

the m♥ther

written by
Michael Notarile

The True Story of the Matriarch of Organized Crime in New York

EXT. LOWER EAST SIDE, NYC - CLINTON STREET - 1869

We're abruptly hit in the face by poverty: unpaved streets, worn buildings, layers of street trash consisting of HORSE URINE and MANURE, FOOD WASTE, BROKEN WOOD, and THICK BLACK TAR.

MARM (V.O.)

*You might've forgotten by now, but
Lower Manhattan was once known as
the dirtiest place in the world.*

Knee-deep in that filth are STREET DWELLERS that we're taught only exist in third world countries. But this is America. PEDDLERS, PROSTITUTES, ORPHANS all begging in Old New York.

MARM (V.O.)

*No sanitation service. No clean
water. Disease ran rampant, spiking
death rates to rival medieval
London. And we bathed once a month.
Well, when we could afford soap...*

We FOCUS on a broken plumbing pipe, forming a puddle around a HORSE CARCASS. A HUNGRY CHILD (8) sits nearby, staring at it. *

MARM (V.O.)

*But the City's Government refused to
pay attention to us. They dedicated
their resources to Upper Manhattan --
where the votes mattered.*

The CARCASS is SPLASHED as a LIVE HORSE trots into the puddle. It stops on command from its driver: **INVESTIGATOR DORCY** (22), an ambitious rule keeper with a chip on his shoulder. *

MARM (V.O.)

*Just a few years after Lincoln got
popped and there was already a
second Civil War brewing... The
haves versus the have nots.*

An EXPENSIVE LEATHER SHOE steps out and into the puddle. It belongs to a WEALTHY BUSINESSMAN (30s). He shakes off gunk, annoyed, paying no mind to the hungry child beside him. *

Then, he and Dorcy walk toward a CORNER STORE.

MARM (V.O.)

*The rich had profit. But the poor
had purpose. And purpose made all
the difference...*

The Child watches them go for a moment. Then, he clocks the horse carcass... the beast eyes, flickering. He's concerned. *

CHILD

Someone help the horsey.

An IRISHMAN follows the Kid's gaze. The horse is barely alive. Struggling. They all know the feeling. He retrieves a KNIFE --

INT. MANDELBAUM'S DRY GOODS STORE - CONTINUOUS

From inside, we see him DRIVE the blade into the horse's neck! BLOOD SPEWS. But a DRESSMAKER (48) in her flamboyant hat is unfazed. She's focused on her alteration of an engraved handkerchief. This is **MARM MANDLEBAUM**, high-mileage, homely, and fine with both because she ain't trying to please you anyway.

The Wealthy Businessman enters. Dorcy right behind.

DORCY

That's her. This is the place.

MARM

Would you two fine gentlemen like
to make a purchase?

WEALTHY BUSINESSMAN

No. I want my wife's ring back.

Marm is uninterested in the dramatics. She scans both men
briefly, sizing them up.

*
*

MARM

I can't imagine your treasure is
down here. What is it your Madison
Avenue friends call Lower
Manhattan? The bowels of New York?

*

WEALTHY BUSINESSMAN

The den of disease.

MARM

Ah. Right.

DORCY

Ma'am --

MARM

I prefer Marm. It's much sweeter.

DORCY

Marm, a criminal has habits, traits
which reveal their identity to a
skilled investigator. No different
than a blade of grass revealing its
genus to a practiced botanist.

MARM

So tell me, are you a skilled investigator or a failed botanist?

DORCY

I'm a believer in law and order.

MARM

Yet, you do not bring any chains. Could it be because New York penal codes define the receiving of stolen property as ancillary?

DORCY

But still punishable when a thief provides proof of his transaction.

MARM

For whom do I owe the favor?

DORCY

Lars Lynch. He told the judge he brought it here, that you're a cleaner for stolen goods.

*

MARM

Merely an accusation. Because it was Lars who went to prison, wasn't it?

The Wealthy Businessman SLAMS his hand DOWN on the counter.

WEALTHY BUSINESSMAN

Look, we know what happens here. Garments trimmed with scissors. Jewelry re-engraved. Pointed edges, rounded. Rounded edges, pointed. All ID removed so the lady herself could not recognize her ring by evening!

MARM

Perhaps this gentleman should be the one under investigation...?

DORCY

Perhaps I question your husband.

MARM

Perhaps you can show me your badge.

Dorcy visibly angers. He doesn't have one.

*

MARM (CONT'D)

I figured. Real cops focus on real criminals. So again I ask: would you two fine gentlemen like to make a purchase?

Marm reveals an ALTERED RING. The Businessman recognizes it.

MARM (CONT'D)

Twelve dollars.

DORCY

Ten.

MARM

Deal.

WEALTHY BUSINESSMAN

For my own engagement ring?

MARM

Why is it that men have a problem for every solution?

DORCY

Just give her the money. It's the best you're going to get.

A tiny beat. The Businessman reluctantly hands over \$10 and Marm hands him his ring... Then, he SPITS in her face. Dorcy is shocked. But Marm simply sets down her scissors. Unafraid.

MARM (V.O.)

Every jungle requires a code to survive. Mine were my ten virtues.

He waits for her to retaliate, to incriminate herself. But she allows the saliva to drip down her cheek. Pure defiance.

MARM (V.O)

***Resilience was my first.
Regardless of circumstance, of struggle, of what anyone does to you... No matter how cruel...
Never let them see you sweat.***

*

The saliva OOZES down. And Marm smiles at the Businessman. Which makes him angrier. He folds under the pressure and leaves the store. But Dorcy remains, still burned by the "real cop" comment.

MARM (CONT'D)

Will that be all? Sure you have some cheating husbands to spy on.

Dorcy swallows his rage and follows his client outside. Then, finally, she wipes her face and adds her \$10 to her purse. This is Marm's jungle and we're about to live in it...

EXT. MANDELBAUM'S DRY GOODS STORE / 79 CLINTON STREET - NIGHT

Marm locks her store and begins her walk home. She keeps her eyes down, averting gazes from STREET DWELLERS. She spots the dried blood from where the horse carcass lied earlier. A moment of sympathy for the beast of burden, but she keeps on walking.

INT. MANDELBAUM'S TENEMENT HOME - NIGHT

Marm enters her confined apartment. Outside FACTORY HUMS provide a soundscape. KEROSINE LANTERNS illuminate sweat beads on HER DAUGHTERS (**ANNA** 11, **GERTIE** 14, **SARA** 15) in makeshift beds.

MARM

My darlings.

In spite of their circumstance, they're happy to see their mother... until VIOLENT COUGHING emanates from --

INT. MANDELBAUM'S TENEMENT HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

WOLFE MANDELBAUM (50), a worn and torn German-immigrant, rests on a damp pillow. Beside him is their son **JULIUS** (16), insecure, always in the way and desperate to be more than he's capable of.

JULIUS

Mother. We were worried.

WOLFE

He was worried. Like always.

Marm looks to the other side of the bed at **DR. SCHMIDT** (30s), an elitist who made it out of the ghetto. He packs his medical box.

DR. SCHMIDT

Would you care to sit down?

MARM

No.

DR. SCHMIDT

Tuberculosis. Unfortunately, it's very common down here.

MARM

When does he get better?

WOLFE

He's says I won't. That I'll just waste away...

Marm looks at Dr. Schmidt for confirmation -- and he bows his head. It's true. Julius studies Marm for a reaction, but she remains stoic, covering her emotions by reaching for her purse.

MARM

How much?

DR. SCHMIDT

Including the kids and all the visits over the last few months...
Thirty four.

MARM

I'll have to stay on credit. You're not the only one I owe right now.

DR. SCHMIDT

Mrs. Mandelbaum, this only gets uglier. More painful. Expensive. If Wolfe doesn't have his medicine --

MARM

He will.

DR. SCHMIDT

Or if your children lack nutrients--

MARM

They won't. Here. For now.

She gestures \$10 that she's willing to give. He takes it.

*

DR. SCHMIDT

Look, either we settle your debts in the next few weeks or--

MARM

You can't come anymore. I get it.

Off Wolfe's hacking growing worse...

EXT. THIEVES EXCHANGE - BROADWAY/HOUSTON INTERSECTION - NIGHT

Marm, in a pea coat, stands at an intersection of LOITERING GANGSTERS; exchanging loot, drinking, fighting... She enters. And threatening glances are immediately sent her way.

But Marm persists, searching for one inviting pair of eyes. And she finds them in a **FREDDIE**, a homeless teenager, near a pushcart of shitty loot (FLOUR, METAL, ROPE).

MARM

Evening, young man.

FREDDIE
I'm not interested.

MARM
But you don't know what I'm selling.

FREDDIE
I'm assuming it's relations.

MARM
You're a boy. And no, far more
lucrative: silver and timepieces.

Marm indicates to BULKY AREAS of her coat. He cocks his head.

MARM (CONT'D)
They've been in my husband's family
for generations.

FREDDIE
And you're bringing them to Thieves
Exchange?

MARM
Sentimentality doesn't pay bills.

Freddie is intrigued, but clocks the criminals' angry gazes.

FREDDIE
You got some balls comin' here.

MARM
So do you.
(re: his shitty loot)
Trying to make a profit off trash.

FREDDIE
How much for the silver?

MARM
A quarter.

FREDDIE
Ten cents.

MARM
Fifty cents.

FREDDIE
That's not how this works.

MARM
Final offer. No engravings and it's
not hot. You could flip it tonight.

Just as Freddie considers -- Marm is BUMPED. HARD.

SILVER falls from her dress. She turns to find **JOHN GRADY (32)**, a career criminal who wears his scars like badges of honor.

MARM (CONT'D)

Pardon me.

Marm bends down to retrieve her silver. Grady towers over her.

GRADY

This ain't the place for manners.

But as she turns to go, Grady stops her with his bear-claw.

GRADY (CONT'D)

Nah, nah, nah. The silver first.

MARM

Okay. What's your offer? *

Grady pulls a blade, taunting Marm. Marm searches for help. But no one cares to. They want to see blood.

GRADY

Go on: scream. Here, let me do it
for you: Someone help this old hag!
She's being raped!... Hold on...
Wait one God-forsaken minute! She
likes it! Yes! It's been years
since a man's touched her like
this! But-- But it's-- Oh, God,
it's a disaster down here! Somebody
bring rags! She's fixen to blow!

THIEVES LAUGH. Marm stares into Grady's haunted eyes -- and then *
SWATS his hand away! She won't be their clown.

Grady responds by GRABBING HER BY THE NECK. Tense beat. In a *
flip from earlier, this is not her jungle. So she hands over
her silver. And Grady releases his choke. THEN --

He TOSSES the silver into the crowd. Thieves CHEER, GRASP for *
it. Marm watches the animals scavenge her family's nest egg -- *
as Grady stares her down, DARING her to make a move for it -- *

MARM (V.O.)

***Failure. Number two. It teaches us
more than success. A hungry
stomach, an empty pocket, and a
broken heart give us our best
lessons... Listen and learn.***

-- But she doesn't. She just retreats out and to safety. *

EXT. STREET / ALLEY NEAR THIEVES EXCHANGE - NIGHT

Her brisk walk comes to a slow once she reaches a quiet street. Anxiety washes over her... regret... defeat... THEN --

WHIMPERS sound off from the alley ahead. No one notices. Or cares. But Marm's instincts kick in: could it be an abandoned baby? A woman in danger? She peeks between buildings to find:

SOPHIE ELKINS (18), ethereal beauty and magnetic presence, but desperate in every way, right down to her super-tight-corset.

MARM

Dear...? Are you hurt?

Marm approaches Sophie who scoots backward, apprehensive like a hungry street dog. Once Marm reaches her, she gently touches her.

MARM (CONT'D)

It's not safe for a young girl
like you at this hour.

Sophie arches her eyebrows, feeling challenged.

SOPHIE

Might be worse for a lady like you.

MARM

It might. What's wrong? Where are
your parents?

SOPHIE

Sing Sing.

Sophie bursts into tears. But this time Marm takes her into her arms like a child. And Sophie allows it.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Look, I ain't no whore.

MARM

Pardon?

SOPHIE

I know what business old maids got
at night... No offense or nothin'.

MARM

None taken. I've earned my
wrinkles. I'm proud of my wrinkles.
And I would never ask a girl to
sell herself out.

SOPHIE

Right. You was just comin' to check
on a homeless girl.

MARM

Who was crying. But seems as if
you're fine so I won't be a bother.

Marm pulls away from the embrace. But Sophie holds onto it.

SOPHIE

Wait. How about some charity before
you go?

Marm takes a moment. That one tagged her the wrong way.

MARM

You expect a stranger to just offer
you help because you are upset?

SOPHIE

Ain't that why you came?

MARM

(Marm's actual quote)

Dear, I'm a Jew, an immigrant, and
a woman. I know exactly how it
feels when the world tries to tell
you that you're nothing. Sometimes
we even believe it. But no one
changes their fortune by begging...
So drop the sob story and go tell
the world who you are.

Marm forces herself out of the embrace and rises to leave.

SOPHIE

All high and mighty but what about
who you are?... A woman only keeps
her ring hidden when she's out
being naughty...

Sophie reveals MARM'S RING. Marm feels her empty pocket.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Sorry, I get tingly when it's that
easy. You can thank my mother for
that. She always said opportunity
was made out of misfortune.

MARM

Give me my ring back.

SOPHIE

Let's talk first. Where you coming from if you ain't a madame?

MARM

Hasn't anyone ever told you that it's not polite to ask questions?

SOPHIE

Isn't that a question?

Sophie smirks. Marm finds her moment and SNATCHES HER RING.

MARM

A good thief never takes her eye off the loot. Your mother should have taught you the basics.

Marm stuffs her ring back into her breast pocket and feels for her other items in her coat. All of them are still there.

MARM (CONT'D)

Take care of yourself out here.

Marm walks off before anything else goes wrong tonight.

INT. MANDELBAUM'S TENEMENT HOME - NIGHT

Marm tip toes in. Her daughters and Julius are sleeping. She blows out the lanterns and retreats into the shadows toward --

THE CHIMNEY. Marm removes the false back revealing a DUMBWAITER holding FAMILY HEIRLOOMS. She empties her pockets and places the timepieces from her coat on the dumbwaiter.

Then, with a YANK of a lever, it RAISES UPWARD into hiding...

She reaches into her breast pocket and takes out her wedding ring. She puts it back on her finger... and a wave of concern washes over her face... THE RING IS LOOSE. It is not hers.

MARM (PRE-LAP)

Please forgive me...

INT. MANDELBAUM'S TENEMENT HOME - DAY

Wolfe has worsened, evident by BLOOD on his pillow. He CRINGES with every rise of his chest while staring at the false ring.

WOLFE

All you had to do was look at it.

MARM

It was dark. I was in an alley...
And I was scared...

WOLFE

Since when do you scare?

MARM

I was at Thieves Exchange.

That lands on Wolfe. Surprise. Concern. Realizing:

WOLFE

You were going to sell your ring?

MARM

First, I was trying to sell what
your grandmother left us.

Disappointment quietly washes over Wolfe's face. Marm,
ashamed, puts the false ring away. A down beat.

WOLFE

Tell Julius he's done with school.

MARM

He's two years from graduating.

WOLFE

But you need help.

MARM

And I'll figure it out. I'm not
sending our son to the streets.

WOLFE

So you're going to sell our
family's history on them?

MARM

How else am I going to afford your
medicine? Food for the children?
Rent?... The store isn't enough. It
hasn't been for a while now.

The couple begins speaking German so the kids can't hear.

MARM (CONT'D)

Castle Garden. Our first steps in
America. We made a promise...

WOLFE

"Children first."

MARM

Which means giving our son a chance
to build his life how he chooses.

A beat.

WOLFE

Then have mercy on me.

MARM

How do you mean?

WOLFE

My lungs, my stomach... My head.
It all feels like the Devil's ass.
It's only a matter of time anyway.

Wolfe indicates the pillow. Marm studies him, carefully.

MARM

Wolfe... What're you asking of me?

WOLFE

We can't afford another burden. And
that's all I'll be until... I waste
away.

MARM

And then what?

WOLFE

You'll figure it out.

MARM

No.

WOLFE

You can do more than anyone gives
you credit for --

MARM

-- I know what I'm capable of --

WOLFE

-- But not with me around. I'm
suffering --

MARM

-- And I can't, I won't --

WOLFE

They're suffering.

Silence. Wolfe grasps Marm's hand and looks in her eyes.

WOLFE (CONT'D)
Castle Garden.

A tiny beat. Marm flicks her eyes away and stares at the pillow.

WOLFE (CONT'D)
You have to. Please... I love you,
my dear... But I'm ready now.

He uses his last bit of strength to place her hands and the pillow over his face. Marm takes a moment as her sick husband lies still, desperately wanting out of this life...

MARM
I love you, too, Wolfe.

Then, she puts pressure on the pillow, suffocating her husband. He doesn't struggle though his body instinctively flails. She keeps an eye on the door to ensure her children don't enter as she holds the pillow firmly over their father's face...

And then... *Wolfe's body goes limp*... Marm keeps the pillow there, angry she had to do it, afraid to look... And after a few moments, she exhales... And it's not one of relief.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - THE MANDELBAUMS PLOT - DAY

The ORANGE SUNSET casts a glow over a turn-of-the-century graveyard; elaborate shrines for the haves and crooked graves for the have-nots. A stoic Marm stands over her children who kneel before a crooked stone: **WOLFE MANDELBAUM 1819-1869**.

REVEAL IN THE DISTANCE: Dr. Schmidt spying this portrait of a shattered family from a cushy horse & carriage with a YOUNG COUPLE in the back. The Young husband pulls his Young Wife closer... as Dr. Schmidt steps out...

BACK TO: Marm comforting her children. After a few moments...

DR. SCHMIDT
My condolences... Wolfe was a great
man, a wonderful father...

MARM
Doctor Schmidt?...
(then, realizing)
Oh, right. Your money.

*

DR. SCHMIDT
Please. I'm not here to collect.
(off her look)
I'm just here to talk about your
debts. Privately.

Dr. Schmidt indicates to her children. Marm grows curious, and steps aside. They talk in whispers:

DR. SCHMIDT (CONT'D)
You have a long road ahead. So do they. And I don't want to make it longer... And well...
(then)
Mr. and Mrs. Kittle are a fine pair of folks... cursed by infertility.

Marm clocks the CARRIAGE. The couple gently smiles. She doesn't.

MARM
Surely a sea of gravestones won't lift their curse.

DR. SCHMIDT
But your daughter could.

MARM
What did you just say to me?

DR. SCHMIDT
Listen, Mothers do it all the time these days. *

Marm scoffs. But Dr. Schmidt continues his pitch: *

DR. SCHMIDT (CONT'D)
They are offering one thousand dollars for your youngest. Cash.

He expects that to land in a big way. It doesn't. Instead, Marm takes out \$34 from her purse and drops it at his feet.

MARM
I suppose I'll skip dinner this week. *

DR. SCHMIDT
Miss Mandelbaum... You have four children and a failed dry goods store... What are you going to do? *

MARM
That doesn't concern you. We have no more business together, Doctor. *

DR. SCHMIDT
Do you really want your pride to be the reason they suffer? *

That pissed Marm off. But for the first time, she doesn't have a quip. Instead, she pushes past and back to her children.

MARM

Come on. We've had enough. No
one's accomplished anything by
just dwelling in their misery.

With tears in their eyes, the children stand and glance back
at Dr. Schmidt and the money... They're confused. But before
they can ask, Marm ushers them away from the gravestone...

And as they walk off, Marm's facade of strength is beginning
to shatter... *She has no fucking idea what she's going to do.*

EXT. STREET - EVENING

Sophie is jolly as she walks down the street, grazed by the
final rays of sunset. From a distance, we watch her locking
eyes with every PASSING MAN on his way home from work. THEN --

She COLLIDES with A DISTRACTED MAN. Sophie uses her hands
to brace his chest for impact.

SOPHIE

Ow!

STREET DWELLERS turn their eyes to the commotion. Sophie
clutches her bruised chest.

DISTRACTED MAN

I'm so sorry!

Sophie eyes him -- considers making a scene -- but feels pity
for the pathetic bastard. So she just moves forward. It's his
lucky day. He watches her go as she turns the corner to enter --

THE ALLEY. Sophie walks in, swallowed into the darkness. Just
then, she pulls out a SILVER TIME PIECE. She's delighted by
her new item and she inspects it closely when --

We spot Marm eerily silhouetted behind her. Menacing as she also
enters the alley. And as she approaches, Sophie has no idea...

MARM

You're pretty good at this.

Sophie SPINS around --

SOPHIE

It's mine -- I swear!

But then she recognizes Marm. And IMMEDIATELY jumps backward.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

I already hocked your ring!

MARM

I hope you got a good deal. But I'm
here for something more valuable.

*

Marm inches toward Sophie as she backs into a CONCRETE WALL.

*

MARM (CONT'D)

*

Recruitment.

*

That's NOT what Sophie was expecting. She studies Marm, puzzled.

*

MARM (CONT'D)

*

Let's earn a living. Me and you.

*

SOPHIE

Oh. You want me to steal for you.

MARM

I want you to embrace your God-given
talent.

SOPHIE

He didn't give me none of that.

*

Marm indicates the stolen timepiece.

*

MARM

Darling, we are all born with a
skill and we don't get to choose
what it is. I'm a caretaker. You're
a thief.

SOPHIE

You think I want to do what I do?

*

MARM

Certainly not. That's why I need you.
And frankly, it's why you need me,
too.

*

*

*

Sophie folds her arms. That means she's listening.

*

MARM (CONT'D)

When the rich break laws, it's
called business. But when the poor
retaliate, it's called crime.
Perhaps it's time to blend the two.

SOPHIE

How so?

MARM

Honor as thieves. We organize our
crime and play by the same flexible
rules as the Forbes or Vanderbilts.
No violence. Some fibbing. Everyone
eats.

*

Sophie eyes glisten, but she's still apprehensive.

SOPHIE

And I should trust you because...

MARM

I didn't take you to the police.
Yet. So are you interested?

SOPHIE

(considering, then)
When do we start?

*

MARM

First, we educate. Assemble. And
then, we attack.

INT. MANDELBAUM'S SCHOOL FOR CRIMINALS - GRAND STREET - DAY

Marm pontificates in front of a CHALKBOARD chock full of
writing. Sophie is the only student in the classroom.

*

*

MARM

Never write when you can speak.
Never speak when you can nod. Never
nod when you can wink.

SOPHIE

So... I'm not going to learn any
practical skills then? I don't
know, like reading or writing?

*

*

MARM

Dear, you're learning communication
right now. Next is mathematics --

*

*

Marm points to an area which reads: "CALCULATING A SALE."

*

MARM (CONT'D)

Then, economics --

*

*

Underneath that: "SUPPLY AND DEMAND." She continues pointing
around to various phrases on the board:

*

*

MARM (CONT'D)

History. Government. Business.
Psychology. Even some philosophy --

*

*

*

Marm points to her quote: "LIFE IS ALWAYS MORE VALUABLE THAN LOOT." *

MARM (CONT'D) *

So pay attention and I'll teach you
every life skill you'll ever need. *

Sophie is in over her head as Marm continues writing her list.

EXT. THIEVES EXCHANGE - BROADWAY/HOUSTON INTERSECTION - DAY

Marm and Sophie stand at Thieves Exchange. Marm holds a BAG.

MARM

It's the Silk Road of New York.

SOPHIE

What the heck is the silk road?

MARM

Criminals exchange everything here.
Loot, secrets, even people.

SOPHIE

Is it dangerous?

MARM

Of course.

SOPHIE

Then why are you sending me alone?

MARM

Last time I tried, I was nearly
killed. But you're softer than me.
You can convince them to listen.

SOPHIE

And if the Grady Gang is here?

MARM

It's Sunday and Grady fancies
himself as a man of God.

Marm shoves the BAG into her arms and nudges her forward...

Sophie enters, passing the same GANGSTERS that hated Marm,
but now their gazes aren't threatening. They're lustful.
Sophie ignores them all, continuing toward --

Freddie. The homeless teen with the shitty loot. He's
surrounded by ORPHANS (5-15). Sophie sets the bag down.

SOPHIE

Courtesy of Marm Mandelbaum.

Freddie looks inside: STACKS OF HOMECOOKED MEALS. The smell causes the Orphans to look, too. Rumbling stomachs. Hungry eyes.

FROM AFAR, Marm delightfully watches as Freddie hands out meals.

INT. MANDELBAUM'S SCHOOL FOR CRIMINALS - GRAND STREET - DAY

Marm's chalkboard has lessons written all over. Now, Sophie is sitting in the classroom PACKED with ORPHANS. The students are fully engaged as Marm continues her lesson...

MARM (V.O.)

***Loyalty. Give a man a fish, he'll
eat for a day. Earn a man's
loyalty, you'll eat for a lifetime.***

INT. CONGREGATION TEMPLE RODEPH SHOLOM - SHABBAT EVENING

THE CONGREGATION listens to their beloved **RABBI DAVID SCHMIDT** (50s). In the back pew: Marm sits between her kids & Sophie.

MARM (V.O.)

***The street kids were the eyes and
ears of the city. And no one cared
for them. Not until I cared. And
well, the future is either your
greatest ally or greatest enemy...***

*

Marm glares at SEVEN ORPHANS in the same row goofing around.

MARM

Hush up. The Rabbi will pray for
you and he will save your soul.
Trust me, you're going to need it.

The Orphans quiet and look at the Rabbi. Marm turns around. But we see Julius enviously staring at the street kids...

EXT. CONGREGATION TEMPLE RODEPH SHOLOM - LATER

Marm waits in a LINE of WORSHIPERS greeting the Rabbi. Her daughters are star struck as they near closer. Sophie is unfazed. But Julius keeps an eye across the street --

An ORPHAN BEGS a WELL-DRESSED-MAN for change. While the mark's distracted, Freddie sneaks behind to pick the man's pocket --

Once he scores, the kids BOOK IT down the street. As shocked HEADS turn toward the crime, Marm feigns surprise, too, stowing away her satisfaction with the orphans.

INT. MANDELBAUM'S DRY GOODS STORE - BACK ROOM - DAY

Surrounded by DRY GOODS STORAGE, Marm inspects TEN TIMEPIECES while Sophie keeps watch by the door for customers.

MARM

Always inspect what the kids give us. You put bad eggs with good ones, it'll rot the carton.

SOPHIE

But at some point, you've got to cook the eggs.

(off Marm's look)

All we've been doing is stealing, recruiting, or hiding loot away.

MARM

Yes. Stocking inventory.

SOPHIE

And when do we start moving the inventory to sellers?

MARM

Once I've made crime my commodity to barter.

SOPHIE

Marm, I'm aware of the mission statement. But I need to know when it becomes more than just words.

MARM

When we have the community in the palm of our hands. Business is about calculated risk.

SOPHIE

Well, what are we still calculating? Our luck?

Marm reaches between BLANKETS and dumps all ten timepieces into a HIDDEN CHEST.

MARM

Luck lives on Madison Avenue. Here, we work for what we have.

Marm stuffs the chest away and heads back into --

INT. MANDELBAUM'S DRY GOODS STORE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Marm positions herself behind the counter. Sophie follows.

SOPHIE

Look, we've educated. We've assembled. Now, when do we attack?

MARM

When we have a cop on payroll.

SOPHIE

Are you crazy? No-no-no-no.

MARM

Sophie, once we have the law, we have the community. Then and only then can we attack the criminals.

SOPHIE

You've got this ass backwards.

MARM

Why can't you be patient? Do you have four children?

SOPHIE

No.

MARM

Do you owe debts on multiple bills?

SOPHIE

No.

MARM

Do you have a dead husband?

SOPHIE

I wish.

*

The admission surprises Marm. It hangs in the air for a moment.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

I married him when I was 14 to get off the streets. My mother left me at a market because her new man didn't want someone else's kids. So I made it work. At least for a while. And I thought you were my way out... so you know... I don't have to repeat it all over again with some other pathetic brute.

A pregnant beat. Marm sees pain in her eyes. Her story is true.

MARM

Okay. You can live with me for now.

SOPHIE
No. You're not understanding.

MARM
Sophie, I do. I get it. We are all
a prisoner of some memory.

Sophie sees pain right back in Marm's eyes. But doesn't press.

SOPHIE
Maybe, fine. But I didn't sign up
for this to be someone's burden.

MARM
Family is never supposed to be a
burden. And that's what we need to
be before we make our move...
Otherwise, we're just like the
rest of 'em.

Marm moves toward Sophie and grabs her hands.

MARM (CONT'D)
I'm going to give you things your
own mother didn't. Like love. All I
ask in return is for your loyalty.
Like a real daughter. You can even
start calling me "Mother." If it
makes you feel good... So what do
you say, Sophie?

Sophie smiles. A haunting, desperate smile...

JULIUS (PRE-LAP)
Why can't I help you at the store?

INT. THE MANDELBAUM'S TENEMENT HOME - KITCHENETTE - EVENING

An awkward dinner. Marm sits across Julius and her daughters.
All the children stare across the table at -- Sophie.

MARM
You have school to finish.

JULIUS
Then I can help you at night...
with your other stuff.

MARM
What other stuff?

Julius indicates to his sisters, not wanting to say.

MARM (CONT'D)

Go on. Secrets kill families.

JULIUS

I know why you help those orphans.
I saw the false chimney before you
moved everything to your store... I
know why Sophie is here.

MARM

Do your sisters know?

JULIUS

No. You can trust me.

MARM

Girls, I'm a fence. I'm sorry your
brother hasn't already told you.

CLANGS of silverware. Julius was NOT expecting that.

GERTIE

Does that mean you steal?

JULIUS

Yes.

MARM

No. It means I borrow someone's
belongings until another person
pays for them.

*

SARA

Is that why you came to New York?

*

JULIUS

She came for the American Dream.

*

MARM

No. I came to break away from my
family.

*

*

*

A rare moment of vulnerability. No one knows that story. And
no one has the guts to ask.

*

*

ANNA

... Did Papa know what you did?

*

JULIUS

No.

MARM

Yes. I guess you aren't as astute
as you thought, Julius. Best for
you to stay in school.

*

JULIUS

Wait. Father let you do this?

*

MARM

Who do you think taught me? He had
a pawn shop in Bavaria.

*

(then, to the girls)

But it's only for now. To get us
ahead. And Sophie is helping me do
that while she stays with us... If
that's okay with all of you.

A moment. Sophie smiles at the girls. And they return the smile.

MARM (CONT'D)

Oh, joy!

But when Marm looks to Julius for approval... He grimaces.

MARM (CONT'D)

One day you'll understand.

Off Julius, a family forming whether he likes it or not...

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

A turn-of-the-century hotel room. Sophie passionately kisses
TOMAS "SHANG" DRAPER (33), a large man born with the safety
off, and an underlying darkness like Joaquin Phoenix.

He presses her against the wall, turned on. Impatient. Ready
to go as he reaches under her dress --

SOPHIE

You must be married.

SHANG

Only a little.

Sophie shoves him onto the bed. Shang loves the aggression.

SOPHIE

Well, I don't know about her. But I
need a little foreplay first.

He watches as Sophie unbuttons her dress down to undergarments.
Just as her fingers reach beneath her underwear -- she STOPS.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
Strip. All of it.

Without any kind of show, Shang instantly gets nude and tosses his clothes aside --

SHANG
Your turn. Finish.

But Sophie SNATCHES his clothes and moves to the closed door.

SOPHIE
In your dreams, creep.

The DOOR BURSTS OPEN and it's Marm, holding the HOTEL KEY.

MARM
Shall she scream or would you like
to play ball? *

SHANG
Is this part of the service? *

MARM
No, you idiot. *

SHANG
Oh. I get it now. Well, before you
ask me to buy my wardrobe back, you
might wanna look in my pocket. *

Sophie reaches into his pocket and... pulls out a POLICE BADGE.

SOPHIE
Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Mother?!

And Marm CLOSES the door. Sophie drops the damsel in distress act. She has an evil grin as she hands Marm his POLICE WEAPON.

SHANG
What the fuck? You two broads are
cop killers?

Shang braces himself to fight but Marm sets the gun aside. Instead, she grabs the POLICE BADGE and holds it up --

MARM
You haven't made detective yet.

SHANG
I'm saving up for that.

MARM

So the NYPD still requires you to pay for your own promotion?

SHANG

Lady, if you think I haven't been offered side cash from a perp trying to get out of an arrest --

MARM

I am an organizer offering payroll.

Beat. Shang wasn't expecting that.

MARM (CONT'D)

In exchange, you protect us from the law and the streets. Quick, easy money. We crack no safes, dodge no bullets, pick no locks. We work with our neighbors.

SHANG

Who's we?

MARM

At the moment? Me, her, and a bunch of orphans.

*

SHANG

That's your gang?

MARM

My business. Designed for people who don't want to just survive the streets. They want to run them...

(then)

Or did you give up that dream?

SHANG

How do you mean?

MARM

Well, at the precinct, you're a dutiful policeman... But Officer Draper used to be a different man. He used to chase his desires.

Shang studies her, allows her to keep going...

MARM (CONT'D)

Satan's Circus. You were "Shang." Earned the nickname by shanghaiing drunk fellas by the East River on ships to Europe.

SHANG

Who the hell are you?

MARM

An old lady who asks a bunch of innocent questions and the street always answers... You were a nasty son of a bitch.

SHANG

I was.

MARM

Did you like that son of a bitch?

SHANG

... I did.

MARM

Then be that son of a bitch again. But this time -- with the badge.

Beat.

SHANG

And how are you two gonna gain turf on boys like Traveling John Grady and Killer Kyle McCrow?

*

MARM

We live in the shadows. We're relegated to being servants, housemaids. Women can't even legally buy a beer. And when no one suspects you of doing much of anything, then they don't expect you to strike, either... We don't forget. We don't react with violence. And we don't rat. No. A woman -- a real woman -- knows loyalty. Honor. Family. And that's what crime should be about. And what ours will be about.

*

*

*

*

*

*

Marm sees Shang considering and she goes for the kill:

MARM (CONT'D)

So... Shang, I am offering you the opportunity to be yourself again.

*

Off Shang's intrigue...

EXT. LORD & TAYLOR DEPARTMENT STORE - "LADIES MILE" - DAY

*

In the real-life row of Department Stores in Gilded Age, WOMEN, stroll on the arms of MEN, fawning over window displays. Marm turns the corner, in raggedy clothing. Sophie follows also in subpar duds, insecure as she waddles in her wide-legged dress.

*

SOPHIE

What knuck sewed this horrid thing?

MARM

I did. Look, no matter how
expensive their heels are, they're
walking on the same ground as you.

The ladies stop before the entrance. Sophie waits, incredulous.

SOPHIE

Do you think I'm going to start
opening my own doors now, too?

Marm rolls her eyes and opens the door. As Sophie enters --

*

INT. LORD & TAYLOR DEPARTMENT STORE - LADIES MILE - LATER

Wealthy. White. Women. Shopping. Marm browses silk while keeping her eye on the --

DIAMOND COUNTER where Sophie flirts with a MALE CLERK (20s).

But Marm's gaze is interrupted by a judgey FEMALE CLERK (30s).

FEMALE CLERK

Excuse me, Miss?

MARM

I'm okay. Thank you.

FEMALE CLERK

I've had my eye on you since you
walked in here.

MARM

Oh?

FEMALE CLERK

I know a thief when I see one.

Marm focuses on the Female Clerk.

MARM

Quite the accusation.

Marm sneaks a glance to Sophie -- DIAMONDS now out before her.

MARM (CONT'D)

Let me tell you what I see.

Marm sizes the Female Clerk up and then dives in:

MARM (CONT'D)

I see a woman forced to work
because of a husband who can't earn
enough. You chose Lord and Taylor
because it allows you to rub elbows
with the versions of yourself you
desperately want to be. Pampered.
Beautiful. Wealthy. Your dream as a
little girl. Hey, maybe you'll even
get some double takes... That'd
make you feel good, right? Because
all of this distracts you from the
real version of yourself that keeps
you awake at night. Becoming me. A
woman who doesn't belong. But
here's a little secret from an old
lady, you will never belong. So
take your eye off of me and look at
the bitch in the mirror.

*

The Female Clerk looks at Marm, shocked. Shaken. Muttering.

FEMALE CLERK

I... would like...

MARM

Don't mumble now. Go on and make
your commotion.

The Female Clerk stuffs away her tears and then GRABS MARM.

FEMALE CLERK

Gypsy! Someone call a policeman!

Heads turn. Bingo. As chaos erupts, Sophie and Male Clerk also
look up. Sophie JUMPS back, KNOCKING OVER THE DIAMOND TRAY--

SOPHIE

Oh my, God. I'm so sorry.

Diamonds SCATTER on the floor! Male Clerk RUSHES around to
collect his diamonds, brushing Sophie -- who FALLS to the ground.

Her wide dress landing right over a clump of diamonds.

Customers turn as Sophie begins WAILING, nursing her knee.

COP (O.S.)

Out of the way!

FEMALE CLERK
Check this woman's ankles.

A UNIFORMED OFFICER rushes in --

SHANG
Who attacked this young lady?

But the cop is SHANG. And he looks right past the Female Clerk who points at Marm -- to Sophie, on the ground.

SOPHIE
He did.

She points to the Male Clerk. Customers nod. Shang takes out his BATON and approaches... Now, everyone's attention is fully on the Male Clerk who gets down on his knees, afraid...

And Marm slips out. Sophie stands and waddles her way out, too. A masterful bait and switch. And just as the Male Clerk is handcuffed we see one INTRIGUED CUSTOMER in the corner:

GEORGE LESLIE (26), charming like Gosling, well-dressed like Clooney, but a meticulous perfectionist. He witnessed everything... and he's impressed.

EXT. LORD & TAYLOR DEPT. STORE - LADIES MILE - MOMENTS LATER

Sophie finds Marm waiting for her. They share a smile as Marm reaches under her dress to retrieve FIVE STOLEN DIAMONDS.

SOPHIE
Smooth as a baby's bottom.

MARM
Patience always pays off, my dear.

SOPHIE
I'll admit it. You were right.

Marm grins as she puts the loot under her hat before they fold into the crowd.

MARM
And now we attack.

SOPHIE
What do you have in mind?

MARM
Nothing fancy. We just announce we're open for business...

As our POV rises like a skyscraper, we CROSSFADE TO:

EXT. THIEVES EXCHANGE - BROADWAY/HOUSTON INTERSECTION - NIGHT

Marm and Sophie enter the belly of the beast. But this time, they fearlessly beeline past the CRIMINAL GAZES -- to Freddie and a THICK PACK of STREET KIDS who form a circle.

Marm enters the circle with Sophie. And Freddie closes it off by moving one of his tables. Marm is temporarily guarded.

MARM
(to Freddie)
Stand strong. I'll be quick.

Freddie nods. And then, Marm removes A DIAMOND from her hat -- and stands on a crate and calls out:

MARM (CONT'D)
This is a 2 carat African diamond.

THE SPARKLING ROCK captures every criminal's attention. *
Including Grady, who eyes Marm from afar, incredulous, pissed *
that she didn't take his warning seriously... Marm continues: *

MARM (CONT'D)
Starting tomorrow, I will be
selling high quality goods just
like this out of my store on 79
Clinton Street. That is my Thieves
Exchange. My prices are fair. And *
all are welcome.

Grady moves with his crew, ready to plow over the kids. THEN -- *

MARM (CONT'D)
Thank you everyone for your time. *

Marm FLICKS the DIAMOND in the air! Every criminal is in awe, *
focused on the Diamond's trajectory. As they form a THICK *
PACK, waiting for its descent -- *

Marm slips between and leads Sophie and the Orphans out of *
Thieves Exchange before Grady and his crew can get to them. *

MARM (V.O.)
***Respect. It comes from fear or
admiration. They chose fear. So I
chose to be unique. And that's how
I gained my turf in New York City.*** *

The DIAMOND CRASHES to the ground and CHAOS ERUPTS! Every
THIEF fighting for ownership... Off Grady realizing he just
gained a new competitor.

EXT. ELDRIDGE ST. POLICE STATION - SERGEANT'S OFFICE - DAY

ANGLE ON: The precinct. Uneventful. A few CIVILIANS talk outside. After a moment, TWO NYPD OFFICERS (SERGEANT, 30s & BEAT COP, 20s) emerge. They continue talking before stopping at a HORSE & CARRIAGE. We spy from across the street.

After a moment, Beat Cop offers a goodbye handshake, and walks down the road. The Sergeant gets into his carriage...

REVEAL Dorcy, watching from afar. And as soon as the carriage trots forward, Dorcy approaches. The Sergeant notices.

SERGEANT
God damn it.

And he quickly checks around, ensuring no one is watching.

SERGEANT (CONT'D)
What'd I tell you about coming to my precinct?

DORCY
I'm walking on the street. You're in a carriage. We just happen to be going the same way.

It's true. Dorcy walks in unison with the carriage. But from afar, they don't appear to be together.

DORCY (CONT'D)
Did you review my application?

SERGEANT
Yes.

DORCY
And?

SERGEANT
Same answer as the last precinct.

Dorcy sinks but quickly rebounds by pulling out a LIST.

DORCY
Pawn shops. I've documented every one in the area. Now, if you hire me, we can take out the middle man--

SERGEANT
Just go to another state.

DORCY
I wanna be a cop in New York.

SERGEANT

Why?

DORCY

You know why.

SERGEANT

Well, he's the reason you keep
getting rejected. No one wants to
hire the son of a crooked cop.

DORCY

He was undercover.

SERGEANT

Look, go bring your conspiracies to
the publications.

DORCY

I've tried.

The Sergeant ruffles the reigns slightly, causing the horse
to pick up the pace. But Dorcy keeps up.

DORCY (CONT'D)

Maybe I should bring the papers my
suspicion that a sergeant in Lower
Manhattan likes to frequent the
casinos at night.

Finally, the Sergeant makes eye contact with Dorcy.

SERGEANT

Is that a threat?

DORCY

I don't know. Is it?

Beat. Dorcy has him hooked.

SERGEANT

Okay. Listen. If you want to
restore your family's name, bring
me an 800 pound gorilla wrapped in
a nice bow. All I have to do is
cuff him. Then, we'll talk.

(then, direct)

But if you keep stalking me, I
promise you'll rot in a jail cell.
Do not fuck with me again, kid.

Dorcy stops as he watches the Sergeant go with a smile. Off
this dog with a bone...

INT. CONGREGATION TEMPLE RODEPH SHOLOM - EVENING

A LINE OF WORSHIPPERS greet the Mandelbaum family before service. **LAWYER BILL HOWE** (40s), a beanstalk, shakes her hand.

BILL HOWE
You won't find a better lawyer in
Lower Manhattan...

MARM
Shabbat Shalom.

Marm smiles. Bill heads off. Next up is Rabbi David Schmidt (whom we saw earlier) -- in his new TALLIT.

MARM (CONT'D)
Oh, it looks delightful.

RABBI SCHMIDT
It was a very generous gift.

MARM
My pleasure. And thank you for
letting the gentiles come, too.

REVEAL CRIMINAL TYPES scattered among the CONGREGATION.

MARM (CONT'D)
Tell me if they skimp on donations.

The Rabbi smiles, but it's clear something is on his mind.

MARM (CONT'D)
Go on.

RABBI SCHMIDT
Look, I am deeply ashamed what my
brother asked of you. And so is he.

Marm tenses at the mention.

RABBI SCHMIDT (CONT'D)
He's willing to do whatever it
takes to make things right.

MARM
Understood. But in due time.

Marm follows Rabbi's gaze to the back where Dr. Schmidt (Wolfe's doctor) stands by the doors... And Rabbi Schmidt shakes his head. He is NOT allowed in.

MARM (CONT'D)
Thank you, Rabbi. You're very kind.

Off Marm watching Dr. Schmidt exit...

EXT. MANDELBAUM'S DRY GOODS STORE - DAY

A long line of CUSTOMERS (criminals and neighbors) wait to enter the store from the back.

INT. MANDELBAUM'S DRY GOODS' STORE - CONTINUOUS

Sophie mans the counter, when the next customer approaches. Sophie's surprised to find -- Julius stepping up. He DROPS a SACHEL on the counter. *

JULIUS
I got antiques. *

Julius opens to show: tarnished jewels, silver, broken rings.

SOPHIE
Where'd you get those?

JULIUS
Hey, you ain't supposed to ask a criminal where he got his loot.

SOPHIE
I asked a boy whose mother will be upset that he's dodging school.

JULIUS
How's she gonna know?
(re: line of customers)
You sayin' these people are rats?

SOPHIE
Loyal rats. So am I. And I don't want your trash, Julius. *

Julius eyes her for a moment. She's not budging.

JULIUS
Asshole.

Julius takes his sack and heads out. Sophie watches him exit before her attention is taken away by her next customer --

GEORGE
How do ya do? George Leslie.

George extends his hand. But Sophie sizes him up, suspicious. *

SOPHIE
I think you're in the wrong place.

GEORGE

How do you mean? I'm here to sell.

SOPHIE

Then show me what you've got because conversation isn't currency here.

*

George points to himself -- smiling, charming and obnoxious.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

No deal. Next in line.

GEORGE

What if I told you it's free.
Comes with daddy issues, but hey,
aren't we all a little damaged?

SOPHIE

"We?" Do you see anyone here
wearing Brooks Brothers? Coming to
a pawn shop isn't going to make you
a part of "we." Ever. Now, move on.

*

*

George takes it as a challenge and begins singing --

*

GEORGE

Sweet violets, sweeter than roses.
Covered all from head to toooooo.

SOPHIE

Please don't do that.

The CUSTOMERS in line are amused as George waltzes around,
singing *Joseph Emmet's* censored rhyme full of innuendos.

GEORGE

Covered all with sweet viiiioolets.

He moves gracefully, conducting as Customers sing along:

GEORGE & CUSTOMERS

There once was a farmer who took a
young miss // in the back of the barn
where he gave her a lecture! // On
horses and chickens and eggs // and
told her she had beautiful manners!

Laughter all around. Even Sophie cracks a smile. George returns
to the counter.

GEORGE

See, we aren't so different. Just
gotta give me a shot and I bet
you'll be delighted.

SOPHIE

How much are you willing to bet?

GEORGE

My pride? My ego? A very expensive
dinner at a fancy restaurant?

Off Sophie's intrigue as a smile blossoms.

INT. DELMONICO'S RESTAURANT - 5TH AVE & 26TH STREET - NIGHT

WE FOLLOW A WAITER carrying TWO TRAYS in the first modern restaurant in America. He floats between marble saloon tables, nickel-plated showcases with fancy dessert, and a cabinet of french china. *This is the other side of the gilded age.*

Our hero waiter stops at the most high-profile table in the joint. He sets down his trays and we meet our dinner guests: Sophie and George, dressed to the nines, power-couple adjacent.

WAITER

Lobster Newberg for the lady. Baked
Alaska for the gentleman.

The Waiter unveils the food. George indicates to empty glasses.

GEORGE

Thank you. And more wine please.

The Waiter nods and scurries off. George sets his napkin.

SOPHIE

How, exactly, did you get a
reservation here?

GEORGE

Well, first you contact the manager
to check availability. Then--

SOPHIE

To a restaurant which feeds the
likes of Mark Twain.

GEORGE

I look like them.

*

George begins eating. Sophie sets her napkin.

SOPHIE

But do you earn like them?

GEORGE

These people don't work.

SOPHIE
You know what I mean.

GEORGE
How's the fish?

SOPHIE
What do you do for a living?

GEORGE
At least try the fish. Before we
have to go.

SOPHIE
Are you in a rush?

GEORGE
No, but it's a five dollar piece
of fish and I'd like to know if
it's worth it.

Sophie cuts off a piece of fish, tries it.

SOPHIE
Now, what do you do?
(George still waits)
It's worth it.

GEORGE
I keep my options open.

SOPHIE
For what?

GEORGE
My next opportunity.

Then, George notices the SNOODY MANAGER and the hero Waiter,
eyeing them. Sophie clocks it, too. George waves and smiles --

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Come on, eat.

SOPHIE
You are in a rush.

GEORGE
Time can't be bought, sold, or
stolen. It's God's greatest weapon.
So we should all be in a rush.

George races to eat --

SOPHIE

Who do these people think you are?

GEORGE

It's of no worth to me unless it's
going toward the bill. And it is.

SOPHIE

So you're a con artist.

GEORGE

Not as keen as the one I'm with.

SOPHIE

I'm afraid I have no idea what
you're talking about.

*

GEORGE

Is that so? 'Cause you've gained
quite the reputation around here. I
find your "honor as thieves"
particularly fascinating.

*

*

*

Sophie stuffs her mouth with food to avoid the details.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Great. You're finally eating. Now,
I'll tell you who I am.

*

George finally sets his fork down.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I'm a graduate of the University of
Cincinnati. Engineering and
Architecture, top of the class. But
I got bored. Ohio is pretty hum
drum. So I came to the big city.

*

SOPHIE

A man with the privilege to be
anything he wanted in the world but
chooses to be anything but
himself... What're you running from?

*

GEORGE

See, here's where we are different.

*

SOPHIE

Oh, don't tell me you're not.
Everyone's running.

*

*

*

GEORGE

That's true. But y'all are running
away from a life, a country, a
struggle. But I am running toward a
goal: etching my name into history.

SOPHIE

By doing what?

GEORGE

I told you, I'm still working that
part out.

SOPHIE

(growing suspicious)

Is this is a business dinner, Mr.
Leslie? Because if it is, you and
me live and die by this five dollar
piece of fish. No harm done.

GEORGE

It's a date. That's all.

That's what she was hoping to hear. She settles.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I do have one request though... Can
you remove your heels?

George points to the Manager and FAT SECURITY GUARD heading over
with a WEALTHY COUPLE who just arrived for their reservations.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

It appears as though Mr. Roger
Guillian has learned someone stole
his reservation tonight...

George smiles. Sophie, too. She reaches to unstrap her heel.

EXT. 5TH AVE - NIGHT

UPPER CLASS COUPLES stroll the street when -- WHOOSH --
George and a barefoot Sophie POUND THE PAVEMENT -- leaving
the Fat Security Guard in the far distance, out of breath.

They catch eyes while they run, giggling, *connecting*...

And they turn a corner to catch their breath. Panting. Sophie
eyes George for a moment. Then, she plants him with a kiss.
They begin to make out. Raw passion in the concrete jungle...

GEORGE

Wanna go back to your place?

SOPHIE
I live with my mother.

GEORGE
Hard pass.
(then, an idea forming)
What about the store?

*
*
*

Off Sophie's adventurous gaze...

INT. MANDELBAUM'S DRY GOODS' STORE - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Sophie and George CRASH into a STACK OF SILK while making out. George kisses her neck. Sophie undoes his belt. George unbuttons her blouse. Sophie takes his pants off. He takes hers off. She nibbles his ear. He lies on top of her AND... SMASH TO:

INT. MANDELBAUM'S DRY GOODS' STORE - BACK ROOM - LATER

Sophie, with shagged up sex-hair, puts her dress back on while thinking about what just happened in that room. On that crate. Sweat marks still present. She smiles to herself. THEN--

CRASH. From inside. She quickly redresses, growing concerned.

SOPHIE
George?...

INT. MANDELBAUM'S DRY GOODS' STORE - MOMENTS LATER

Sophie enters to find Grady aiming his PEARL HANDLED DERRINGER PISTOL at George behind the counter.

GRADY
You said you were alone, you cunt.

SEVEN OF GRADY'S GANGSTERS also fill the store. One is "BLACK" LENA KLEINSCHMEIDT, a twisted version of Sophie who --

Aims her WEBLEY REVOLVER at Sophie's chest.

GEORGE
DON'T!

Sophie tenses. There's no shot.

GRADY
Where does Mandelbaum keep her shit?

SOPHIE
In a warehouse. No one knows the address. Not even me.

BLACK LENA
Bullshit! You're her right hand.

SOPHIE
And who are you?

BLACK LENA
Black Lena.

GRADY
My right hand in Jersey. Lena is
the Queen of Hackensack now.

SOPHIE
No Queens live in New Jersey.

BLACK LENA
Do you really wanna mouth off to
someone aiming her gun atcha?

Just as Grady flicks his eyes over, Sophie nods to George --
And George GRABS Grady's PISTOL -- aims it BACK IN HIS FACE!

SOPHIE
Never take your eye off the prize.
Should've attended Marm's school.

Immediately, the SIX OTHERS PULL their guns on Sophie --

GRADY
Always carry a weapon. Should've
studied the game before playing it.

It's a STANDOFF. SEVEN guns on Sophie. George aiming on Grady.

GEORGE
Okay, okay, okay. Everyone settle
down. No one needs to get shot.

GRADY
Beg to differ.

GEORGE
There's a stash of cash underneath
the register --

SOPHIE
What are you doing?

GEORGE
Making sure our second date isn't
six feet under.

*

While keeping the gun trained on Grady, George carefully reaches under the register to Marm's secret stash of cash --

SOPHIE

No. She's gonna kill you.

GRADY

Not if we do it first.

George pulls out a WAD OF TENS from the stash.

GEORGE

There's about \$200 here. And I'll even return your pistol.

SOPHIE

George --

GEORGE

Sophie, please. I got this.

(then, to Grady)

You lose nothing by taking this.

Grady considers. Sophie still isn't on board. But George moves forward anyway, placing the money on the counter...

And Grady instantly grabs it.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Great. We're doing great. Now, we lower our guns. You, first.

Tense beat. Grady nods. His gangsters lower their weapons. Lena is last to do it, eyeing Sophie hard. Then, George slowly hands Grady's pistol back -- and Grady takes it.

GRADY

This boy bought you another chance at life. Don't fuck it up now.

Grady stares at Sophie while stepping back to the exit. His crew follows. Once gone, George exhales. And Sophie begins shaking...

SOPHIE (PRE-LAP)

And then George talked Grady down.

INT. MANDELBAUM'S TENEMENT HOME - ALLEY - LATER

Marm stands in her nightgown, with one eye on her apartment window, and one eye on George. Sophie stands between them.

MARM

What'd you promise them?

GEORGE
I paid them.

MARM
How much?

GEORGE
About two hundred.

MARM
... From my stash?

George reluctantly nods. Sophie stays silent.

*

MARM (CONT'D)
Well, thank God you were there to save
my Sophie.
(George's relieved, then)
But you're going to pay me back.

*

*

*

GEORGE
Ma'am, I don't have that kind of
disposable cash right now --

MARM
I'm sure a man in your threads has
an inheritance.

GEORGE
Not anymore.

MARM
Okay. Then you'll earn it back.

SOPHIE
Mother!

MARM
Do you care about this George fella?

SOPHIE
It was only one date...

MARM
If you don't, I'll have him
arrested for theft and trespassing
in my store and we'll call it even.

SOPHIE
Yes. Okay. Yes. I could see it
going somewhere.

MARM

Great. Then this is his chance to prove he cares about you, too.

GEORGE

Are you blackmailing me?

MARM

Precisely.

SOPHIE

No-no, I don't want him involved--

GEORGE

How do I earn it back?

MARM

Handle my Grady situation.

GEORGE

All due respect, I'm not a killer.

MARM

Young man, did you think I was going to ask you to pull a revolver on his family and make headlines?

GEORGE

I mean, obviously.

MARM

Quite the opposite. I want a truce.

George and Sophie were NOT expecting that.

GEORGE

And if he doesn't accept it?

MARM

(matter of fact)

He'll probably kill you. That's why you are offering it instead of me. I'd say that's worth about \$200.

*

Beat. The magnitude lands on George.

SOPHIE

George, you don't need to do this.

GEORGE

I want to. And that counts for something these days, right?

Off George and Sophie exchanging a romantic glisten.

EXT. EAST RIVER DOCKS - NIGHT

Sea of darkness. George stands by a docked ship. Alone. Anxious.

GRADY emerges, leading a PACK OF GANGSTERS toward George. They carry bats, chains, and bad intentions. George stiffens at the sight, takes his hands out of his pockets just in case.

As they near closer, Grady cocks his head --

GRADY
Where is Mandelbaum?

*
*

GEORGE
With her children.

GRADY
So she sent you alone to get your
ass whooped?

GEORGE
She sent me to offer a truce.

A tiny beat.

GRADY
Are you fucking me, George?

GEORGE
You're the one who just said you
were going to whoop my ass.

GRADY
Because if you're fucking me --

GEORGE
Look, she has two stashhouses of
loot. Silver, antiques, furniture,
cigars, you name it. And she's
willing to offer you one.

GRADY
Take me there and if its worth it,
then you and me have no more
business together.

GEORGE
You're already here.

George motions to the ship. Rocking back and forth... Grady indicates for George to go first. He does. Then, Grady indicates for his crew to stay out, keep watch. They do.

Grady follows George onto the ship. They both disappear into its bowels as Grady's crew waits patiently for several moments.

WHACK! THUD. Someone falls to the ground in the ship. THEN --

FFFSHHHH! THE SHIP GOES UP IN FLAMES!

Sophie HOPS OFF and onto the dock! George JUMPS BEHIND HER!

GEORGE (CONT'D)
GO!! GO!! GO!!

They both BOLT in the opposite direction! JUST AS --

WWWAAHHH! POLICE HORNS BLARE! Grady's THIEVES SCATTER.

Grady steps off the boat, holding his head which begins to swell. (He was the thud.) But before he can run --

*

POLICEMAN (O.S.)
Get on the ground!

A POLICE CARRIAGE SURROUNDS HIM IMMEDIATELY.

GRADY
What the hell is this?

And out steps Shang, aiming his weapon at Grady --

SHANG
I said on the ground! You're under arrest.

Grady puts his hands up and slowly gets onto his knees...

GRADY
What the fuck? I didn't do this shit!

The WELT forms on Grady's head. Shang vigorously approaches and Grady takes a step backward --

GRADY (CONT'D)
Look at my forehead! I was attacked! I'm being framed.

SHANG
No. You were resisting.

Shang grabs Grady and SLAMS him to the ground, forcing his bruised head onto the gritty wooden dock.

SHANG (CONT'D)
NYPD has patrol units all around
the East River. I saw everything.

Shang begins cuffing him.

GRADY
Then did you see that kid lead me
onto the ship? It's another one of
Mandelbaum's fucking mind games.

SHANG
That widow with the failed dry
goods shop?

Shang cackles.

SHANG (CONT'D)
See if that holds up in court.

Shang brutally brings Grady to his feet by his wrist chains.
Grady YELPS. And then, Shang shoves him into the carriage --

MARM (V.O.)
Justice. The key to confrontation
is to kill your enemy without them
even realizing it.

INT. TWEED COURTHOUSE - DAY

The famously crooked courthouse. George is on the witness
stand, offering passionate testimony. Grady is the defendant.

MARM (V.O.)
For me, that was easy. Revenge is a
dish best served by a mother. And
on my platter was George --

George cries during his defense, earning sympathy from all.

MARM (V.O.)
A star witness who nobody would
suspect of being associated with a
poor old widow like me.

The CURLY-HAIRED JUDGE BANGS his gavel. Grady grimaces.

INT. MANDELBAUM'S CLAPBOARD HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Marm gazes at a LUXURIOUS LAMB-SKIN DINNER INVITATION reading:
"A Dinner Party Hosted by the Honorable Mrs. Mandelbaum."

MARM (V.O.)

And when war is over, a great leader cultivates peace. My sixth virtue and perhaps life's most profitable commodity.

*

The oven DINGS. Marm takes out a hot glass tray of DELICIOUS FOOD. Like a Thanksgiving Commercial, Marm carries it into --

INT. MANDELBAUM'S CLAPBOARD HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Marm's new upscale dining room is full of GUESTS around her marble table. Marm sets the tray down, unveiling DELICIOUS FOOD.

MARM (V.O.)

When families scavenged, they trusted me to help them survive. Business owners needed protection, I had brutes look after their store. You needed bail money, I fronted it. If you wanted the Jewish vote, you first needed my vote of confidence.

*

*

REVEAL through the length of the table: George, Shang, Sophie, Curly Haired Judge, Rabbi Schmidt, Lawyer Bill Howe, POLITICIANS, COPS, THIEVES...

MARM (V.O.)

And my dinner parties were the hottest in the city because my guest list was as carefully refined as my menu...

*

PULL OUT to the FULL VIEW of Marm's dining room where WHITE-COLLAREDS sit beside BLUE-COLLAREDS. All one happy family.

*

MARM (V.O.)

The fringe of society dining with the high society. Not because this is America, but because when you do favors for people, they're more likely to do one back...

Marm takes her seat at the head of the table --

MARM

Let's eat!

Off her command, the guests dig in and celebrations begin...

INT. MANDELBAUM'S CLAPBOARD HOME - HALLWAY - LATER

Among echoes from the party, George toes down a hallway. A LANTERN in one hand and a NEWSPAPER concealing a BULKY OBJECT in his other. He approaches a door and pushes his way into --

INT. MANDELBAUM'S CLAPBOARD HOME - JULIUS' ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Where Julius stares at a SIX-SHOOTER beside a FALSE FLOORBOARD.

GEORGE
Shit. Sorry.

JULIUS
What the hell? You don't knock?

GEORGE
You didn't lock and I thought...
Where's your mother's room?

Julius stands, grabs his gun --

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Relax. She agreed to talk... away
from everyone. That's all.

JULIUS
Then what's in the newspaper?

George unravels the paper to reveal: A SMALL TIN WHEEL WITH WIRES ATTACHED ("THE LITTLE JOKER").

GEORGE
A device I invented. I call it The
Little Joker.

JULIUS
What's it for?

George shows him the (real) newspaper headline: **"DEXTER BANK
ROBBED BY GENIUS! POLICE HUNT FOR CLUES!"**

GEORGE
This. It records a safe's
combination without a trace.

JULIUS
(mesmerized)
You robbed a bank?

GEORGE
(re: Julius's gun)
Do you want ME to start asking YOU
questions?

JULIUS
I bought it at Thieves Exchange.

GEORGE
Hey! I didn't ask. I don't want to
know. Just put it away.

Finally, Julius sets the gun down under the false floorboard.

JULIUS
You gonna tell my mom? Like Sophie?

GEORGE
Brothers are different.

JULIUS
Is that what we are?

GEORGE
We could be.
(re: The Little Joker)
If you don't tell anyone about my
friend, either.

Julius nods. George goes. Then, with a YANK OF A LEVER (just like Marm), Julius sends the gun downward into a crawl space.

INT. MANDELBAUM'S CLAPBOARD HOME - MARM'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

George shows Marm his "Little Joker" device while she scans the newspaper article to corroborate his story.

GEORGE
Keep reading. It says I was in and
out like a ghost.

MARM
Did the earnings disappear into
thin air, too?

GEORGE
They paid my debts. It cost me
about the same to plan the heist.

MARM
So there was no profit?

GEORGE
The profit is proof that it works.

Marm hands the newspaper back.

MARM

George, I'm not going to finance a heist just because I can.

GEORGE

But you would if it earns you enough money to retire, right?... Criminals get hooked forever. Working people never stop working. But businesspeople, real businesspeople retire.

Just as Marm considers that notion --

SOPHIE (O.S.)

And what are you going to tell our children?

*
*
*

They find Sophie in the doorway.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Daddy's a bank robber? Daddy's a cheat?

*

GEORGE

Whoa. Kids? Slow down.

SOPHIE

Speed up. I'm not here to be your arm candy. Or your accomplice.

GEORGE

I never asked you to be either. Just... please give us a moment.

*
*
*

George eagerly looks at Marm, gripping his invention. But Sophie studies him for a brief moment, puzzled, speculating:

*
*

SOPHIE

Wait. Were you fucking using me?

*

GEORGE

(yes)

What, no. No, of course not.

SOPHIE

Then, have your pick. Me or crime.

GEORGE

Have yours. Me or the money you think I have.

*

Sophie is caught. But she's not ashamed.

SOPHIE

Well, I'm not gonna marry some bum
who keeps me in this mess. And what
do you mean by "think you have?"

GEORGE

I'm the American Nightmare. Riches
to rags. I have \$140 dollars to my
name... So we can all help each
other out here...

SOPHIE

(confirming it out loud)
No... no... You were using me...
You're... You're broke.

The air sinks out of the room for Sophie.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

GET OUT OF MY HOUSE!

MARM

Sophie --

SOPHIE

He's a fucking liar and I want him
out! NOW.

MARM

We have guests. Go back inside.

Sophie's shocked. The first time Mother didn't cater to her.

SOPHIE

You're actually considering taking
a bank? What the hell has gotten
into you?

Marm shuts the door.

MARM

This secures my family's future for
generations. And I never once
thought I'd come close that.

SOPHIE

But this isn't how we do it.

Marm just stares at Sophie. She's fine with that. Beat.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

You're all alone on this one.

Sophie turns to the door, but waits one last moment. Marm still *
doesn't budge. So Sophie exits. Then, Marm looks to George: *

MARM

I need to know how you lost your
money. Your curses, debts, motives.
Tell me all of it. And if you lie,
no matter when I discover it -- I
will pull the rug from underneath
you. Do not test me, young man.

Beat. George carefully considers his answer:

GEORGE

My father's name was defined by
breweries. Mine was defined by my
father. I was a rich kid who got
what he wanted when he wanted. I
didn't like that feeling. I hate
those kinds of people. Dad called me
ungrateful. He didn't understand why
I wanted to "make my own name." So
he cut me off as soon as my train
stopped in New York... It was the
nicest thing he'd ever done for
me... That's where you come in, Miss
Mandelbaum. I invented this device
because it doesn't require dynamite,
violence, or danger. Just fortitude.
And I think you're the only fence
around who could appreciate my kind
of genius.

A loaded beat. Marm shuts the door.

MARM

The Manhattan Savings Institution.
It's the personal depository of
New York's wealthiest and the only
heist that makes this worth it for
the both of us...

Off Marm, dollars in her eyes and dreams in George's...

INT. MANHATTAN SAVINGS INSTITUTION - GRAND LOBBY - DAY

An architectural masterpiece. TELLERS stand behind ARCHED
CAGES serving CLIENTS. **PAT SHEVELIN** (40s), a drone, a worn,
defeated, mutton-chopped drone, waves over the next customer --

George, surveying every inch of this kingdom, while approaching.

PAT SHEVELIN

Withdrawal or deposit?

GEORGE

Deposit.

PAT SHEVELIN

Cash, gold, or personal items?

GEORGE

Personal items.

George reveals THREE DIAMONDS. Pat simply goes through the motions, placing the three diamonds in a deposit tray... Until George moves a diamond toward Pat. *Now, Pat is engaged.*

INT. MANDELBAUM'S DRY GOODS' STORE - NIGHT

Sophie slouches, defeated, counting cash. Dorcy enters.

SOPHIE

We're closed.

DORCY

Please. I need a ring. Fast.

*

SOPHIE

This is a Dry Goods store.
Bedsheets, silk, no diamonds.

DORCY

Come on. I was referred here.

SOPHIE

By whom?

DORCY

Some orphan at Thieves Exchange.
Said you have fair prices.

*

*

SOPHIE

What's his name?

DORCY

Ralph? James? I don't remember some
fucking street kid.

SOPHIE

Yet you trusted his recommendation.

*

DORCY

Look, if I don't propose tonight,
she's gone.

SOPHIE

Aw. What a shame.

DORCY
I'll pay a premium.

Dorcy DROPS a SACK on the counter.

DORCY (CONT'D)
Directly to you. Unless you want to
be a clerk at a pawn shop forever.

Beat. Dorcy opens to reveal: a STACK OF CASH. Sophie eyes it.

SOPHIE
Suppose we did have diamonds and
suppose I did do this under the
table...

DORCY
I wouldn't tell nobody. Not even
your boss.

SOPHIE
That's a given. But it's gonna cost
you a decent amount.

DORCY
Call it.

*

SOPHIE
No. You call the price. And make it
enough to... I don't know, "secure
my future" at least for a few
months.

*

DORCY
I'll give you all of it if you give
me your best and biggest rock.

Beat. She considers him, the deal behind Marm's back... Then,
she pulls out a 2.5 Carat Diamond from behind the register.
Dorcy nods. Sophie takes his sack and hands him the diamond.

SOPHIE
Piece of advice? Let the diamond do
the proposing. Good luck, fella.

But Dorcy doesn't leave. And Sophie grows impatient.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
I said we're done here. Good night.

Then, Dorcy shows his P.I. License. Sophie's stunned.

DORCY

Tiffany's reported a loss of two thousand in diamonds yesterday. Something tells me I can trace this rock right back to their store...

SOPHIE

Uh... No. A man came in with--

DORCY

This is no accusation. This is proof, Miss Elkins.

*
*

Sophie freezes.

SOPHIE

How do you know my name?

*
*

DORCY

I know lots of things. And either I can bring it to the precinct... or you can tell me all about Old Mother Mandelbaum and her operation.

*
*
*
*

Off Sophie, completely fucked...

INT. ELDRIDGE ST. POLICE STATION - HALLWAY/SHANG'S OFFICE

Dorcy charges down a HALLWAY flanked by the SERGEANT from earlier. They BUST INTO Shang's office --

SERGEANT

You bastard!

The Sergeant SLAMS Shang's HEAD down onto his desk and breaks out the handcuffs. Shang is the one being arrested.

INT. MANDELBAUM'S CLAPBOARD HOME - DINING ROOM - DAY

George holds blueprints of the bank but Marm is distracted. Nervous. Paranoid like we haven't seen her...

GEORGE

Shang probably did himself in.

MARM

You realize what this means?

GEORGE

That we have to move on the bank quickly.

MARM

That we have a wolf among us.

GEORGE

Okay. So we'll move carefully.

*

Sophie enters. Something seems off about her. She looks at George as if she wants to say more... But all she says is:

SOPHIE

I'm moving out.

Enter **NED LYONS** (30s) -- a burly redhead with a torn off ear.

MARM

With this brute?!

SOPHIE

Ned, yes. He bought me a house in Long Island. And before you say--

MARM

You are running from who you are again. And this man will fall very short of your expectations.

SOPHIE

He wants to get away from all of this, too. Start a family. Live a quiet, comfortable life...

Sophie looks at Ned. He nods.

MARM

How do we know he isn't the mole?

SOPHIE

Because Ned comes from a family of criminals. You know who doesn't?

Sophie points to George. George scoffs.

GEORGE

Please. Maybe you're the snake.

Marm rises, considers them both.

SOPHIE

Mother -- I would never--

GEORGE

This is exactly what she does when she doesn't get her way. She plays people's emotions to get them to do as she pleases.

SOPHIE

I do not.

GEORGE

Mother, look what's happening right now --

SOPHIE

What did you just call her?

GEORGE

-- She found the worst possible guy after you agreed to a job that she doesn't approve of.

SOPHIE

I don't approve of it because I'm looking out for her best interests.

GEORGE

You said yourself you have her wrapped around your finger.

Marm expects Sophie's denial... But instead, Sophie walks aggressively toward George --

SOPHIE

FUCK YOU, GEORGE! For fucking ruining everything --

And George shoves Sophie away. Then, Ned grabs George and TOSSES him into the CHINA CABINET. GLASS SHATTERS all over Marm's floor.

MARM (V.O.)

Discipline. Choose a path or die in the middle. Don't let compassion create liabilities.

Ned readies for a fight as George stands. But George backs off, respecting Marm's code. He covers his bleeding elbow.

MARM

Of course I cared for Sophie. But a mother's sin is we care too much.

Sophie pushes Ned into a corner. And Marm deadeyes Sophie.

MARM (CONT'D)

I'm through with your grade school behavior.

SOPHIE

Listen to me.

MARM

No.

SOPHIE

I swear I didn't rat on you.

MARM

I don't want to see you anymore,
Sophie. Do not ever come here again
unless I send for you.

That lands on Sophie. Sadness lingering in the air. And
Sophie quietly exits. Ned follows. LONG BEAT.

*

George just waits for Marm to gather herself. Then she puts
on her mask of determination as she declares:

*

*

MARM (CONT'D)

Cut ties with anyone we've ever
worked with. We trust no one. We
end every operation. It's all over,
George.

*

*

*

*

GEORGE

... Including Manhattan Savings?

MARM

No. I need it now more than ever.

*

Relief washes over George's face.

MARM (CONT'D)

So don't fuck it up.

Off Marm, grilling George...

*

INT. MANDELBAUM'S CLAPBOARD HOME - JULIUS'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Marm enters to find Julius, looking out his window at Sophie.

JULIUS

Where is she going?

MARM

Long Island. Or so she says.

JULIUS

Are we going to see her again?

Emotional beat. Marm doesn't respond. She sits beside Julius.

MARM

I need your help. Just this once.

Julius slowly turns his gaze to his mother. Sparkling eyes.

INT. MANDELBAUM'S WAREHOUSE - BANK REPLICA - NIGHT

AN EXACT REPLICA of the Manhattan Savings Institution in Marm's WAREHOUSE. Marm stands in the "grand lobby" with George.

MARM

You used my money to build a replica? *

GEORGE

Practice is man's best friend. *

**(NOTE: this was the first
replica ever used)**

Now, come. Check out the vault.

Marm follows George through the PRISTINE REPLICA LOBBY with
ARCHED TELLER CAGES. *

They pass the JANITOR'S STAIRS and a WATCHMAN'S CLOSET on the
right, a CONFERENCE ROOM on the left, and then arrive at -- *

The ORNATE CIRCULAR VAULT ENTRANCE, protected by TRIPLE DOORS
-- open -- revealing TIN SECURITY DEPOSIT BOXES lining the
walls -- all leading to -- AN IRONCLAD CHUBBS AND SONS LOCK
AND SAFE, QUADRUPLE COMPARTMENT. *

And inside the vault is: Pat Shevelin and Julius.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

My 3 man army. Meet Mr. Shevelin.

Pat looks at Marm, dryly. He's not very good at greetings.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Mr. Shevelin goes inside the vault
every day. And he's going to
install the little joker so we
don't have to break in twice...

PAT SHEVELIN

And Mr. Shevelin will be paid three
thousand dollars for his services.

Marm eyes him.

GEORGE

Don't mind him. He's quirky.

MARM

I would have preferred an inside
man who wasn't.

(then, to Julius)

Have you been hired, yet? *

JULIUS

Yep. Get my janitor's uniform
tomorrow. Been practicing my
mopping, too.

*
*
*

Julius beams. Marm just stares at him with a ruthless glance.

MARM

Get to work.

INT. MANDELBAUM'S WAREHOUSE - BANK REPLICA - MONTAGE - NIGHT

Marm observes from the lobby as George lies inside the vault,
listening to each turn of the safe's dial with a STETHOSCOPE.

Meanwhile, already mid-action, Julius rushes to transfer mock
jewelry from the 50 DEPOSIT BOXES to Pat's WOOL BAG. Just as
they finish the 50th BOX, George hears a CLICK in the safe --

And he POPS OPEN THE SAFE. Julius and Pat stand tall as George
rushes to check the clock above the vault: striking **9:23pm**.

GEORGE

Pathetic!

Julius and Pat sink. George paces like a Drill Sergeant.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

34 seconds for 1 deposit box. 28
minutes and 30 seconds for all 50.
But we wouldn't have even gotten
that far because Pat decided to
stand in the only spot where the
top of his empty skull can be seen
from anyone out on the street!

George indicates the DUMMY-WINDOW in line with Pat's position.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

But his gravest mistake was
installing my Little Joker
backwards. How could I possibly get
the right combination when it's
showing me the wrong numbers? That's
why I had to use a stethoscope like
I'm diagnosing fucking Small Pox.

PAT SHEVELIN

I'm sorry.

GEORGE

That's what prisoners say.

Pat looks away, moves back to the Janitor's room for square one. But George physically stops Julius from walking there.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Sweet buggy-eyed Julius... If I have to knock eight times on the janitor's door -- instead of the agreed upon seven -- I'm going to kick you off this job and leave you begging for a suckle of your mother's teet. Do you hear me?

Julius looks to Marm -- for her defense.

MARM

Don't look at me. Every one and every thing has a function. The janitor's entrance is the cleanest way into the bank. One thing goes wrong, every thing goes wrong. Do it right or we will find someone else who can mop.

*
*
*
*
*

Julius drags to the Janitor's office. Then, George settles.

GEORGE

Sorry about the bug eyes thing. He's very handsome. I just... this needs to be perfect.

George fusses with a CLUNKY WOODEN CHAIR, inching it over.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

And it will be perfect.

George re-locks the safe. SMASH into A RAPID FIRE SEQUENCE...

INT. BANK HEIST MONTAGE - DAY/NIGHT

JANITOR'S DOOR -- George knocks SEVEN times. Pat waits on the stairway. Julius opens the door. Too long. George shakes his head. Again. George shuts the door. George knocks SEVEN times. Julius opens. Too quick. Again. George shuts the door.

REAL MANHATTAN SAVINGS BANK -- Behind his teller cage, Pat hands George deposit paperwork. George slides cash -- and the LITTLE JOKER over to Pat -- unseen by any eye in the joint.

OFFICE ACROSS REAL MANHATTAN SAVINGS BANK -- George sits in an empty office, staring at the bank across the street. You can see Pat's head through the window like he said. He studies the BANKERS closing down process... IRON SHUTTERS BEING SHUT...

WAREHOUSE REPLICA//MANHATTAN SAVINGS BANK -- ONE screen grows into SIX split screens:

- Now with CLOSED IRON SHUTTERS, the crew navigates the lobby.
- Julius opens the Janitor Door on time.
- Pat dodges Marm's attempt to trip him.
- While running, Julius drops jewelry because he's got too much.
- George cracks the replica safe.
- Pat installs the LITTLE JOKER in the real bank's safe.

WE MERGE BACK INTO ONE SCREEN WHICH CRASHES US INTO:

INT. MANDELBAUM'S WAREHOUSE - BANK REPLICA - NIGHT

Lit by ONE lantern in a COMPLETELY DARK WAREHOUSE, Marm watches the trio -- mere movements in the shadows -- carrying out the heist without light... CLICK...

The vault opens. George rushes to the CLOCK -- STRIKING **9:15pm**.

GEORGE
Gentlemen... We just mugged the
Manhattan Savings Institution!

Julius and Pat fall in exhaustion. George looks to Marm... who cracks a smile. Off their celebratory embrace --

INT. SATAN'S CIRCUS CASINO - NIGHT

It's a party. Onyx pillars, oil paintings, silk curtains; glitzy Vegas in Old New York. A very *tipsy* Julius and George play POKER with DRUNKARDS. DEVIANT WOMEN on all their laps.

JULIUS
We're going to live in fucking
infamy!

Julius slides in CHIPS and reveals TWO ACES. George responds with a STRAIGHT. The Drunkards groan.

JULIUS (CONT'D)
GOD DAMN IT, GEORGE!

And George takes the pot, adding it to his BIG STACK.

SHANG (O.S.)
Room for one more?

They look up to find Shang heading over with his wife, **BABE DRAPER** (30s, a firecracker before her marriage) --

*

GEORGE
Shang. Holy shit.

George rises to hug him. But Shang just takes a seat. Awkward.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
What are you doing here? I thought
they gave you five years.

SHANG
A cop's got powerful friends.
Trade off is I can't be a cop no
more.

GEORGE
Good trade off.

SHANG
No. I got no more paycheck. I'm
back to being "Shang" at this dump.

GEORGE
I thought you liked it here.

SHANG
I did.

Awkward. Shang offers the DEALER cash. Dealer deals to the
players. George tries to make it better, indicating to Babe.

GEORGE
Hey, at least you've got a lovely
lady to keep you company.

SHANG
My wife. Had her then, too.

GEORGE
Nice to meet you, Mrs. Draper.

SHANG
That's enough, George.

Tension. Shang puts out a blind... And George matches it.

SHANG (CONT'D)
What's Marm up to these days?

GEORGE
Called it quits after you got
pinched.

SHANG

Do I look like a bitch?

GEORGE

Huh? No. No. Of course not.

SHANG

'Cause I didn't say a God-damned word in there. I could've. And I'd still be a cop. But I'd be a snake, too. And I don't like snakes.

*

George just nods. Shang's eyes piercing through his skin. Drunkards match the blind, if only to stay and watch. That leaves Julius. He matches it, too. But Shang still glares --

SHANG (CONT'D)

What do you think? Does she trust me?

JULIUS

She should. I do.

SHANG

Then maybe she has one last job to make things right between us?

GEORGE

Shang, come on. I said she's done.

SHANG

I want to know what he says. If he can drink in Satan's Circus, he can speak for himself. Right, Julius?

JULIUS

... Right.

*

GEORGE

Sophie sang on you. Okay? If you got a bone to pick, find her.

SHANG

Actually, that's why I came here. See, someone dug up shit on me -- and I wanted to know who it was -- so I did digging on everyone around me. Including my wife. I started with Sophie and she checked out... But you? I'm not so sure about.

GEORGE

You're turning this on me now?

SHANG

Yeah. 'Cause no one ever quite knew
why you were running... But I found
out. You were being chased.

George's leg begins BOUNCING under the table. A THICK CROWD
begins to form as Shang speaks very loudly --

SHANG (CONT'D)

Three million were called to duty
for the Union. Half came back
maimed, wounded, or not at all.
But not you. 'Cause Daddy paid to
for you to dodge Lincoln's draft.

Silence falls. In this day, you're a patriot or a traitor.

SHANG (CONT'D)

Your city hated you. They all
sacrificed someone but you
sacrificed \$300. So you came to a
city too big to know you, too big
to hate you... But I am sure there
are men here right now who hate a
man who don't serve his country...

AYE! Men shout in agreement. The woman on his lap stands to
go. Angry gazes cover George. Including Julius. And then:

GEORGE

My father paid without me knowing.

George stands, leaving his pot behind.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Keep the pot. For your paycheck.
But I ain't no fucking rat.

Shang nods to a BIG IRISHMAN who STEPS in front of George AND
SHOVES HIM BACK into his seat.

THEN -- A BEER COMES FLYING at George's chest. Alcohol DOUSING
his clothes. CHEERS for blood!

Still, George keeps it cool, looks to Julius.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Let's get out of here.

George stands. But Shang stops Julius from standing, too.

SHANG

Sit, boy.

IRISHMAN

Come on, you fucking greenback!

GEORGE

I'm not going to fight you, man.

IRISHMAN

Hit me, you fucking twat!

The Irishman gets right in George's face, taunting him. THEN FROM OUT OF NOWHERE, SHANG THROWS AN ELBOW at the Irishman!

The Irishman falls.

The crowd makes a CIRCLE as Shang mounts him, CRUSHING his skull with ELBOW after ELBOW. BLOOD SPURTS onto Shang's face.

George is SHOCKED. Julius, too. As they watch Shang throwing blow after blow to the Irishman's EYE. BREAKING THE BONE.

BABE DRAPER

That's enough, Tomas!

But Shang can barely hear her over the violent cheers. He PULLS OUT COPPER BRASS KNUCKLES, places them on, and POP! POP-POP! Shang nails the Irishman in the nose. The bone breaks.

He's a fucking mush of flesh, bone, and blood --

JULIUS

You're going to kill him!

GEORGE

Shang, enough!

FINALLY -- George pulls at Shang. Shang dismounts. He catches his breath -- and smiles as blood drips down his face.

SHANG

Someone get the mick help --

MEN come haul off the Irishman -- groaning and grumbling. Shang indicates for Babe to towel him off with a rag. As she does, he keeps his eyes on George --

SHANG (CONT'D)

I want in on her last job. And if not, I don't like to hurt people, but when a man loses his livelihood, you know, it's tough.

*

Off George fearful, shamed, and flicking his eyes to Babe...

EXT. HORSE STABLE - NIGHT

HANDS LEAN ON A STACK OF HAY. Babe holds her balance as George plows into her. Moans. Passion. CLIMAX. George plops beside her in the blue moonlight. Babe catches her breath. A beat.

BABE DRAPER

... It was you, wasn't it?

GEORGE

How could you ask me that?

But she waits for the answer.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

(pointed)

Look, I ain't no two timer.

BABE DRAPER

I know what I am. I'm a notch on a frightened man's belt. What does that say about you?

GEORGE

You think I did this because of... whatever happened at the casino?

BABE DRAPER

Why else would you do it?

GEORGE

(lying)

Because Shang isn't treating you right. Because I would.

BABE DRAPER

Oh, so you're here to save me, eh?

GEORGE

Don't be an ass.

BABE DRAPER

Prove it then. Let's runaway... Out of New York to some paradise.

(then, threatening)

Far away from Shang. So he never finds out what we did tonight...

Off the veiled threat, George smiles to keep her happy.

GEORGE

When you fixen to leave?

INT. MANDELBAUM'S CLAPBOARD HOME - DINING ROOM

Marm and George sit at the marble table.

MARM

You said you could do it with three.

GEORGE

I was so focused on the heist, I wasn't thinking about a way out.

MARM

I was. We have a horse to carry everything to my warehouse.

GEORGE

And while we're inside, who's going to keep watch outside? You?

MARM

I don't get my hands dirty.

GEORGE

But Shang does.

MARM

Shang?

GEORGE

He's out. And he didn't say a peep. He's the only other person we could trust to be our fourth man.

Julius enters like he's seen a ghost. Neither Marm nor George were expecting him. And George is worried what he'll say...

JULIUS

It's Sophie. She needs your help.

INT. SING SING PRISON - HALLWAY OF CELLS - DAY

Marm follows a GUARD down a hall of cells. They come upon Sophie's cell... Sophie won't even look up. Marm scowls.

MARM

That's her.

The Guard opens the cell and Marm enters. There's a distance between them. No eye contact. Marm still sits across from her.

Then, the Guard locks them inside before walking off.

Marm waits for Sophie to look her in the eyes. But Sophie still hangs her head. Ashamed. So Marm speaks first:

MARM (CONT'D)

What do you want?

SOPHIE

(muttering, ashamed)

You were right about Ned.

MARM

Of course I was. But you knew you were dancing with the devil.

SOPHIE

Now I'm suspected of ending that dance with a bullet to his brain.

Sophie looks up through a swollen eye. Marm softens.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

He gave me everything a woman could want. All with an honest construction job out in Montauk. But when the job ended, money ran dry and that's when he got cruel. Went back to the life, you know? So I made him choose. Well, Ned don't like to be forced into nothing. So things spiraled and I guess I didn't shut up like he told me to, so... So-- I just left...

Marm studies her for a moment.

MARM

Sophie. Either you tell me the whole truth for once or I leave.

Beat. Sophie indicates her belly and the tiniest of baby bumps.

SOPHIE

I didn't want to put someone else through what I went through.

Marm immediately moves to comfort Sophie. A temporary truce that stretches beyond any bad blood.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

You're right. I run. And I'm good at it. So when Ned got, you know... That's what I did. But I never killed him. I swear to you. All I did was leave.

Marm takes Sophie's head into her arms. And it's exactly what Sophie needed. She grows immediately vulnerable like a child.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Why does this always happen to me?
What am I doing wrong? I want to
stop running. I have to before...
ya know... But how do I stop, Marm?
(then)
How did you stop?

*

MARM

I never started.

*

Sophie looks at Marm, sympathetic but also challenging:

*

SOPHIE

No. No. You said yourself we are
all a prisoner of some memory...
Why did you come to America? What
were you running from?

*

*

*

*

MARM

That's none of your business.

*

SOPHIE

And that's why I never asked. But
now I need to know how I can do
what you did, how a broken girl can
be a good mother, too...

*

A pregnant pause. Marm struggles with her words...

MARM

My mother... let my father and his
friends do... unspeakable acts...
But the strong only run until they
reach their destination. Mine was
New York, where I could start over.
And here I am. Surviving...
(a moment to steady herself)
Now, it's your turn.

Marm flicks her eyes back to Sophie:

MARM (CONT'D)

My lawyers have an alibi: You were
out stealing when Ned was murdered.
We've got a store owner from my
synagogue who'll say he caught you.

*

*

*

*

SOPHIE

And then I'll be jailed for
thievery.

*

*

*

MARM

No. They're going to say you're
what's called a kleptomaniac.

**(NOTE: the first time in
history this was used)**

We don't want to know if you really
killed Ned. Just repeat every word
they give you and say it like you
mean it. You'll be out tomorrow.

The sincerity lands on Sophie. Tears well in her eyes.

MARM (CONT'D)

I made you a promise. That I'd
never be like your mother. Now you
promise me the same.

(re: Sophie's belly)

That you won't be, either.

Sophie nods and HUGS Marm as if she never wants to let go.
But Marm is done with her now and pulls away --

MARM (CONT'D)

Goodbye, Sophie.

Just as she rises --

SOPHIE

Wait. I need to get something off
my chest.

Sophie rises, too. Eye level with Marm.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Some investigator came into your
store after you agreed to the
heist. I wasn't thinking clearly.

Marm goes to speak but Sophie stands, puts her hand on her lips.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

But I never once told him anything
about you. Or your school. Shang.
Any of it. I refused. I gave him
dirt on one name... George Leslie.

Marm wasn't expecting that. Confusion, concern settles in...

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

And then Shang got arrested instead.

Off Marm, running it over in her head, as RAGE takes form.

INT. MANDELBAUM'S CLAPBOARD HOME - JULIUS'S ROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE ON: Julius sleeping like an angel.

MARM (O.S.)

Why did George suddenly want to
bring on Shang?

He wakes to his mother standing over him, lit from beneath
with her lantern, looking like a fucking demon.

JULIUS

I don't know.

MARM

Tell me the fucking truth, you
spineless twerp!

JULIUS

Mother?

Julius sits up, terrified. Marm towering over him --

JULIUS (CONT'D)

Shang got violent... But--But George
swears he trusts him.

MARM

Because he's protected!

JULIUS

What?

MARM

Get up.

JULIUS

Why?

MARM

I ought to kick you out on the
streets for keeping this from me!

JULIUS

I'm sorry... Please--

MARM

Don't beg with me, boy.

JULIUS

What do you want me to do?

Marm RIPS OFF his blankets.

INT. OPIUM DEN - CHINATOWN - NIGHT

A room of rugs, privacy curtains, and bunk beds. PROSTITUTES lie with some of the men. George lies on the floor, smoking some Shanghai Sally across from Dorcy. Sober. Determined.

DORCY

What's taking so long?

GEORGE

She isn't exactly a walk in the park to deal with...

*
*

DORCY

Do you think you have the leverage here, George?

*
*

GEORGE

I'm handing Marm to you on a silver platter: Catching her red-handed in the biggest robbery in the United States. So yes, I call that leverage, Mr. Dorcy.

*

*

DORCY

More like empty promises.

GEORGE

Come again?

DORCY

I've seen nothing so far but a smug prick who should be in jail taking his sweet ass time to deliver.

*

GEORGE

Do you doubt me?

DORCY

Of course I doubt you.

GEORGE

So you don't think I can pull this off?

*
*

DORCY

Or you won't. I haven't decided.

Off the challenge, George puts the pipe down.

GEORGE

When I heard about Grady's Mandelbaum problem, I offered to help him.

(MORE)

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Said I'd get close to Sophie,
bring her to the store, and then
his crew could swoop in... I'd
play hero, gain Marm's trust, and
boom -- I'd give Grady her schemes
and contacts.

DORCY

But you flipped on Grady instead.

GEORGE

Right. He was my way in to the
underworld. But he wasn't the fence
who could make my dreams come true.
Marm was. Now, 'cause of Sophie's
loose lips, I need a way out. So
Marm is Grady. And she will be
jailed. And you are Marm. Except
you will be the hero of the NYPD.

EXT. OPIUM DEN - NIGHT - SIMULATANEOUS

Julius eavesdrops by a SEEDY ENTRANCE concealed by a curtain.

GEORGE (O.S.)

So I am going to need you to--

THRASH. Rats fight between garbage cans. FUCK. The talking
inside stops. His cover is blown. He steels himself, and...

INT. OPIUM DEN - MOMENTS LATER

Julius passes through the curtain to find George. Alone.

JULIUS

Hey.

GEORGE

Hey? What're you doing here?

JULIUS

Looking for someone to smoke with.
What're you doing?

GEORGE

Having a smoke.

JULIUS

Alone?

GEORGE

Yeah. Why? You fixen to kill me?

George laughs. Julius echoes it while checking around.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

You want a pipe?

Then, Julius spots BOOTS behind the CURTAIN of the next room.

JULIUS

Uh... em... No thanks.

GEORGE

But you said you came to smoke.

JULIUS

Right.

Julius nervously laughs. Then, George takes a glance at the two boots behind the curtain. Not sure what Julius saw.

GEORGE

Or... perhaps you think you saw something Mama wouldn't be fond of.

JULIUS

Like your opium?

GEORGE

Sure. Something like that.

Julius looks George dead in the eye and takes a seat:

JULIUS

Even if I did, "brothers are different"... Remember?

Julius takes the pipe and hits it. George smiles at his mark.

GEORGE

Indeed they are.

And behind the curtain, we watch Dorcy as he slips out the back.

JULIUS (PRE-LAP)

Sophie wasn't lying...

INT. MANDELBAUM'S CLAPBOARD HOME - DINING ROOM - EARLY MORNING

The sunrise peeks through the window. Marm sits across Julius.

JULIUS

The heist is a double cross. We scam the law. George scams us. You get arrested.

MARM

Dorcy's letting him rob the bank?

JULIUS

In order to catch you in the act.
Undeniable proof with an army of
cops present. And George goes free.

Julius takes out a CRUMPLED LETTER and gives it to Marm.

JULIUS (CONT'D)

His love letter to Babe Draper.
They're skipping town right after.

Beat. Marm reads, her concern and fury rising as we hear:

MARM (V.O.)

***A single-mother is, perhaps, the
busiest job in the world and George
took advantage. He made me into a
fool... Or at least he tried to.***

*

Marm hands the letter back and looks at Julius, intensely.

MARM

He needs to be taken care of.

JULIUS

Mother... We don't do that.

MARM

I don't intend to do anything. You
give this little love note to
Shang. And we'll see what happens.

Off the death sentence, the burden on Julius's shoulders...

INT. BROTHEL - NIGHT

A BLONDE-HAIRED-HEAD bobs up and down. George enjoys a
blowjob from someone who is not Babe Draper. In full ecstasy,
he leans back, looking up at the ceiling --

And Shang steps up. Red with fury. The door wide open.

SHANG

BURN IN HELL, RAT FUCK!

Shang presses a GUN to George's forehead... **CLICK...**

INT. MANDELBAUM'S CLAPBOARD HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

*ECHOES OF A GUN SHOT bleed over as Marm peeks through the
curtains. She spots a HORSE, lit by lantern, riding up the
street. Its driver: Shang. He stops. They locks eyes...*

Then, Shang nods. The deed is done. And Marm shuts the curtain.

She paces in her room. ERRATIC. Waiting to burst. Then, she sees the pillow she suffocated her husband with. The only other time she was responsible for murder. The moment that led her here. And she grabs it, STUFFS her face into it --

And SCREAMS. Like a muted lion. After a few moments, she sets it down, straightens herself and gently calls out:

MARM
Julius, dear?

After a moment, Julius enters with RED EYES. Marm shuts the door.

MARM (CONT'D)
Tell Shang he needs to leave town.
Tonight. And give him this... for
all he's done for us.

Marm hands Julius an envelope of CASH.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

ANGLE ON: George, a flicker of fear frozen on his face as he lies in his COFFIN. The morticians did a shoddy job of covering up the bullet hole in his forehead. FIFTY FUNERAL GUESTS fill the room; CRIMINALS from New York, SNOBS from Cincinnati.

AND WAY IN THE BACK: Marm stands beside Julius. They both gaze longingly at George's corpse.

MARM (V.O)
Adaptation. Survival is change.
George forced me to pivot on my
code and pounce. This sin was on
his soul. Not mine.

Dorcy enters. Julius immediately tenses.

JULIUS
Holy shit. Is he here for us?

MARM
No. We were careful.

Marm watches carefully as Dorcy approaches GEORGE'S PARENTS.

MARM (CONT'D)
He's here to talk to anyone George
knew to get as many details as
possible to bring us down...

JULIUS
So what do we do?

MARM

We take Manhattan Savings.

JULIUS

Wait. You still want to do this?

MARM

Tonight. It's our only chance to
reap the rewards. Dorcy is
distracted.

Marm feigns tears as she grabs a tissue and dabs her eye.

MARM (CONT'D)

Out the back. Act like you need
fresh air.

Julius follows and whispers as they walk toward an exit:

JULIUS

We don't even have a crew. Me and
Pat can't do it without--

MARM

I'll fill in for George.

JULIUS

And what about the fourth man?

EXT. MANHATTAN SAVINGS INSTITUTION - BROADWAY ENTRANCE - NIGHT

HORSE HOOVES trot down the street before coming to a stop off
the command from its driver: Sophie. Marm gets out the back
with Pat. Before they go, Marm indicates to Sophie's belly.

MARM

That comes first. If anything
happens out here, just go.

Sophie nods. Marm leads Pat toward...

EXT. MANHATTAN SAVINGS INSTITUTION - BLEECKER ENTRANCE

Marm and Pat toe into the alley, toward the side entrance.
Marm KNOCKS on the door. Seven times. Like they planned. And
then, Julius opens the door in janitor's gear. They enter.

INT. MANHATTAN SAVINGS INSTITUTION - JANITOR'S ROOM

Surrounded by janitorial tools, Julius hands out supplies; WOOL
BAGS, LANTERNS, KEYS... But Marm notices his hand is shaking.

MARM

Are you okay, son?

JULIUS

Yeah. Yes. Yeah. Of course.

Julius grabs his shaky hand to try to steady it.

JULIUS (CONT'D)

Let's fucking do this.

Marm and Pat exchange a glance. Julius takes a step forward.

INT. MANHATTAN SAVINGS INSTITUTION - GRAND LOBBY

They've entered the lobby. Just like George's replica; they pass the **ARCHED TELLER CAGES**, the **WATCHMAN'S CLOSET** on the right, **CONFERENCE ROOM** on the left...

And Marm leads the way to the **CIRCULAR VAULT**...

Once there, Pat turns the **SPINDLE** (looks like a Ship's Captain's Wheel) in three distinct directions. **THE FACADE DOOR OPENS. That's one.**

Now, they stand before a **SECOND RECTANGULAR STEEL DOOR** enforced by **RODS**. Marm pulls at it herself, but there's no give. Before she can ask -- **CLICK** -- the door **UNLOCKS**.

Pat points to the **CLOCK** above the vault -- striking 9:00PM.

PAT SHEVELIN

Timed. Every 6 hours.

That's two. Pat places his hand on **THE THIRD STEEL DOOR** while retrieving a **KEY** from his pocket. He inserts it. **THEN:**

NIGHT WATCHMAN (O.S.)

Mr. Shevelin?

Pat spins to find -- **THE NIGHT WATCHMAN** (20s, rugged).

PAT SHEVELIN

Nick? What're you doing here?

And **HIS MISTRESS** (20s, smeared lipstick) emerges from the closet.

NIGHT WATCHMAN

She likes banks. What about you?

PAT SHEVELIN

I forgot something at my station.

NIGHT WATCHMAN

Why's the janitor here? And who's the old lady?

JULIUS

My mother. She also likes banks.

Standoff. They're both being shady. But before Marm works her magic -- Julius whips out a COLT45 and aims it at the Watchman.

NIGHT WATCHMAN

No! Don't!

MISTRESS

Oh my, God!

MARM

Julius!

NIGHT WATCHMAN

I have kids!

MISTRESS

You do?

PAT SHEVELIN

He does.

MARM

Put the gun away.

JULIUS

I'm not going to jail because of this bastard's infidelity.

PAT SHEVELIN

He's right. Just shoot him.

NIGHT WATCHMAN

Pat? Please --

Julius is shaky, inching over. Marm moves to be the only thing between the gun and the young couple.

MARM

Let me handle this, Julius.

NIGHT WATCHMAN

I won't tell anyone. Listen to her--

JULIUS

I'm done listening to other people.

Julius SHOOTS a round at the Watchman's feet. But his aim is WAY OFF as the bullet DINGS off a MARBLE PILLAR!

The Watchman DROPS to the ground in fear. Mistress shrieks as Julius raises the pistol to aim and shoot again --

But Marm grabs his arm!

MARM

You are not going to kill anyone.

Mother and son both hold the gun, danger brewing between them.

MARM (CONT'D)

We'll lock them in the closet. No one's going to jail.

A stare down. Both refuse to let go.

MARM (CONT'D)

(to the Watchman)

Slide your gun over here.

NIGHT WATCHMAN

I don't have a--

MARM

Boy, now is not the time to lie.

JULIUS

See! He'll burn us. So let go.

A tiny beat. Watchman takes his gun off his waist and slides it to the other end of the lobby. A sign of peace.

MARM

Pat, get his cuffs and chain them to something sturdy in the closet.

Pat walks to the Night Watchman and takes the handcuffs off his waistband. The Watchman and Mistress both stand, shaky.

MARM (CONT'D)

I highly suggest you don't try anything funny. Understood?

They nod profusely. Pat leads the way to the closet. The couple follows. But Marm and Julius both still hold the gun.

MARM (CONT'D)

What the hell are you thinking?

JULIUS

I'm playing the game --

*

MARM

Oh, no you are not. Give it to me.

*

JULIUS

It's mine. I bought it.

*

That lands on Marm. Fury. Fear. But no time for either.

MARM

Julius -- GIVE. ME. THE. GUN.

Beat. Marm stares, intensely. Finally, Julius hands it over.

MARM (CONT'D)

Start on the deposit boxes. We're running out of time. And now I have to go find your fucking bullet.

Julius, ashamed, moves to the vault. Marm tucks the gun in her waistband and begins searching on the ground for the bullet...

EXT. MANHATTAN SAVINGS INSTITUTION - BROADWAY ENTRANCE

A FAINT BANG from inside. Sophie checks her pocket watch.
9:15pm. Where are they?

THEN, a HORSE & CARRIAGE trots up with a SKEEZ driving it.

SKEEZ

You okay over there, Ma'am?

Fuck. Sophie straightens herself, sneaks a glance at the bank.

SOPHIE

Yes. Fine. Sir.

SKEEZ

I could... come over there and... help you. If you're interested.

He grins. She cocks her head.

SKEEZ (CONT'D)

These streets are dangerous, and, you know... I could keep you safe.

SOPHIE

Maybe that's the reason you shouldn't come any closer.

SKEEZ

Pardon?

SOPHIE

If we're going to speculate, let's speculate. The streets could be dangerous because I am the danger.

SKEEZ

A purdy lady like yourself?

SOPHIE

Sure. Perhaps this lady put a
bullet in a man's brain before.

He considers her. Not sure what to make of that.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

You ever look into the eyes of
someone who knows he's gonna die?
Pure fear. Pathetic. Yet
heartbreaking. At least for me.
'Cause last time I did it that man
put a bump in my belly, too... See?
(re: her belly, then)
And I still pulled the trigger on
that weak son of a bitch. Hope my
baby boy ain't too upset about that
in there.

A dark beat. Sophie holds her stomach. The Skeeze remains.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Whatcha waiting for, big boy? Come
on over here.

Sophie moves her hand to her waistband, ready to draw her
weapon... And he senses she's dead ass serious.

SKEEZE

You be safe out there.

He turns to trot away on his horse. THEN --

We see Sophie's hand, holding nothing. She was bluffing and he
was conned by the master. She grabs her belly from the baby
kicking... And then she looks to the bank, impatiently...

INT. MANHATTAN SAVINGS INSTITUTION - VAULT

ANGLE ON: JEWELRY DUMPED into a WOOL BAG. Pat holds the bag,
and Julius scurries back to OPENED SECURITY DEPOSIT BOXES.

Meanwhile, Marm pops off the SAFE'S DIAL KNOB, revealing the
LITTLE JOKER. She REMOVES the device and analyzes the
indentations on its tin wheel. Then, she replaces the dial.
She compares the Joker's indentations to the dial numbers and
enters: **80-9-25 (the real combination)**... CLICK.

The door opens.

She opens it wider and a GOLD GLOW emerges on her face a la
PULP FICTION. But we get to see what's inside:

BARS OF GOLD. STACKS OF CASH. CLUMPS of JEWELRY.

JULIUS
It's... real.

PAT SHEVELIN
It's a fortune.

MARM
It's ours.

Marm grasps TWO STACKS OF HUNDREDS and DUMPS THE STACK OF CASH into one of the wool bags. She motions for Pat to hold the bag and Julius to assist. Together, Mother and Son race to steal all SEVENTY STACKS and transfer them into another bag.

Once the cash is emptied -- Marm digs into the gold:

PAT SHEVELIN
We don't have time for that.

MARM
We are NOT leaving gold.

Pat nervously checks the clock. Marm nods to Julius. He helps her transfer all FIFTY BARS OF GOLD from safe into the bag.

Then, Pat hoists his bag up --

MARM (CONT'D)
Not yet. The right compartment --

Marm fusses with a lock inside the safe to another compartment. *

PAT SHEVELIN
It's just securities.

MARM
Of all the fat cats in New York.

JULIUS
We have enough.

MARM
They have enough.

Marm begins SLAMMING the inside door to the extra compartment. Pat and Julius exchange a look. *

PAT SHEVELIN
We'll have a hard time selling 'em anyway --

MARM
Shut up and help me!

JULIUS
Mother... Please. We've already been
in here too long.

Beat. Marm studies her son, a scared little boy. And she stops.

MARM
Haul the bags out.

PAT SHEVELIN
What about the watchman?

MARM
I'll handle it.

Marm wears a stoic gaze, as they run out with bags of loot...

EXT. MANHATTAN SAVINGS INSTITUTION - BROADWAY ENTRANCE

Sophie holds the reigns. BAGS OF LOOT between Julius and Pat in the back. They're still waiting for -- MARM who bursts through the Broadway Entrance. She's delighted to see Sophie.

MARM
You waited.

Sophie smiles. Marm hops in -- with her own bag.

SOPHIE
What's in the bag?

PAT SHEVELIN
You took the securities?

MARM
(eyeing Julius)
Bullet. Shell. Gun. Our only trace
and it'll be dumped in the river.
(then, to Sophie)
Now take us to my warehouse.

Sophie SHAKES the reigns and the horse races them off into night.

INT. MANHATTAN SAVINGS INSTITUTION - VAULT - THE NEXT MORNING

VAULT CLERK goes through the motions as he steps into the open vault. Wait. OPEN? The safe emptied, security boxes gone.

VAULT CLERK
Oh. My. God.

INT. NEW YORK STREETS - MORNING

NEW YORKERS HUDDLE around newsstands carrying the (real) headlines: "MANHATTAN SAVINGS ROBBED OF 3 MILLION!!" "MOST SENSATIONAL HEIST IN HISTORY!" "THE KING OF BANK ROBBERS STRIKES!" George's coveted legacy now attributed to Marm. CROSSFADE INTO:

EXT. MANDELBAUM'S DRY GOODS' STORE - STREETS - DAY

Marm, in her flamboyant hat, plasters a **SOLD** SIGN on the window. IMMIGRANTS, ORPHANS, and WHORES watch. Proud.

EXT. THIEVES EXCHANGE - NIGHT

Marm walks by the new criminals of the day. No one protests her being there. In fact, a thick pack forms around her.

MARM

Friends. It's your lucky day. I am having a going out of business sale and I have enough loot to supply an army... Who's interested?

Off the shouts of offers and waves of cash --

INT. PINKERTON AGENCY - INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

The Night Watchman sits across Dorcy.

NIGHT WATCHMAN

No. I didn't see this Miss Mandel-
whatever that night.

DORCY

Bullshit.

NIGHT WATCHMAN

Sir, I've already lost my job for this. If I saw someone there, I would've said it by now.

DORCY

She paid you off, didn't she?

NIGHT WATCHMAN

(yes)

No.

Dorcy sees past it. The Night Watchman fusses in his seat. *

NIGHT WATCHMAN (CONT'D) *

I don't need to sit here and deal
with accusations from some wannabe
cop. *

DORCY

Actually, the NYPD is working with me on this one. So you do. Now explain to me how the watchman misses a break in.

NIGHT WATCHMAN

Because the thief was in and out like a ghost.

(then, an idea forming)

Wait. You ever find the one who took Dexter Bank?

Dorcy clocks the cover story, nearly excited by the lie.

DORCY

No. We didn't.

NIGHT WATCHMAN

Maybe it's the same guy?

Dorcy stands, places his hand on his shoulders to play nice guy.

DORCY

Listen Kid, I found a bullet graze on one of the pillars...

The Watchman's leg begins bouncing under the table.

DORCY (CONT'D)

And I'm trying to help you here. Because if you didn't hear gunfire, and you didn't see anybody... perhaps you were the one who robbed the Manhattan Savings Institution.

EXT. MANDELBAUM'S DRY GOODS' STORE - NIGHT

Marm hands over the STORE KEYS to a YOUNG WHITE MAN. He cheerfully walks inside. Marm gives her former store one last look and walks away. After several strides, she passes a STREET DWELLER in the ALLEY. She doesn't pay him mind...

BUT THEN MARM IS TACKLED TO THE GROUND. As she struggles, a HOOD IS FORCED OVER her HEAD... **and our POV GOES BLACK.**

INT. PINKERTON AGENCY - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Silence. Marm sits across Dorcy. The CLOCK ticks. Ticks.

MARM

Do you really believe a fifty year old woman is capable of taking the Fort Knox of banks?

DORCY

Yes. Yes. I do.

MARM

Under what pretense? My record is clean and I have good standing within my community.

DORCY

People talk when you offer them money.

MARM

Is that a confession of bribery?

DORCY

Do you have proof of your accusation?

Beat. Dorcy smirks, strokes his BATON.

MARM

I want my lawyer.

DORCY

What happened to George Leslie?

MARM

You tell me. Word is that you were the one working with him.

DORCY

Does that concern you?

MARM

It should concern you. Perhaps all your information died with George.

DORCY

Why did you kill him?

MARM

Really, Sir?

(then)

Look, I could cry if it makes you feel better about letting me off. Give me a moment. It's been a while... Wait. Here it comes.

As Marm face scrunches up -- Dorcy SMASHES HER WITH THE BATON. She CRASHES down to the floor.

DORCY

Will ya look at that. Motherbird
got her egg scrambled.

ANOTHER SWIPE TO HER JAW. Marm spits BLOOD. Dorcy mounts her.
As she re-orientes herself, she sees Dorcy through hazy vision:

MARM

Flaunting power while risking
nothing. How manly of you.

WHACK. Dorcy smacks her. She SPITS OUT BLOOD, clenches her
eyes. ANOTHER POP to her nose. SHE SQUEALS. BLOOD SPURTS.

DORCY

Go on. Start talking.

*

MARM

Do what you will. Violence is your
weapon. But strength is a mother's.

*

Marm braces for another whack --

DORCY

You know what, you're right.

But Dorcy surprises her by calming down. He stands.

DORCY (CONT'D)

But when you use someone strength
against them, you find their
weakness... Bring him in!

TWO COPS walk in, ushering in a handcuffed -- JULIUS.

MARM

Julius!

JULIUS

MOTHER?!

DORCY

I told you I had something. The kid
shot off his gun that night. And I
got a witness who's willing to
testify in court...

Marm is horrified. She struggles to get to her son but Dorcy
keeps his foot on her neck. And Julius pushes to get to his
mother -- but he's restrained.

JULIUS

I WILL FUCKING KILL YOU!

DORCY

Now... who murdered George Leslie?

Dorcy raises his BATON toward Marm. Julius opens his mouth --

MARM

I DID.

JULIUS

NO!

MARM

And I took the bank. I'm the
fence... My son doesn't know how I
earn my money. None of my kids do.

Marm looks at Julius, desperate.

MARM (CONT'D)

I love you, baby. Don't say a word.

And Julius stays silent. Dorcy nods for them to take him away.

DORCY

I'll be back with your confession.

Dorcy leaves, too. As Marm is a bloody mess on the floor.

MARM (V.O.)

Sacrifice. My ninth virtue.

She rests her head in her own pool of blood. Off her defeat --

INT. BILL HOWE'S LAW OFFICE - DAY

Marm sits across Bill Howe in an elegant office. She's
focused on NEWSPAPER HEADLINE: "**REDEMPTION: STAN DORCY, JR.
NABS MOST CORRUPT WOMAN IN NEW YORK!**" accompanied by (the
real) offensively drawn caricature of Marm appearing guilty.

*
*
*

BILL HOWE

We're looking at forty years.

MARM

I'm too old for that, Bill. What's
your other option?

BILL HOWE

I'm afraid there isn't one. I
could get your sentenced reduced
if you give up the names of your
accomplices.

*

MARM

I had none.

BILL HOWE

Marm, you didn't do this alone.
Perhaps there's an inside banker?

MARM

You know how I feel about loyalty.
Come on, we've been evading prison
for quite some time...

BILL HOWE

Right. But this is different. We're
lucky Judge Donahue's bail held up.

MARM

Don't ever call me lucky.

BILL HOWE

Look, as your lawyer, I'm trying to
get your affairs in order.
Detective Dorcy is your police
escort until sentencing. There's no
way out of this. It's over, Marm.

Marm considers her options, her reality. And she tears up...

BILL HOWE (CONT'D)

Don't do this. It's unnecessary.

But it's real. Marm is crying because she realizes it is
over. Her career, her life. Bill hands her a tissue.

MARM

Get your pen out.

BILL HOWE

Why?

MARM

Because I want to give a statement.

BILL HOWE

To whom?

MARM

New York.

Beat. Bill takes out a pen. Marm considers her words. And he
begins writing as she speaks:

MARM (CONT'D)

Have corrupt Presidents gone to jail? Profiteers off the Civil War? Slave Owners? The elite who pay pitiful wages or incite hatred between Italians and Irish, Germans and Jews, unemployed and freed slaves -- anything to keep us against each other? No. None of them. I'll tell you who's gone to jail this year: Susan B. Anthony for unauthorized voting. This world gives people like me two options: beg or lose. And when you beg in America, you lose anyway. Because life is free but living is not. So I created a third option. Do it on my own terms. The front door was locked, so I opened the back. I understood the American system -- you get what you pay for -- and I paid to play. And you know what? I have not one single regret.

Bill shifts in his seat, uncomfortable.

MARM (CONT'D)

Have every newspaper print every word. Not one edit. No one's ever told me how to live my life. And it's not gonna start now.

INT. MANDELBAUM'S CLAPBOARD HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

This time it's NOT bursting with energy. It's Marm and her four children eating dinner. CLANGS of silverware. It's gloomy. Quiet. Resentment fills the air.... Marm looks at Julius.

MARM

What did you say to them?

GERTIE

Secrets kill families, right?

SARA

He told us the truth.

ANNA

That you're going to prison.

JULIUS

But it should be me. A man should face his own consequences.

*
*

MARM

Thank you all for your input. Now
eat. All of you.

But the children have stopped eating. They are unified.

GERTIE

It's your turn to listen. A mother
shouldn't abandon her children.

MARM

What?

SARA

You cared more about kids on the
street than you did for us.

MARM

That is not --

ANNA

We were just your excuse to do
what you did. But it wasn't for
us... You did it for yourself.

And that one tagged Marm the wrong way --

MARM

I haven't done a thing for myself
since before I killed your father!

*

An atomic bomb. The children are too stunned to cry, to
emote... But Marm feels no sympathy. They asked for this.

MARM (CONT'D)

Not because I wanted to. Because he
begged me to. He couldn't watch you
suffer anymore. So he left me to do
it -- alone. For that, I will never
forgive him. But I would suffocate
him over and over and over and over
if I was given the chance. Because
that's the only way he could die in
peace. The only way we could keep
our promise... Children first.

Finally, Marm makes eye contact with each of them:

MARM (CONT'D)

And in spite of my flaws and all
the things that people will say
when I'm gone, I am a woman of my
word and I always will be.

The room is dead silent. But Marm's facade is brave. She doesn't cry because she has no regrets. No doubts. No shame.

MARM (CONT'D)

Now, I promise on my word -- on my everything -- I will be okay. You will be okay. So everyone just--
STOP with your God-damned opinions.
(then, vulnerable)
Please. Please just stop.

A tense beat. Julius runs to hug his mother. He sobs into her arms like a child... The daughters all follow suit and hug her tightly... And as Marm embraces them, it's clear: a mother needs her child as much as a child needs their mother.

MARM (CONT'D)

Oh, my sweet babies. I will miss you. Dear God, how I'll miss you...

As we slowly pull away from this portrait of a family once shattered... but now united...

EXT. MANDELBAUM'S CLAPBOARD HOME - EARLY MORNING

Marm exits her home, head-scarf, flamboyant hat, covered in a lot of garb. She gets into a HORSE & CARRIAGE driven by Dorcy, wearing a crisp POLICE UNIFORM.

MARM

Don't you look handsome.

DORCY

Where are we going?

MARM

Synagogue.

DORCY

You and God got some talking to do before prison.

*

MARM

Sure do. He's a good listener.

*

But then, Marm feels her HEART RACING for a moment. She physically holds her chest and lets out a NASTY cough. Just as Dorcy registers it, she covers any weakness. In pure defiance.

DORCY

Are you... okay?

MARM

That's sweet. On our merry way,
shall we?

Dorcy eyes her. Marm rubs her chest to work out the kinks.

MARM (CONT'D)

Just a little stressed out as you
can imagine. Now, please.

Marm indicates for Dorcy to go... And he ruffles the reigns.

INT. CONGREGATION TEMPLE RODEPH SHOLOM - DAY

The Carriage comes to a HALT. Marm gets out. Dorcy waits.
But as she begins walking... She WOBBLES. She stops for a
moment. Steadies herself. Then walks into the synagogue.

Dorcy checks in the alleys: A POLICE CARRIAGE in each one. He
makes eye contact with its officers, all on high alert...

INT. CONGREGATION TEMPLE RODEPH SHOLOM - LATER

Time has passed. Dorcy is just as astute as before, eyeing the
synagogue, waiting for Marm... He checks his POCKET WATCH. Hm.
And then he clocks the COPS watching in the nearby alley. No
one has seen anything. Time seems to be moving slowly. Until --

Rabbi Schmidt BURSTS through the doors --

RABBI SCHMIDT

She's having a heart attack!

Dorcy looks through the open doors and sees Marm lying down,
labored breathing, clutching her chest...

RABBI SCHMIDT (CONT'D)

Send for a doctor!

DORCY

What happened?

RABBI SCHMIDT

She needs a medical carriage!

DORCY

I'll take her!

RABBI SCHMIDT

What?

DORCY

We CAN NOT let her die. Load her in.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

A MAKESHIFT GURNEY CRASHES through the doors. Rabbi Schmidt steers it. Dorcy on his tail. Marm lies on it; eyes fluttering, lungs GASPING, GRUMBLING IN PAIN...

Dr. Schmidt meets his Rabbi brother by the doors.

RABBI SCHMIDT
Jacob! I think it's her heart.

*

Dr. Schmidt looks at Marm, incredulous. He does a quick check of her pupils, they're spinning out of control.

DR. SCHMIDT
She needs morphine.

Dr. Schmidt takes the gurney and begins STEERING aggressively down the hall, leaving Rabbi Schmidt behind...

But Dorcy follows the Doctor as the gurney flies by SICK PATIENTS in a Gilded Age Emergency Room. And then, Marm's CHEST STOPS RISING. She is NOT BREATHING. DEAD.

DR. SCHMIDT (CONT'D)
FUCK.
(looking around, then)
MOVE.

Dr. Schmidt PUSHES Dorcy aside and grabs a nearby NURSE --

DR. SCHMIDT (CONT'D)
STEER THIS.

She does as Dr. Schmidt hops on top of Marm, and begins compressions. Repeatedly. UP. DOWN. UP. DOWN.

They take a hard LEFT DOWN ANOTHER HALL -- nearly CRASHING into another GURNEY FLYING in the OPPOSITE DIRECTION. Dr. Schmidt barely holds on, continuing his compression...

As Dorcy gets lost in the shuffle, he watches as Dr. Schmidt and the Nurse lead a coding Marm into an OPERATING ROOM...

INT. HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - EVENING

Silent. Rabbi Schmidt and Dorcy wait. Impatiently. For different reasons. Rabbi Schmidt doesn't want to lose his friend. Dorcy can't lose his 800 pound gorilla.

Finally, Dr. Schmidt emerges. They both stand.

DORCY
Where is she?

RABBI SCHMIDT
How is she?

And Dr. Schmidt removes his hat.

DORCY (CONT'D)

No. No!

Rabbi Schmidt grows emotional.

DORCY (CONT'D)

I need to see her.

DR. SCHMIDT

Sir, we ask for some decency --

Dorcy SHOWS his NYPD BADGE --

DORCY

Dead or alive. Now.

Dr. Schmidt exhales. Dorcy pushes past, and heads down the hall. And once he's gone, for the briefest of moments, Dr. Schmidt and Rabbi Schmidt exchange an odd look --

RABBI SCHMIDT

She said... She said forgives you.

Dr. Schmidt absorbs that. A moment of relief between the two brothers before Dr. Schmidt turns to follow Dorcy...

INT. HOSPITAL MORGUE - MOMENTS LATER

In a room full of corpses, Dorcy towers over ONE CORPSE as Dr. Schmidt pulls the sheet, revealing: **AN UNKNOWN WOMAN'S CORPSE.**

DR. SCHMIDT

The cyanide must've killed her in her cell. Nothing we could do.

Dorcy is shocked. Confused. ANXIOUS.

DORCY

That isn't Mandelbaum.

DR. SCHMIDT

I thought you were waiting for the prisoner. Marm left hours ago.

*

Dorcy begins looking around, erratically pulling off sheets of every corpse in sight. None of them are Marm.

DR. SCHMIDT (CONT'D)

It wasn't a heart attack. Just stress. I recommended bedrest --

Dorcy GRABS Dr. Schmidt's lapels and SLAMS HIM on the wall.

DORCY
YOU MOTHERFUCKER! You're aiding and
abetting a felon--

*

DR. SCHMIDT
Sir, it is not my responsibility to
monitor healthy patients after they
are discharged --

*

*

DORCY
WHERE THE FUCK IS SHE?!

INT. TRAIN - EVENING

A FRAIL OLD MAN with a SUITCASE sits on a MOVING TRAIN. Sophie
steps up with her OWN SUITCASE and sits beside him.

FRAIL OLD MAN
How are you feeling?

SOPHIE
(re: her stomach)
She won't stop kicking.

The Frail Old Man touches Sophie's stomach. It's warm. And as
we look closer, we realize the OLD MAN is MARM in DISGUISE.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
How are yours doing?

MARM
Oh, you know. Lots of tears. But
they're in for a treat when my
lawyer delivers the boxes I left.
Diamonds. Legal, too.
(then, proudly)
My babies are millionaires now.

SOPHIE
Wait, what? How?

MARM
Thieves Exchange helped me liquify
my assets. Judge Donahue never
signed the liens. And the bondsman
forgot to file his paperwork. Oh
and the jeweler was a wonderful
recommendation from my Rabbi. No
one did anything illegal. Just a
bunch of minor mistakes in the
community that add up to, well, a
fortune.

SOPHIE
And Detective Dorcy?

MARM
He'll be accused of being crooked
for my escape. Lose his badge.
Might even be jailed. The world is
fair sometimes, eh?

*

*

Marm smirks, satisfied, at peace. Sophie's impressed.

SOPHIE
One last con but this time the
Government is your mark.

MARM
No. My last con was on you.
You're not coming to Montreal.

Sophie's heart drops. Marm swaps suitcases with Sophie.

MARM (CONT'D)
You're going to England with enough
cash to start over.
(off Sophie's apprehension)
Canada is too risky if I'm there.
And I can't leave you in New York
with your old friends. This is the
destination you need... You are
going to be a great mother, Sophie.

Sophie finds solace in Marm's confidence. She looks up and
grabs Marm's hand.

SOPHIE
... Thank you, Marm.

MARM
(French accent)
Actually, it's Madame Fuchs now.

Off their embrace, with America fading further away through
the train window, we CROSSFADE TO:

EXT. COTTAGE - CANADA - SUNSET

THE SUN RISES over a GRASSY MEADOW. This is NOT New York. It's
peaceful. Serene. On an idyllic porch, Marm rocks on a chair.
Years have passed. She's wrinkly, frail, in deep thought --

MARM (V.O.)
*Wealth, my final virtue. It drives
you to be bigger than what anyone
says you're capable of.*
(MORE)

MARM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

*Be greedy for wealth. But not riches.
Wealth isn't a fancy horse, house, or
a number in a bank account. It's the
ability to live how you choose
regardless of a society, of a rigged
system, of any individual. That
wealth is real freedom. Not the
American scam.*

Marm flicks her eyes down to a HANDWRITTEN LETTER. She begins writing what she just said as we notice that EACH VIRTUE is WRITTEN in the letter. At the top is the addressee which reads:

"My dear Julius,"

MARM

*Times are different for you now.
New York has changed. But I hope my
letter reminds you of where we came
from. So your son will always know
what the Mandelbaums stood for and
who they stood against... I really
wish I could meet him because,
well, I think I'd be one hell of a
grandmother, too. Maybe one day.
Let him be your greatest profit,
Julius. Let him change your life.
Let him know that his Oma loved him
before she even met him.*

Marm signs: "LOVE, MOTHER" and stuffs it into an envelope.

MARM (CONT'D)

(French accent)

Barbara?

A FEMALE CARETAKER (40) comes out of the house --

CARETAKER

Yes, Madame Fuchs?

Marm hands over the envelope.

CARETAKER (CONT'D)

To your friends in New York again?

MARM

(French accent)

Yes. I miss 'zem very much.

The Caretaker offers a polite nod and takes her envelope inside. Marm returns to rocking, daydreaming about her family.

A NEIGHBOR passes. Marm waves. They wave back. It's endearing. Not one Canadian suspects this sweet old lady for being the Most Wanted Criminal in America...

EXT. THE STATUE OF LIBERTY - 1886

We watch the STATUE OF LIBERTY as its first erected... The symbol of America, Immigration, the New York that we know today -- and it's a woman.

CHYRON SCROLLS OVER THE IMAGERY:

When her eldest daughter died, *Marm* snuck back into New York to attend the funeral. After the services, she fooled authorities once again, by evading arrest and fleeing back to Canada.

Marm died in 1894. Her casket was sent back to New York, but rumors ran rampant that she faked her own death to come back home in one final scam. At her funeral, wealthy attendees reported major losses due to pick-pockets, further supporting the theory that she was offering one last gift to her loyal criminals.

"BLACK" LENA and "SHANG" DRAPER died in prison.

"TRAVELING" JOHN GRADY was murdered on the streets, but a falsified autopsy prevented further investigation. His death was ruled "a freak accident."

SOPHIE ELKINS and her son battled in court in an attempt to get the other arrested. Sophie won. She was murdered at 75 years old. Her perpetrator was never found.

FREDERICKA "OLD MOTHER" MANDELBAUM, a fence who handled over \$270M (*based on inflation*), and the mastermind behind the biggest bank robbery in U.S. History, was never jailed, killed, or a victim of crime.

Marm lived on her terms and died on her terms. *She did it her way.*