge?

O'Mara's moved beyond words.

O'MARA
Parker never wanted to stop Cohen.
He just wanted him out of his
hair. But we don't work for
Parker. We work for the City of
Los Angeles.

O'Mara pulls his gleaming BADGE, holding it up.

O'MARA
Says so right on the badge. We're
not soldiers. We're not gangsters.
(off The Squad)
We're police officers.

O'Mara pulls the WARRANT AFFIDAVIT from his coat.

O'MARA
Now, I have here an arrest
warrant, signed by a magistrate,
for Mickey Cohen. For the crime of
murder. And I'm bringin' him in.

KENNARD
We go out there and try an' put
handcuffs on that sumbitch, some
of us ain't comin' back.

O'MARA
I have to do this.

The men look around, nodding. They've come this far and they're with O'Mara until the wheels fall off.

INT. HOLLYWOOD ROOSEVELT HOTEL - NIGHT

We can HEAR the **RAIN** outside as Lennox steps out of the elevator on the 12th floor. Cohen has rented out the entire floor. Lennox passes several armed **MECHANICS** (hitmen) in the hallway.

INT. COHEN'S SUITE - MOMENTS LATER

It now resembles a bunker. MECHANICS assemble an arsenal of wicked assault weapons on the bed, thumbing rounds into magazines. Cohen stands at the window with a drink, looking out over the KLEIG LIGHTS of Hollywood Boulevard.

LENNOX

I just got off the phone with Krauss. He says he signed the warrant himself.

COHEN

Yeah? And who's gonna serve it? Five guys? Forget it. Five guys won't make it past the damn lobby. Nobody's arresting me.

But the ursine Lennox isn't convinced. He lifts a Carcano carbine off the bed, testing the heft. The exotic, 7.35 mm RIFLE fitted with a side-mounted 38.5 mm GRENADE LAUNCHER. We HEAR Vaughn Monroe's *Riders in the Sky* as...

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - MIDNIGHT

The Gangster Squad drives through Hollywood, Kleig lights stabbing the rain-shrouded night sky. Tires HISS through the rain. Each man wearing his war face, knowing one way or another this ends tonight. This is it. No regrets.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - NIGHT

RAIN pounds the boulevard with extreme prejudice. Streams fill the gutters. The last COUPLES hustle from GRAUMAN'S CHINESE THEATRE (*the feature: *GUN CRAZY*).

EXT. ROOF OF THE DRUGSTORE ACROSS THE STREET - NIGHT

NEDDY HERBERT patrols the neon-puddled roof with binoculars and a BAR rifle. From this high vantage, he sees up and down the boulevard. Rain sheeting across it.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - NIGHT

The Gangster Squad pulls their Fords to the flooded curb. They step out into the driving rain and shoulder SATCHELS carrying extra drum mags. They pull their Thompsons out of the trunk. Wooters offers a Thompson to Kennard.

CONTINUED:

WOOTERS
Kennard?

Kennard TWIRLS his PEACEMAKER, holsters it.

KENNARD
I'm gonna dance with the one what
brung me.

INT. ROOSEVELT (FIRST FLOOR ROOM) - NIGHT

HOOKY ROTHMAN watches the Boulevard through parted curtains, a huge LEWIS GUN braced against the windowsill. He looks like he can't wait to try out his new toy.

INT. ROOSEVELT LOBBY - NIGHT

WREVOCK and three other GUNMEN loiter and pace the empty Spanish-revival lobby, smoking, not even bothering to conceal their ASSAULT RIFLES. **DING!** Wrevock TAPS the BELL on the BELL DESK. Nobody's coming, the lobby deserted.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - NIGHT

Water sheets off brims of their fedoras as the Squad checks their weapons. O'Mara and his men walk, not hurrying, down Hollywood Boulevard toward the Roosevelt. What few PEDESTRIANS there are SCURRY out of their way, HUSTLING out of the street before all hell breaks loose.

EXT. ROOSEVELT HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Now, O'Mara and his men stop in the middle of Hollywood Boulevard right in front of the Roosevelt. O'Mara's men spread out as he lifts his **BULLHORN**.

O'MARA (BULLHORN)
**MICKEY COHEN. THIS IS SGT. JOHN
O'MARA OF THE LOS ANGELES POLICE
DEPARTMENT.**

INT. COHEN'S SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Cohen looks out the window to see O'Mara and his men standing out in the middle of the boulevard.

CONTINUED:

O'MARA (BULLHORN)
**I HAVE A WARRANT HERE FOR YOUR
 ARREST. COME OUT QUIETLY WITH YOUR
 HANDS UP AND YOU WON'T BE HARMED.**

COHEN
 (chuckling)
 Crazy sons of bitches.

EXT. ROOSEVELT HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

The Mechanics walk out of the lobby. More and MORE of them pouring out of the Roosevelt until the Gangster Squad faces a dozen heavily armed men fanned out in front of the Roosevelt. A pregnant moment.

HEAD MECHANIC
 Hey, cop. I've got a better idea.
 Why don't you guys take a walk?

Just **RAIN** and their **FOGGING BREATH**. The Squad puts their Thompson guns to their shoulders, barrels still angled at the deck. Kennard stands with his feet shoulder-width apart, his fingers splayed and ready.

KENNARD
 You call it, Sarge.

O'Mara looks to Wooters, standing at his side. Wooters nods. O'Mara thumbs his **FIRE SELECTOR** to **FULL AUTO**.

The MECHANICS raise their weapons and...

O'MARA
 Light 'em up.

The Squad raise their Thompsons and **FIRE**. Bright red **BALL TRACERS** pierce the stormy Hollywood night, photon torpedoes fizzing full-auto through the rain! We've never seen a fire fight like this. Streaming dotted-lines of tracer bullets CLEAVE through the sheets of rain. 850 rounds per minute. Each round leaves its own contrail, instantly reducing the rain around it to hissing steam.

The Mechanics UNLEASH their own high-velocity HELL. Bullets whizzing, KICKING up chunks of asphalt around them. *Black Hawk Down* on Hollywood Boulevard. Kennard fans the hammer of his Peacemaker, dropping Mechanics.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - CONTINUOUS

O'Mara and Wooters take cover behind a parked CAR at the corner DRUGSTORE, FIRING from cover, TRACERS drilling the gunmen. Brass SHELLS clatter the wet sidewalk. Rain HISSES off the hot barrel of O'Mara's Thompson.

WOOTERS

Pretty dumb, huh?

O'MARA

The dumbest.

Smoke spirals from Wooters' compensator as he DROPS the EMPTY MAG, slams a FRESH MAG home, FIRING again.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - NIGHT

HOOKY ROTHMAN fires his **LEWIS GUN**: a man-killing monster with a cooling-shroud on the barrel and fifty-round top-mounted, drum-pan magazine. ROTHMAN pulls the trigger, holds it down, 30-06 rounds ROARING out at Ramirez. **BOOM-BOOM-BOOM!** Ramirez DIVES out of the way as the 30-06 rounds RUPTURE a FIRE HYDRANT, spraying a wall of water.

Kennard stands in the street and **FIRE**S, not at ROTHMAN, but at the **LEWIS GUN** itself, BOOM, BOOM! Kennard's rounds *sparking* against the thick, shrouded barrel of the chunky Lewis. Each bullet impact **TURNING** the **LEWIS**. And we see Kennard's actually forcing the unwitting Rothman to **MOW DOWN THREE OF HIS OWN MEN** before he realizes it!

KENNARD

Careful with that contraption.

Kennard fires again, putting one through Rothman's chest.

INT. ROOSEVELT LOBBY - NIGHT

O'Mara and Wooters **CHARGE** into the lobby, Thompson guns **BLAZING**, killing one gunman. Wrevock and two other gunmen fire back. Plaster spitting off the walls.

Wooters and O'Mara **BREAK** off in opposite directions, gunfire chasing them from PILLAR to PILLAR. Couches **BURST**, stuffing snow-globe into the air.

Wrevock FIRES at Wooters. Chandeliers **FALL**. The terra-cotta FOUNTAIN SHATTERS and water floods out across the tiles. **And one of Wrevock's shots PIERCES Wooters' LEG!** Wooters tumbles and scoots against a pillar. *Shit.*

EXT. ROOF OF THE DRUGSTORE - CONTINUOUS

Neddy Herbert swaps mags to **FIRE** down at Kennard and Ramirez. But Kennard *SHOVES* Ramirez out of the way. Bullets **TEAR** through Kennard. He staggers, and falls.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - CONTINUOUS

Washington runs out into the street, GRABS Kennard, and drags him back behind a parked car, FIRING his Thompson. But once he makes it to cover, **Washington touches his side, and his hand comes away bloody. Shit.** Ramirez and Washington crouch next to Kennard. **Two in Kennard's upper chest.** The wound's mortal and he knows it.

RAMIREZ

KENNARD

Unable to stand, Kennard twists painfully to **FIRE** his Peacemaker from a seated position. Still in the fight.

KENNARD

But at least I'm gonna die on top
of Barbara Stanwyck.

Ramirez looks down to see that his friend is bleeding over Barbara's handprints and autograph.

EXT. ROOF OF THE DRUGSTORE - CONTINUOUS

Neddy Herbert angles his BAR, putting the **SIGHTS ON RAMIREZ**. His finger taking the slack off the trigger, preparing to take Ramirez's head off, when-

Washington flicks his SWITCHBLADE, and holy-shit, **THROWS** **the knife all the way across the street**, the blade buzzing, arcing, as it spins through the air to-

-shickt!— Herbert's SIGHT WOBLES. He looks down at the STILETTO buried to the hilt in his sternum. He drops his BAR, pin-wheeling his arms, falling off the roof. Done.

KENNARD
Much obliged.

WASHINGTON
Don't mention it.

INT. 12TH FLOOR ROOSEVELT - NIGHT

Hearing the GUNFIRE outside, Cohen looks shaken, somehow smaller, his empire crumbling around him. Lennox grabs the Carcano rifle and leads Cohen to the elevator, GUNMEN flanking him like Secret Service agents.

INT. ROOSEVELT LOBBY - NIGHT

O'Mara FIRES from behind his pillar, engaging the two remaining gunmen. Wrevock stalks toward Wooters, firing just above Wooter's head with his STEN gun. Sitting up against his pillar, Wooters tourniquets his belt around his bleeding leg and teeth-cinches it. Strips out his empty drum magazine, and taps it against his head, SIGNALLING to O'Mara that he's *out of ammo*. Wrevock is closing in on him.

Other two gunmen continue to pound O'Mara, pinning him. O'Mara has no shot at Wrevock and no unobstructed path to toss Wooters a spare magazine. **That pillar is in the way.**

O'MARA

Jerry!

O'Mara **CHUCKS** the drum magazine with force enough to **BOUNCE** it off the **PILLAR**, the drum ricochetting, like a **BANK SHOT** right into Wooters' upheld palm! Wooters **SLAMS** the fresh drum into his weapon, **ROLLS** out from behind the pillar, **RAKING** Wrevock, tracers setting his clothes aflame, knocking him back over the bell desk.

Now the **ELEVATOR DOORS OPEN** and two hissing SMOKE GRENADES roll out into the lobby, GREEN SMOKE roils, like the coming of the Wicked Witch. Lennox and a Mechanic COME OUT FIRING at O'Mara, pinning him down. O'Mara sees **Cohen is with them**, taking cover by the elevator. But O'Mara's trapped by gunfire. He can't get to Cohen.

O'Mara turns and **EMPTIES HIS MAGAZINE** straight into the WALL next to him, stitching an oblong circle in the plaster, which he now **LEAPS** through-

-into the **NEXT ROOM**- his weapon empty. O'Mara TOSSES it as he RUNS out into the HALLWAY, empty handed. **Appearing BEHIND Cohen**. Lennox and the mechanic still busy trading rounds with Wooters, who's hunched down against a pillar.

O'Mara HOOKS his arm around Lennox's throat in a choke hold, and YANKS him backward. Cohen spinning around, his gun on O'Mara now. No shot. And O'Mara sees Lennox reaching down for his Carcano.

CONTINUED:

O'Mara STOMPS down on Lennox's rifle with his left foot and KICKS with his right, aiming at Lennox's face.

But Lennox blocks O'Mara's kick, coming up at O'Mara with his brass-knuckle **TRENCH KNIFE**, O'Mara **TWISTS**, taking the blade in his left arm, **PUNCHING** Lennox with his right. Lennox takes the punch, GRABS the Carcano, *raising it-*

-Wooters **SHOOTS** Mechanic dead. Wooters scoots on the floor from one pillar to another, trailing blood from his leg, trying to find a shot without hitting O'Mara... when Wooters **FIRE**S, his shot just grazing Lennox's arm, setting fire to his sleeve.

Lennox grabs Cohen, hustling Cohen out through the swirling smoke past Wooters amid the gunfire.

EXT. ROOSEVELT HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Ramirez and Washington **FIRE**, forcing Lennox and Cohen behind a parked car. Tracers sizzling into the car, setting FIRE to it. Lennox fires back at Ramirez.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - CONTINUOUS

Ramirez's Thompson **JAMS**. Kennard can't stand, but he concentrates. He tilts his revolver, dumps empties out of the **CYLINDER**. Kennard has only **ONE** left.

KENNARD

How many rounds left in that drum?

RAMIREZ

One.

Coughing, Kennard loads the last tracer into his Peacemaker. That makes **two rounds**.

KENNARD

Get down here an help me aim.
Let's don't let 'em get by us.

I/E. ROOSEVELT HOTEL

O'Mara pulls the knife out of his arm, picks the gun up off the floor and runs out. Wooters struggles to his feet, following O'Mara-

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - CONTINUOUS

-right into Lennox's line of fire. Lennox turns his Carcano on O'Mara. **BAM! BAM! BAM!** O'Mara dives behind a parked car as Lennox fires the Carcano's **GRENADE**. **Cunk-Kaboom!** PARKED CAR next to him lifts off the street in a **BALL** of **FLAME**, knocking O'Mara sideways into a lamp post.

High-pitched **RINGING** FILLS O'Mara's world, his fingers scrape the wet street. He sees Cohen, tries to pick himself up to go after him, but his equilibrium is gone.

Washington fires until his Thompson clicks **EMPTY**.

Wooters **LIMPS** painfully, **FIRING** his Thompson one-handed.

But no one has a good angle on Lennox as he **RUNS** across the flaming wreckage toward O'Mara, putting the Carcano to his shoulder. Ramirez helps Kennard aim his Peacemaker and Kennard **FIREs**, missing Lennox by a mile.

KENNARD

Not where the sumbitch is,
goddamnit.

(coughing)

Where he's gonna be.

Lennox opens the bolt to see he's got a **ROUND** left for O'Mara. He **RAISES** the rifle, grinning his Kodiak grin down at O'Mara, his **FINGER** squeezing the trigger. **BOOM!** A strange red **LIGHT** suddenly emanates from Lennox's chest, like E.T. He falls to his knees, the tracer bullet turning his chest into a Japanese lantern.

Ramirez looks down at the Peacemaker. They did it.

KENNARD (CONT'D)

That's my boy ... Here.

Kennard removes his gunbelt.

KENNARD (CONT'D)

Wear it in good health.

Coughing, Kennard hands his rig over to Ramirez. He smiles through pain. The coughing becomes convulsing and he dies. Washington closes Kennard's eyes.

Cohen stares at the wreckage. He can't run now. Wooters helps O'Mara to his feet. O'Mara, Wooters, Washington and Ramirez converge on Cohen, like a collapsing star. Cohen raises his gun at O'Mara. O'Mara raises his. Silence.

CONTINUED:

O'MARA

Mickey Cohen. You're under arrest.
For the murder of Jack Whalen.

Cohen smiles demonically, tossing the gun aside.

COHEN

Well, what're you waitin' for,
lawman? Take me in.

O'Mara tosses his gun, raises his fists. None of the others make a move. His eyes tell them not to interfere.

WOOTERS

Put him down, Sarge.

THE FIGHT'S ON! Cohen and O'Mara trade savage punches. O'Mara's battle-honed hand-to-hand versus Cohen's years in the ring, the streets. A clash of professional warriors. Cohen adept not in Eastern fighting style, but highly skilled western ones. And O'Mara's injured.

SIRENS. BLACK & WHITES and FIRE TRUCKS arriving. The squad holds back a crowd of UNIFORMS, CIVILIANS, murmuring, pointing. *Jesus, that's Mickey Cohen!*

WASHINGTON

Stay BACK. Give 'em room.

Cohen PUNCHES the knife wound in O'Mara's arm. *Arrgh!* O'Mara clinches and Cohen comes to the body, ribs, kidneys. O'Mara's eyes roll, sucking wind, but he somehow manages to keep his feet. A ring of people watching now.

O'Mara HEADBUTTS Cohen, dips his shoulder to hook his right arm between Cohen's legs, grabbing Cohen's collar with his left fist. And with a roar, O'MARA LIFTS COHEN UP OFF HIS FEET, HOLDING HIM FLAILING AND KICKING OVER O'MARA'S HEAD. The crowd gasp. And O'Mara THROWS him down in the street. Cohen's head bouncing off the asphalt, dazed, blinking at the crowd of ANGELENOS around him...

...At their **FACES**, and the relief flooding them, the veil of fear lifting. The nightmare finally over. Awestruck, grateful. Smiling. The witch is dead. Hail Dorothy.

O'MARA

(panting)
Take him away.

We PULL BACK from the wreckage on Hollywood Boulevard.

I/E. LAPD HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

O'Mara, Wooters, Ramirez and Washington march Cohen into the lobby of LAPD HEADQUARTERS. And fifty COPS in here to get out of the rain turn to look at them. Holy shit.

INT. LAPD HEADQUARTERS (BOOKING AREA) - NIGHT

Mickey Cohen sneers at us for his final BOOKING PHOTO.

EXT. CITY HALL - EVENING

LA NEWSHOUNDS snapping photos of a PRESS CONFERENCE on the steps of **LOS ANGELES CITY HALL**. Behind an impressive line of spit-shined, handsome UNIFORMED LOS ANGELES POLICE OFFICERS, the once and future CHIEF **BILL PARKER** stands, flanked by the MAYOR and DISTRICT ATTORNEY. Gates is present. The Gangster Squad is nowhere to be seen.

PARKER

Thanks to the diligence and vigilance of the finest police force in the modern world, the LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT, the reign of gangster Mickey Cohen in Los Angeles is at an end.

Cheers and Applause.

EXT. FOREST LAWN CEMETERY - PERFECT DAY

WOOTERS kneels at the grave of CONWAY KEELER and places a LOS ANGELES TIMES next to the marker, weighing it down with a rock. He moves from grave to grave, places newspapers near the marker of MAXWELL KENNARD. JACK WHALEN. PETE CALLAHAN. The headline: **COHEN CONVICTED**. Wooters climbs into his car, where JEAN is waiting. She leans in close as they drive away out of Los Angeles.

EXT. CENTRAL AVENUE - BRILLIANT NIGHT

CENTRAL AVENUE: CAR CLUBS cruise the Ave; the REBEL ROUSERS, the HUNS, BLOOD ALLEY, cat-calling from their sleek CONVERTIBLES as they pass JACK'S BASKET ROOM.

Two **LAPD UNIFORMED BEAT COPS** swaggering side by side like Dodge City Marshals. One cop big and black. The other cop small and brown, with a well-fitting uniform and a .45 COLT PEACEMAKER in a non-regulation gunbelt.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OFFICER NAVIDAD RAMIREZ and his partner **ROCKY WASHINGTON** walk down Central Avenue and suddenly SHOTS RING OUT. And there's nowhere in the world these two would rather be.

EXT. AVALON HARBOR CATALINA ISLAND - SUNSET

A GRUMMAN SEAPLANE soars past the CASINO BUILDING and kisses down on the blue waters Avalon harbor. JOHN and CONNIE O'MARA are building a sand castle with their six-month old DAUGHTER. Connie points to the seaplane.

O'Mara catches sight of a milk-skinned BLONDE walking by on the arm of a young SAILOR in dress whites. She doesn't look back at O'Mara as they stroll past him. O'Mara watches them. Couldn't be OUR Blonde, could it? Doesn't matter. She reminds O'Mara of what he's accomplished.

CONNIE
(smiling)
Eyes front, Sergeant.

O'Mara smiles, kissing his wife. Finally at peace.

***AND WE HEAR MODERN LAPD RADIO TRAFFIC PRELAPPING...**

CUT TO:

TIGHT ON: A BLACK & WHITE PHOTO, but we're so close to it the faces appear pixelated, too blurry to make out, until we *PULL BACK* to reveal it's a DIGITAL copy of a copy of an old UNIT PHOTO of the **ACTUAL GANGSTER SQUAD...**

PULLING FURTHER BACK to reveal that the photo of the squad is just one picture, half-forgotten, on a WALL covered with photos: CRASH UNIT PHOTOS, generations of eager young GANG COPS posing around SEIZED DOPE and GUNS. DIVISIONAL SOFTBALL TEAMS, the BAKER TO VEGAS LAW ENFORCEMENT RELAY RACES. COMMENDATIONS. GANG BANDANAS pinned to the wall like Comanche Scalps.

We're in the cramped office of the **77TH DIVISION GANG UNIT**, hardly more than a closet, underfunded, ignored. We follow LAPD GANG COPS *hustling* out of the office...

EXT. 77TH DIVISION - SUNSET

And into their BLACK & WHITES. SIRENS WAIL as the cars head out into LA. Dry palm trees over graffiti-covered apartments. LAPD CHOPPERS circle in a beautiful sunset...

THE END