
The Sicilian Pigeon

A Radio Comedy

By: Garrett Michael McCann

The Sicilan Pigeon

A Radio Comedy

For a flexible cast
(playing multiple roles, if desired.)

VOICES (in order of speaking.)

BARTENDER
DICK DIAMOND
STELLA
IMA PHONEY
ALICE BOWMAN
DAUGHTER
SON
CLERK
PATRON 1
GARCON
PATRON 2
MAYOR LA GUARDIA
STAN
BILLY
JOLENE TOLEDO
EDDIE
OLD LADY
MR. FRIDAY
GOON 1
GOON 2
VINCENZO BISCOTTI
BUTLER
DOLORES KENNEDY

THE SICILIAN PIGEON

BY: GARRETT MICHAEL MCCANN

MUSIC: Melancholy Jazz.

INT. SEEDY DIVE BAR - LATE NIGHT 1

WALLA: A dive bar; saxophone plays; glasses clink.

BARTENDER

Can I get you another one, Dick?

DIAMOND

Keep 'em coming.

BARTENDER

Rough night, pal?

DIAMOND

Just got a lot on my mind.

BARTENDER

Bet it's a dame. A fella only drinks like that because of a dame.

DIAMOND

You're too smart for your own good, Marv.

BARTENDER

Don't take no genius, bub. Let me guess, some cockeyed dame strolled in whistling dixie and left ya bupkis for your troubles. See it all the time.

DIAMOND

Can I just get another drink?

BARTENDER

Sure thing. One Shirley Temple, coming up.

SOUND: BARTENDER starts to make his drink.

MUSIC SWELLS.

DIAMOND (V/O)

My father always said, "A good dame is worse than a bad colonoscopy." I don't know if he'd met some bad women or had a good doctor. But I never knew how right he was until she walked into my office. I still remember the day. It was raining.

SOUND: Rain.

DIAMOND (V/O)

I love New York when it rains. The skyline surrounded by dark clouds. The lights of Broadway reflected in the puddles on the sidewalk. Tourists getting splashed by a racing taxi. Ah. New York. Under the glitterati. Under the prestige. Lies the city's seedy underbelly. It's my job to tickle that underbelly until it squeals. Coochie Coochie Coo. Being a private eye, I'm used to getting involved in some drama. Runaway brides. Stolen jewels. Finding out your neighbor's dog is a communist. I could hold my own. I ain't no flatfoot. But nothing could have prepared me for what was about to happen.

INT. DIAMOND'S OFFICE - DAY

2

SOUND: Door opens; footsteps.

STELLA

There's a woman out front.

DIAMOND

Well, what do you want me to do about it?

STELLA

I think you're gonna want to meet her. She's a real knockout.

DIAMOND

Is she now?

STELLA

A real doll!

DIAMOND

Well. Well.

STELLA

With huge-

DIAMOND

Thank you, Stella. Please see her in.

STELLA

Right this way, Miss. Phoney. (Pronounced Fuh-nay.)

SOUND: STELLA leaves. Footsteps; door closes. High heels click on the floor as IMA PHONEY enters the office.

DIAMOND (V/O)

In she came, the woman who would shake up my world. She had legs for days. But, like the days in January when the sun set at 4pm. She was surprisingly short.

IMA

Mr. Dick Diamond? Private Detective?

DIAMOND

What can I do for you?

IMA

I'm at my wits end. I was told you could help me.

DIAMOND

That depends on what you need help with. Please, have a seat.

IMA

Thank you. It's my husband. I'm afraid I've lost track of him.

DIAMOND

How unfortunate.

IMA

Yes, it is rather inconvenient. I was hoping you could help me find him.

DIAMOND

What was your name again? Mrs.?

IMA

Here's my card.

DIAMOND

Mrs. Phoney? (Pronounced "foe nee")

IMA

Phoney. (Pronounced Fuh nay) Mrs. Ima Phoney.

DIAMOND

Okay, Mrs. Phoney. When did you see your husband last?

IMA

About a week ago. I'm afraid he has gotten entangled with some rather unsavory characters. My husband likes to gamble, you see.

DIAMOND

Of course.

IMA

But he's never been a lucky man. And I think that may have gotten him in trouble.

DIAMOND

With who?

IMA

He always mentioned a 'Mr. Friday.' But, I couldn't get any more information out of him. Does that name sound familiar to you?

DIAMOND

I wish it didn't.

IMA

Is he bad news?

DIAMOND

Only if you consider a maniacal kingpin with tons of goons at his disposal bad news.

IMA

Well, that doesn't sound great.

DIAMOND

Are you sure he got himself involved in this mess?

IMA

Who?

DIAMOND

Your husband, Mrs. Phoney

IMA

Mrs. who? Oh, that's my name. Sorry.

DIAMOND

Are you alright?

IMA

Oh, yes. I must be coming down with something. Perhaps the weather has me feeling out of sorts.

DIAMOND

Let me get you some coffee. Perhaps something stronger.

IMA

No, thank you. I don't drink.

DIAMOND

Very well.

IMA

Oh, Mr. Diamond. You do think you can help find my husband, don't you?

DIAMOND

Now, are you sure he disappeared? Maybe he ran off. Found some chicky at the bar and went sailing into the sunset.

IMA

No, he's been kidnapped. Or worse.

DIAMOND

How do you know?

IMA

He left behind this.

SOUND: A cardboard box being set on the desk.

DIAMOND

Is that a pack of candy cigarettes?

IMA

No, it's half a pack. He's never not finished a pack. Something bad has happened.

DIAMOND

You expect me to track down one of the city's most ruthless mob bosses over a half eaten pack of candy?

IMA

I understand if you can't do it. Thank you for your time.

SOUND: She stands from her chair and starts to leave.

DIAMOND

Wait a minute now. That's not what I said.

IMA

So, you'll do it.

DIAMOND

My fee is-

IMA

How does \$200 a day plus expenses sound?

DIAMOND

Sounds like we've got a deal.

IMA

Good. It's very important that we find Mr. Friday.

DIAMOND

(Overlapping) You're husband.

IMA

My who? Oh. Yes. Him too.

DIAMOND

Where are you staying?

IMA

At the Belmont. Room 203.

DIAMOND

I'll swing by and pick you up tonight. I have an idea of where we can find our first lead.

IMA

I appreciate all of your hard work, Detective Diamond. I look forward to working together.

SOUND: Heels clicking as she exits; door opens and closes.

MUSIC SWELLS.

DIAMOND (V/O)

Something about Ima Phoney seemed off to me. I just couldn't put my finger on it. But as long as her checks don't bounce I know I could do this job. I wish I could say

that was the most exciting thing to happen that day. But you know what they say, when it rains, a lot of bad things happen at the same time. And it was pouring outside.

SOUND: Phone rings.

DIAMOND

Diamond.

SOUND: Wah Wah wahh Wahha Wahhh

DIAMOND

What?

SOUND: Wah Wah wahh Wahha Wahhh

DIAMOND

You're kidding? You better not be taking me for a ride.

SOUND: Wah Wah wahh Wahha Wahhh

DIAMOND

No, I'll take care of it. Thanks, Eddie.

SOUND: DIAMOND hangs up the phone; door opens and closes; footsteps; STELLA enters.

STELLA

What was that about?

DIAMOND

My partner...

STELLA

Mr. Bowman? What about him?

DIAMOND

He was found with a bullet in his back.

STELLA

Dear Lord!

DIAMOND

Grab my coat. I told them I would break the news to his wife.

ALICE (OFF)

Dick! Oh, Dick!

STELLA

I think she knows.

SOUND: Door opens; footsteps; ALICE, Dick's partner's widow, comes running into the office.

ALICE

Oh Dick! It's horrible!

STELLA

I'll leave you to it.

SOUND: Footsteps; Door shuts.

DIAMOND

Alice, darling, calm down.

ALICE

Oh, Dick it's dreadful. Absolutely dreadful.

DIAMOND

I know. I've just heard the news myself.

ALICE

I don't know how I'll go on. At least I have you.

SOUND: Kiss.

DIAMOND

Alice, my dear.

ALICE

Oh, Dick. I don't know what I would do without you right now.

DIAMOND

Yes. Yes. Alice, do you know what happened to your husband?

ALICE

No. I just got that call saying he was found dead.

DIAMOND

How was he before today? Was he acting strange? Acting wacky?

ALICE

No, not that I can recall.

DIAMOND

Think hard, Alice. Anything out of the ordinary?

ALICE

Well, he did sneak out of the house late at night.

DIAMOND

You don't call that wacky? Any idea where he was going?

ALICE

No, but one night he did bring home a strange package. He had hidden it before I saw what it was.

DIAMOND

No idea what it could be?

ALICE

No, I didn't ask. And now it's too late.

SOUND: She sobs.

DIAMOND

Don't worry, darling. The police will find out who did this.

ALICE

Couldn't you do it? As a favor to me?

DIAMOND

I'm already on a case. But I'm sure the truth will come out.

ALICE

You never liked him did you? You never liked my husband.

DIAMOND

How could you say that? He was my partner.

ALICE

I have to ask.

DIAMOND

What?

ALICE

Did you do it?

DIAMOND

You think I murdered the poor schmuck?

ALICE

Yes. So we could finally be together. You always said if it wasn't for Hank the two of us would ride off into the sunset. Well, he's gone and I'm all packed. Let's go, Dick.

DIAMOND

I can't. If I ran off with my partner's widow I'd become suspect number one whether I killed him or not.

ALICE

Did you?

DIAMOND

No!

ALICE

I thought maybe you did. Maybe you killed him for me.

DIAMOND

You're delirious. Going mad with grief. Let my secretary take you home.

ALICE

I love you, Dick. I want to spend the rest of my life with you. I want to shout from the rooftops: "My name is Alice Bowman and I love D--"

DIAMOND

Enough. Enough. You don't know what you want. You need to go home and get some rest. You're talking crazy. Now, go.

SOUND: Door opens; footsteps. The DAUGHTER runs in.

DAUGHTER

Oh, Dick. Did you kill my father so we could finally be together? Mother?

ALICE

Mary! What are you doing here? Have you been seeing my daughter, Mr. Diamond?

DIAMOND

Uh...

SOUND: Footsteps. The SON runs in.

SON

You killed him so we can finally be together! Mother? Sister?

ALICE

Son? Daughter?

DAUGHTER

Brother? Mother?

ALL THREE

DICK!

DIAMOND

Alright! Everyone out of my office. I'll deal with this greek tragedy later. Out!

SOUND: Everyone shuffles out of the office; door closes.

DIAMOND (V/O)

Just goes to show you, never dip your toe in the same pond more than once. Nothing but trouble. But there were bigger fish to fry. I was going up against Mr. Friday. If I wasn't careful it would be me who would fry like a Friday Fish Fry at the hands of Mr. Friday. One fried private eye. Hold the fries. But I promised Mrs. Phoney I would find her missing husband. And I've never failed a case and I won't start now.

INT. HOTEL BELMOUNT LOBBY - EARLY EVENING

3

WALLA: Busy hotel lobby.

I picked Mrs. Phoney up at the Hotel Belmont at a quarter of eight. The young boy at the front desk rang her up.

CLERK

Ms. Logner. There is a man down here for you.

SOUND: A muffled response, then he hangs up the phone.

CLERK

She will be down in a moment.

DIAMOND (V/O)

Not a moment later, the woman wrapped in a beautiful dress came down the stairs into the lobby. The crowds parted as she walked across the lobby.

IMA

Detective.

DIAMOND

Mrs. Phoney. Or should I say Ms. Logner. That's what the kid at the desk called you.

IMA

Is it? Perhaps you misheard.

DIAMOND

I heard, perfectly.

IMA

Then, he must have been mistaken. In either rate, I knew the message was meant for me so I came down and here you are. Shall we?

DIAMOND

Looking rather stunning this evening. Who are you trying to impress?

IMA

Oh, this old thing.

DIAMOND

You're actually dressed perfectly. It worked out swimmingly.

IMA

Where, may I ask, are we going. You neglected to tell me on the phone.

DIAMOND

If your husband has gotten himself mixed up with Mr. Friday and his gang, then I know just where to start looking. We're going to Billy's.

IMA

Why there?

DIAMOND

Everyone goes to Billy's.

INT. BILLY'S CAFE - EVENING

4

WALLA: Bar noises. Jazz music. Laughter. We are at Billy's Cafe.

PATRON 1

Uh, Waiter?

GARCON

Yes, madame?

PATRON 1

Would you ask Billy if he would join us for a drink?

GARCON

Mr. Billy never drinks with customers. I've never seen it.

PATRON 2

Perhaps if you told him I ran the second largest retail chain in Chicago.

GARCON

Second Largest? Mr. Billy would rather spit on his grandmother than talk to some shopkeeper from Chicago.

PATRON 1

How rude.

SOUND: Door opens; bell rings. DIAMOND and IMA walk through the door.

GARCON

Excuse me. Welcome. Follow me. This way to your table.

DIAMOND

Thank you, good sir.

IMA

You really think my husband is in a place like this.

DIAMOND

If he's not, somewhere here knows where he is.

GARCON

Here you are, sir. Madame. May I get the lady started with something to drink?

DIAMOND

She doesn't drink.

IMA

A vodka martini.

GARCON

Of course, madame.

DIAMOND

You told me you don't drink.

IMA

Did I? You must be mistaken.

DIAMOND

I'm not.

IMA

Then I misspoke.

GARCON

Anything for you sir?

DIAMOND

Yeah, can you tell me where Billy is?

IMA

Who's Billy?

GARCON

Why, you're in Billy's right now. I'm sure he is around here somewhere sir but he does not like to be disturbed. Allow me to get your drinks.

SOUND: Footsteps; GARCON walks away.

WALLA: Club noise continues.

IMA

Do you know this Billy personally?

DIAMOND

Seen him around.

IMA

Where is he from?

DIAMOND

Not sure. Why do you ask?

IMA

No reason. I used to know a "Billy." But we parted ways a long time ago.

DIAMOND (V/O)

He glaze turned glassy. As if some far off memory caused her to remember something that happened in her past. It was a moment before she spoke again.

IMA

This joint is rather swanky.

DIAMOND

Don't let the veneer fool you, doll. See that man over there. By the stairs.

IMA

Yes.

DIAMOND

He's a hitman with the Italian mafia. And that fella runs the biggest drug ring in Manhattan. This bar is full of the most reprehensible characters you've ever seen.

IMA

Is that the mayor?

LA GUARDIA

Dick! My man!

DIAMOND

Hello, Mr. La Guardia. Take it easy.

IMA

You seem to be pretty comfortable.

DIAMOND

In my line of work, sometimes you have to get in bed with all sorts of fellas.

IMA

How progressive. I assure you I have no judgements about your lifestyle choices.

DIAMOND

That's not what I mean and you know it. Let's focus. We are looking for your husband are we not? Do you see him?

IMA

Not yet.

DIAMOND

I don't see Billy either. They might be in the back room.

IMA

Back room?

SOUND: Footsteps; clinking glasses. GARCON enters with their drinks.

GARCON

Here you are, sir. Madame.

DIAMOND

Thank you. We will be taking our drinks in the back room.

GARCON

Mr. Billy wouldn't like you causing any trouble back there.

DIAMOND

No trouble. We just want to look around.

IMA

What's in the back room?

DIAMOND

You'll see.

INT. BACKROOM CASINO - EVENING

5

SOUND: Footsteps. A door opens.

WALLA: Sounds of a casino. Piano music plays.

IMA

My!

DIAMOND

Don't get lost sweetheart. I'm going to see if I can't find Billy. Keep an eye out for your husband.

SOUND: Footsteps; DIAMOND walks off.

MUSIC: The piano music swells.

IMA

What beautiful piano. Where is that coming from?

SOUND: IMA makes her way through the crowd. She approaches STAN the piano player.

IMA

Ah. There. Excuse me sir, you play beautifully.

STAN

Thank you, miss. I-

IMA

Stan? Stan is that you?

STAN

Why, miss. I can't believe it's you. It's been so long.

IMA

I haven't seen you since we were all together.

STAN

You, me, and Mr. Billy.

IMA

Where is he?

STAN

He's not here. I mean, he went home. I mean, he died.

IMA

Stan. Where is he?

STAN

You're not good for him.

IMA

Play one of the old songs. For me.

MUSIC: STAN starts to play a song.

IMA

You know what I want to hear.

STAN

I don't play that song anymore.

IMA

Play it, Stan.

MUSIC: STAN starts to play (INSERT FUNNY SONG HERE). Ima sings along.

SOUND: Commotion as BILLY comes running up to the piano.

BILLY

STAN! I told you never to play that-

IMA

Hello, Billy.

BILLY

You.

SOUND: Footsteps; DIAMOND joins the group.

DIAMOND

Ima, have you found- Oh. Mr. Billy, there you are. This is Mrs. Phoney.

BILLY

We've met. Wait, what did you call her?

DIAMOND

Her name. Mrs. Phoney.

BILLY

Phoney? You mean Phoney. (Pronounced fo-nee)

DIAMOND

Phoney? Ima Phoney! What's the big idea!

BILLY

Is that what people are calling you these days?

IMA

I'm afraid I haven't been very forthright with you.

DIAMOND

For what it's worth I haven't believed a word you say anyhow. Old habit in my business. What is your name?

IMA

Anita. Anita Alibi (Pronounced All-ee-bee)

DIAMOND

How do you spell that?

IMA

A - L - I - B - I.

DIAMOND

A - L - I - B - I. Interesting name, Anita Alibi.

IMA

It's french.

DIAMOND

Sure it is.

BILLY

What are you doing here?

IMA

I'm here looking for someone. I didn't know you'd be here.

BILLY

This is my club.

IMA

How could I have known that? I haven't seen you in years.

DIAMOND

You two know each other?

IMA

Yes. We spent a number of months together a while back. On the west coast.

DIAMOND

Los Angeles?

BILLY

Yakima.

DIAMOND

Ah, Yakima. The Paris of the Pacific Northwest.

IMA

It's been such a long time.

BILLY

Yes. It has. Now if you'll excuse me.

IMA

Billy, wait! I just wanted to-

BILLY

You wanted to "what?" Barge in here after all these years and play with my emotions like you did all those years ago. My heart can't take any more of you.

DIAMOND

You don't have to worry about that, buddy. This here is a married woman.

IMA

Actually...

DIAMOND

I thought we were here looking for your husband.

BILLY

Husband?

IMA

He's not actually my husband.

DIAMOND

Another lie. Is anything you told me the truth?

IMA

I wasn't sure I could trust you.

DIAMOND

Then who are we looking for?

IMA

My brother.

BILLY

Vin? Vin is missing?

IMA

Have you seen him?

BILLY

No, I'm sorry.

DIAMOND

Ima, or I guess, Anita thinks he may have gotten himself mixed up with Mr. Friday. You seen him around here lately?

BILLY

I don't involve myself in the affairs of my customers.

DIAMOND

No, you just take their money.

BILLY

Listen, here pal!

IMA

Boys. Boys. Settle down. Billy, will you help us.

BILLY

Listen, doll. I'm sorry your brother is missing. I really am. But I can't get involved. Not with Mr. Friday. And not with you. Not again.

IMA

Oh, Billy!

BILLY

I have to go. I have my own problems, you know?

DIAMOND

What kind of problems?

BILLY

Things are changing around here. Folks gotta be careful.

IMA

What's going on?

BILLY

There are some new characters moving into town. They're organized. They're ruthless.

DIAMOND

Who are they?

BILLY

The mob.

DIAMOND

Italians?

BILLY

The Germans. They started taking over the city, one neighborhood at a time. First they pushed out the Polish. Then the Hungarians. Then the French. Everyone who manages to get away, ends up here in the Lower East Side.

IMA

Why here?

BILLY

It's the pathway to freedom. They cross that bridge and escape to Brooklyn.

DIAMOND

Things have gotten that bad, have they?

BILLY

And I've kept out of it. And I intend to. If you're looking for Mr. Friday then count me out.

IMA

Oh, Billy. Please. Just tell me if you see him.

BILLY

If I see him. Now, I think you both should get out of here. People are starting to stare.

SOUND: Footsteps; BILLY walks away.

IMA

Billy!

DIAMOND

You're just full of surprises.

MUSIC SWELLS.

DIAMOND (V/O)

So, Billy's was a bust. Turns out Bill is a real pill. But the night did make me realize just how little I knew about the mysterious woman who employed me, her missing husband slash brother, and the motive behind it all. And with the new gangs moving in, New York was changing right before my eyes. Would I recognize her at the end of the night?

I dropped Ima, I mean, Anita, back at her hotel and went straight to my office. In the hustle and bustle of that crazy day I had neglected the news of my partner's murder. I needed to call the officer who was at the scene and get to the bottom of this. My partner, Bowman, and I didn't always see eye to eye but I didn't like the idea that there was some killer on the loose with a taste for private eyes.

SOUND: Door opens and closes; footsteps. DIAMOND enters his office. And starts to dial the phone.

DIAMOND

Hello. Eddie? Hey, it's Dick. Yeah. Thank you for that. Let me ask you, what happened Eddie? Uh, huh. The river? I know it's late but can you meet me there and walk me through exactly what happened? Well, if it's too much trouble forget I asked! It's only my partner who was murdered in cold blood. Why, thank you Eddie. I'll meet you by the docks in an hour.

SOUND: DIAMOND hangs up the phone.

DIAMOND (V/O)

I hung up the phone and looked out the window at my city. The night sky shone with the lights of the big apple. I was so distracted that I hadn't noticed I wasn't alone.

TOLEDO

Hello, Mr. Diamond.

SOUND: DIAMOND screams. He is startled by the presence of Miss. Jolene Toledo.

DIAMOND

Holy Mackerel! Who are you? How did you get in here?

TOLEDO

Miss. Jolene Toledo. Charmed. I was hoping we could talk.

DIAMOND

I'm sure we both have a lot of questions. What do you want with me?

TOLEDO

Truthfully, nothing. I was hoping to speak with your partner, Mr. Bowman. But I understand he's rather indisposed.

DIAMOND

He's a little busy being fished out of the Hudson.
Hopefully I can be a suitable replacement.

TOLEDO

That depends.

DIAMOND

On what?

TOLEDO

Whether or not you have what I'm looking for. Before
tonight, your partner was in possession of a rather
important package.

DIAMOND

An important package? What kind of important package?

TOLEDO

Something that is of particular interest to my employer.

DIAMOND

Who is your employer?

TOLEDO

There will be time for that. Have you seen such a package?

DIAMOND

I don't make a habit out of looking at my partner's
package.

TOLEDO

That's not what I heard. Do you mind if I talk a quick look
around?

DIAMOND

I'd prefer if you didn't.

TOLEDO

If you have nothing to hide.

DIAMOND

I just don't take well to strangers coming in and asking to ransack my office.

TOLEDO

I'm not asking.

SOUND: The click of a gun.

DIAMOND

Watch where you point that thing.

TOLEDO

I don't want to hurt you, Mr. Diamond. Just stay still and let me find what I'm looking for.

DIAMOND

I'm telling you, you won't find it here.

TOLEDO

Just let me look around. Wah!

SOUND: A Scuffle! DIAMOND jumps over the desk and disarms TOLEDO.

DIAMOND

Not so tough now?

TOLEDO

I never intended to cause you harm. You know that.

DIAMOND

Who sent you?

TOLEDO

Would you like to meet him?

DIAMOND

What are you proposing?

TOLEDO

Tomorrow. The Plaza hotel. I'm sure my employer would be very interested in your help retrieving our package. And he'd pay you handsomely for the trouble.

DIAMOND

The Plaza, you say?

TOLEDO

You might be the only one that can help, Mr. Diamond.

DIAMOND

Well, you have my attention.

TOLEDO

I have that effect on men. Well, Mr. Diamond, I look forward to seeing you tomorrow. May I have my gun back? A poor girl needs to defend herself on these mean streets.

DIAMOND

Here.

TOLEDO

Thank you.

SOUND: The click of the gun.

TOLEDO

Now hands up while I search the room. Hey!

SOUND: Scuffle! DIAMOND disarms her again.

DIAMOND

Nice try, doll!

TOLEDO

Can't blame a girl for trying. May I?

DIAMOND

Here.

TOLEDO

Thank you. Now, put your hands up!

SOUND: Scuffle! DIAMOND disarms her yet again.

DIAMOND

Good night. Miss. Toledo.

SOUND: Footsteps and the door closes.

MUSIC SWELLS.

DIAMOND (V/O)

That little circus with Toledo meant I was late meeting Eddie at the docks. He was still there as I pulled up.

EXT. THE DOCKS - NIGHT

7

WALLA: Dock noises.

SOUND: Car engine approaches; parks; turns off; car door opens.

DIAMOND

Eddie!

EDDIE

Dick! Where've ya been?

DIAMOND

I got tied up. Thanks for meeting me.

EDDIE

Well, here's where it happened.

DIAMOND

Not a very scenic end.

EDDIE

A terrible way to go.

DIAMOND

Tell me what happened Eddie?

EDDIE

Well, we got the call early this morning. Some of the neighbors heard some gunshots and got scared. When we got here we looked over the bank of the river there and there he was, laying in the rocks. Bird chow! Well, after we fished him out we counted three gun wounds to the chest. He must have been facing Northwest, toward that apartment building.

DIAMOND

You think the gunman was in one of those windows?

EDDIE

I thought that at first. But the autopsy showed that Bowman was shot at a much closer range.

DIAMOND

So the fella probably looked him in the eye before he bumped him off.

EDDIE

Must have. Jeez. He must have made some powerful enemies. Know what he was into?

DIAMOND

Not yet. But I'm starting to piece it together. I'll look around and see if I can find any clues.

EDDIE

Go ahead. My team swept the whole dock this morning.

DIAMOND

Yeah. Yeah. Just stand back. Let me see. Hmmm.

EDDIE

What are you looking for?

DIAMOND

I'll know it when I see it. Ah ha!

EDDIE

What?

DIAMOND

You know what this is?

EDDIE

It looks like a candy cigarette. Some kid must have left it behind.

DIAMOND

I think I know exactly who left it behind.

EDDIE

Sorry, sir! Keep it moving. Official police business!

DIAMOND

Who is it?

MUSIC SWELLS

SOUND: A Car Chase! We hear the sound effects of the following events throughout.

DIAMOND (V/O)

I turned to look and across the street under the light of a lone street lamp stood a man. Eddie called out again and he ran. I gave chase. What was he running from? He turned the corner, out of sight. I hopped in my car and ran after him. I turned the corner and he was gone. But then a car came speeding out of the garage and down the street. I followed. Avoiding bike messengers, potholes, and little old ladies with their dogs.

OLD LADY

Hey watch it!

DIAMOND (V/O)

I don't know why that puppy was out so late. But I didn't have time to think about that. The man was getting away!

MAN

I'm getting away!

DIAMOND (V/O)

The chase continued.

DIAMOND

Oof! Get back here! Ah! I got ya now!

SOUND: Gunshots.

DIAMOND (V/O)

He almost got me with that one. But two can play at the game.

SOUND: Gunshots; driving; swerving; A tire pops.

DIAMOND

Yes! Got him now!

SOUND: Tires screech!

DIAMOND (V/O)

He swerved. Trying to keep control of his car. I was catching up to him when he turned sharp, Showering the street in sparks, and disappeared down a dark alleyway. I slowed down and followed him, but when I turned down the alley, he was gone. Vanished. Not a broken down car in sight.

DIAMOND

Damn it! I lost him!

MUSIC SWELLS

SOUND: Footsteps up the stairs; knock on the door. IMA answers it.

IMA

Mr. Diamond? What are you doing here?

DIAMOND

The clerk at the Belmont said you checked out. If you were looking to slip away you shouldn't have left a forwarding address.

IMA

I wasn't looking to slip away. You look dreadful.

DIAMOND

I feel worse. Can I come in?

IMA

I suppose.

SOUND: Footsteps, door closes; locks. DIAMOND enters the apartment.

DIAMOND

Who's pad is this anyway?

IMA

Mine, for the moment. Sit. I'll get you some water.

DIAMOND

Sit where? Not a lot of furniture in here.

IMA

I know it's sparse, Mr. Diamond. I don't intend to be here long.

DIAMOND

Why did we meet at the hotel if you had a place of your own.

IMA

This place was being fumigated. Termites.

DIAMOND

Damn it! Stop lying, Ima! Or Anita? I don't even know your name.

IMA

You know all you need to know!

DIAMOND

What I need to know is why did I find this by the docks!?

SOUND: IMA gasps.

DIAMOND

You know what this is? A candy cigarette! You told me on our first meeting how much your missing brother loved candy cigarettes and now I find one at the scene of my partner's murder! You better start talking! And fast!

IMA

I'm not sure what you're talking about. I know nothing about this. What does -this have to do with my brother? How could you think-

DIAMOND

Whoa! Not that fast. Slow down! Now tell me the truth. What is your name?

IMA

Okay, Mr. Diamond. I will tell you the truth. My name is Francesca Biscotti. I come from a long line of Italian nobles dating back to the Renaissance. My brother and I are the last remaining members of our family line.

DIAMOND

I have to admit that is not what I was expecting you to say.

IMA

My brother came to New York in search of a noble artifact. Our birthright. In hopes that we can restore our family's glory. But he's gone rogue and has now gone missing. That is why I hired you.

DIAMOND

How do I know this isn't another elaborate lie?

IMA

Test me.

DIAMOND

Name three pastas.

IMA

Spaghetti. Linguine. Rigatoni.

DIAMOND

Hmm. Sounds pretty Italian to me.

IMA

I assure you. This time, Mr. Diamond. I am telling the truth.

DIAMOND

What exactly is this artifact?

IMA

Truthfully, I don't know. I've never seen it with my own eyes. It was taken from our family generations ago and that shame has kept my family silent. We dare not speak of it. I only know it from the whispers and only by name. The Sicilian Pigeon.

DIAMOND

A pigeon?

IMA

A relic of some kind. Worth a fortune. My brother has made it his mission to retrieve it. He heard some rumors that a

Mr. Friday was looking for it as well. The next thing I know my brother is on a plane to New York and I don't hear from him again.

DIAMOND

Well, Francesca, it's very possible your brother is a murderer. Just now I found evidence at the crime scene and then chased him in my car.

IMA

Chased him? You mean, you saw him?

DIAMOND

I don't know for sure if it was him. I lost him.

IMA

Well, let's go look for him. Right now. Before he gets away!

DIAMOND

He's long gone. Trust me. I scoured that alleyway. It's like he disappeared.

IMA

So we are back to square one. With no leads.

DIAMOND

I wouldn't say that.

IMA

What do you mean?

DIAMOND

Before I came here I was in my office where I met this woman who was also looking for some mysterious package. She was under the impression it was in my partner's possession.

IMA

Looking for a mysterious package? You think she could be the Pigeon?

DIAMOND

I don't know. But I know how to find out. She invited me to meet her employer tomorrow. They want my help tracking it down.

IMA

Are you going to give it to them?

DIAMOND

I don't know.

IMA

I think you should go. If they are looking for the Pigeon as well they might know where Mr. Friday is. And if we can find him we can find my brother.

DIAMOND

It wouldn't hurt to learn what they know either.

IMA

Then it's settled. Just be careful, Dick.

DIAMOND

Don't worry about me sweetheart. Say, has anyone ever told you you look beautiful in the moonlight.

SOUND: IMA slaps DIAMOND.

IMA

Yes, they have.

DIAMOND

Message received.

MUSIC SWELLS

DIAMOND (V/O)

The next day, I took the train uptown to the Plaza Hotel. It was a quarter past two when I stepped foot into the lobby. I had no idea what would be waiting for me.

INT. PLAZA HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

9

WALLA: Hotel lobby.

TOLEDO

Ah, Mr. Diamond. I've been waiting for you.

DIAMOND

Ms. Toledo.

TOLEDO

Follow me.

SOUND: Footsteps. The noise of the lobby fades. They stop in front of a door.

TOLEDO

My employer is in here. He's been expecting you.

DIAMOND

Who exactly is your employer.

TOLEDO

I imagine he would like to introduce himself.

SOUND: She knocks on the door.

TOLEDO

Enter when you wish.

INT. FRIDAY'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

10

SOUND: Footsteps; door opens. TOLEDO walks away. DIAMOND steps through the door.

FRIDAY

Detective Dick Diamond. Please, come in. Your reputation precedes you.

DIAMOND

I wish I could say the same.

FRIDAY

All in due time. Come in. sit. Have a drink.

SOUND: Glasses clink.

DIAMOND

No, thank you. I hope that doesn't come across rude.

FRIDAY

Never trust a man who doesn't drink. It means they have loose lips and can't hold their liquor.

DIAMOND

Then pour me a glass.

FRIDAY

Never trust a man who drinks. They're impulsive and lack a judicious nature.

DIAMOND

Then skip it.

FRIDAY

Never trust a man who changes his mind.

DIAMOND

I didn't change my mind!

FRIDAY

Never trust a man who isn't open to persuasion.

DIAMOND

Enough of this. Can we get down to business?

FRIDAY

Of course. I'm sure you have a lot of questions. I hope to provide some answers.

DIAMOND

Very good. You can start by telling me your name. And why I'm here.

FRIDAY

Direct. You don't beat around the bush. Never trust a man who doesn't ask for what he wants.

DIAMOND

I say never trust a man who doesn't answer questions when he's asked.

MAN

Good philosophy. Although you don't recognize me by face I'm sure my name is one you'd know.

DIAMOND

Enough of the pomp and circumstance. Tell me your name or I'll walk!

FRIDAY

My name? You may call me Mr. Friday. Ah, I see by your reaction you have heard of me.

DIAMOND

Your name may have come up in my line of work.

FRIDAY

And what, may I ask, is your line of work exactly?

DIAMOND

Whatever it is I'm hired to do.

FRIDAY

Now who isn't answering their asked questions, Mr. Diamond.

DIAMOND

Why am I here, Mr. Friday?

FRIDAY

I wanted to inquire about something. Something my friends and I have been unable to acquire.

DIAMOND

Your "friends." You mean the German mob?

FRIDAY

They are very efficient. But even their skills have been fruitless in unearthing what we are looking for.

DIAMOND

You're talking about the bird.

FRIDAY

Ah, Mr. Diamond. How judicious of you. What do you know about the bird?

DIAMOND

Not much. I know it's missing. And it's very valuable from what I heard.

FRIDAY

And where did you hear that?

DIAMOND

You're lackey told me when she gave me a nice visit at my office last night.

FRIDAY

Then I trust you know why we need your assistance.

DIAMOND

That I do know. What I don't know is whether or not I'll give it to you.

FRIDAY

A fraught decision. Perhaps if I share some information you will be more forthcoming.

DIAMOND

Perhaps you're right.

FRIDAY

Do you know what the Sicilian Pigeon is?

DIAMOND

I assume it's some trinket of some kind.

FRIDAY

It's more than some mere trinket. Let me tell you the tale. Picture it, Sicily. 1806. Napoleon was rampaging across Europe. He had heard of the riches possessed by a noble family living on a large estate along the Sicilian coast. So, the Emperor sent his army to liberate them of their riches. But the family, the famous Biscotti line, knew they were coming. They knew they had to take action. They had to hide their jewels.

DIAMOND

How did they manage that?

FRIDAY

Lucky for the Biscottis, their chef was a world class cheese maker. Made the finest parmesan cheese in Italy. He would sculpt the hard cheese into magnificent statuettes to impress visiting dignitaries. I'm sure he had no idea his talent would be used to save the Biscotti fortune.

DIAMOND

I'm not following.

FRIDAY

Don't you see. He hid the family jewels in a large block of parmesan cheese. Then he sculpted the cheese to resemble something plain and unnoticeable, a pigeon. It was then smuggled out of Sicily before Napoleon's army arrived.

DIAMOND

Just so I have this right, the Sicilian Pigeon is a hunk of parmesan cheese with jewels inside?

FRIDAY

Jewels worth more than you can ever imagine.

DIAMOND

If this thing is so valuable, how did it go missing?

FRIDAY

Only the Pigeon knows. As far as anyone knows, it has never been seen since. We think it made its way to New York. In fact, we had a man working to locate it for us. You'd be interested to know who that was.

DIAMOND

Let me guess, my partner, Bowman. That's why Ms. Toledo was at my office that night. To retrieve the package.

FRIDAY

Precisely.

DIAMOND

So, what do you want from me? Why don't you spit it out and we can talk terms.

FRIDAY

You are quite a character, Mr. Diamond. But very well. It's all very simple. I believe Mr. Bowman was in possession of the Pigeon before his untimely demise. Where he's hidden it we don't know. But we want you simply to find it and bring it to me. I shall pay you handsomely for your trouble. Enough money to live as a king.

DIAMOND

A king you say?

FRIDAY

Just bring me the Pigeon, Diamond.

DIAMOND

What are you going to do with all that scratch anyway?

FRIDAY

I'm sure someone in your profession would appreciate discretion.

SOUND: Door opens. Footsteps. Ms. Toledo returns to the room.

FRIDAY

Ah, yes. Ms. Toledo. I know. Mr. Diamond, I'm afraid our meeting has come to an end. I must be off. Do we have a deal?

DIAMOND

I find the Pigeon and you make me rich.

FRIDAY

You seem to understand perfectly. I'll be in touch, Mr. Diamond.

SOUND: Footsteps; door closes. DIAMOND exits.

TOLEDO

You told him what was in the package?

FRIDAY

He already knew. He said you mentioned it the other night at his office.

TOLEDO

Sir, I never mentioned what was in the package.

FRIDAY

You didn't? Interesting.

MUSIC SWELLS

DIAMOND (V/O)

I left the Plaza Hotel as quickly as I dared. I had to get back to my office. Ms. Biscotti, Mr. Friday, my partner, this pigeon! It was all connected. I didn't know what I was going to do with it yet. But I knew I had to find that

bird. Later, I found out that across town my client was having a meeting of her own.

INT. BILLY'S CAFE - AFTERNOON 11

MUSIC: Jazz music.

SOUND: Door opens; footsteps.

GARCON

Welcome back to Billy's ma'am. May I find you a table.

IMA

No, thank you. I'm looking for Billy?

GARCON

He's at the bar.

IMA

Thank you.

SOUND: Footsteps; Glasses Clink.

BILLY

Let me guess, You have to talk to me?

IMA

Please, Billy. I know how you must feel about me.

BILLY

Here, have a drink. First of the night.

IMA

Not tonight.

BILLY

Why did you come? Of all the gin joints in town, you had to walk into mine.

IMA

If I knew it was yours I wouldn't have come.

BILLY

And if I knew you would walk in I never would have opened a club.

IMA

Now Billy, don't be like that. I need your help.

BILLY

Now you need my help? You didn't seem to need anything from me when you left me on that train station.

IMA

If you knew what I went through that day you'd be more kind.

BILLY

What YOU went through?

IMA

William.

BILLY

So, it's back to William now. We're back in Yakima.

IMA

You know why I left.

BILLY

I know why. That damn bird. Always chasing that bird.

IMA

It's what I have to do. It's my family legacy. You wouldn't understand.

BILLY

Why wouldn't I understand? Cause I'm Italian nobility? Chasing some cockeyed bird all around the world.

IMA

My brother and I are the only ones in our family still left. We need to restore our family's glory.

BILLY

Well, you're gonna have to get in line. You ain't the only one chasing after that bird.

IMA

What have you heard?

BILLY

Mr. Friday is after the Pigeon as well.

IMA

Where did you hear that?

BILLY

People talk.

IMA

That must be why my brother chased after him. And now he's missing.

BILLY

Mr. Friday doesn't take prisoners. I'm not sure you're going to find him.

IMA

Oh, I just have to.

BILLY

Friday's got the German mob working for him now.

IMA

The Germans? This is so much bigger than I thought.

BILLY

Get used to it, doll. It's only gonna get nastier from here. New York isn't like it used to be.

IMA

Dick!

BILLY

Watch your language.

IMA

No. Mr. Diamond. He went to a secret meeting today. It has to be with Mr. Friday. He must want Dick to help him find the Pigeon.

BILLY

I wouldn't get involved with him if I were you.

IMA

Then help me, Billy. Please. I need you. I know your cross with me but know I've never stopped loving you. Remember. When we strolled down the streets of Yakima hand in hand.

BILLY

That was then.

IMA

We can get it back. Once I find my brother and recover the Pigeon we can be together. Isn't that worth fighting for?

BILLY

Not if you have to fight Friday, and the Germans. No. I don't stick my neck out of anyone.

IMA

If that's your mind then I guess there is nothing more to be said.

BILLY

I guess there isn't.

IMA

One of these days, you will realize there is something worth fighting for. I just hope you have the strength to do it before it's too late.

SOUND: Footsteps.

BILLY

Where are you going?

IMA

To warn Mr. Diamond and fight for what's mine.

SOUND: Door opens and closes.

MUSIC SWELLS

INT. DIAMOND'S OFFICE - MORNING

12

DIAMOND (V/O)

I returned to my office the next morning to find it completely ransacked. It looked like a hurricane tore through the building.

SOUND: Door opens.

DIAMOND

Dear God!

STELLA

Mr. Diamond! Thank God you're here!

DIAMOND

What has happened? I've seen crime scenes less grisly than this?

STELLA

I don't know, Mr. Diamond. I came in this morning and the place was gutted. Who could have done this?

DIAMOND

I can think of one person. And if she didn't find what she's looking for she'll be back.

STELLA

The woman from the other night?

DIAMOND

Yes, Jolene Toledo. Her and Friday must not have been patient enough and decided to look for the package themselves. That fathead Friday is gonna get what's coming to him!

SOUND: Footsteps.

IMA

What happened?

STELLA

Seems we had a visit.

DIAMOND

It was Friday. I'm sure of it.

IMA

Dick. I tried to ring you last night but you didn't answer. Friday is-

DIAMOND

-working with the Germans. Yes I know. He told me when I saw him yesterday at the Plaza.

IMA

So, it was him you were meeting. Did you tell them about me?

DIAMOND

No. I didn't seem to think it was any of their business.

SOUND: Rustling papers.

STELLA

Don't mind me. I'll just clean up. You two keep talking.

IMA

What did they want?

DIAMOND

They're looking for the bird. Same as you.

STELLA

If you can move your foot. Thanks.

IMA

I assume they asked for your help.

DIAMOND

They did. Said they'd pay handsomely too.

STELLA

I'll grab a broom.

DIAMOND

Dammit, Stella! To hell with the office. We have bigger worries than some misplaced papers.

IMA

Did you promise to help them?

DIAMOND

I told them I would think about it.

IMA

If I have to compete with your loyalty I'm afraid I can't afford it.

DIAMOND

Now, now. Don't get so sharp. The last thing I need are the Germans running through the streets of New York because I bankrolled them.

STELLA

Then what are you going to do? Find that package before they do?

DIAMOND

Assuming they haven't found it yet.

IMA

If we can find my brother we would be that much closer.

STELLA

How are you gonna find him?

IMA

The only lead I have is Mr. Friday. He has to know where my brother is.

SOUND: Phone Rings. Rings. Rings.

DIAMOND

Stella?

IMA

Yes, boss?

DIAMOND

Do you want to answer the phone?

IMA

Oh, of course.

SOUND: Phone rings. Stella picks up the phone.

STELLA

Diamond and Bowman. Oh, I guess I mean just Diamond. God rest his soul. Yes. Oh, one moment. It's Ms. Toledo.

IMA

What are you going to say?

DIAMOND

What should I say?

IMA

Play nice. We need to stay close to them if we want to find my brother.

STELLA

And we need to know what they know.

DIAMOND

Give the phone here. Hello, Ms. Toledo. I see you've been by my office. What do you mean, what do I mean? I come in here this morning and my office is torn apart. You've been in here snooping around. I told you the package wasn't here and I- what was that? You didn't. (to the room) She says she has no idea what I'm talking about.

IMA

Then, who destroyed your office?

SOUND: Heavy knocks at the door.

STELLA

Who's that!

ALICE

Richard!

DIAMOND

Dagnabit! (to phone,) No not you!

IMA

Who is that?

STELLA

Mr. Bowman's widow.

IMA

What does he want with Mr. Diamond.

STELLA

It's a long story.

DIAMOND

Listen, Ms. Toledo, You haven't found the Pigeon yet have you? You haven't?

IMA

Keep them close!

SOUND: Heavy knocks on the door.

STELLA

Just a moment!

ALICE

Dick! Let me in!

DIAMOND

Well, then I'll call you if I find it.

IMA

Ask about my brother?

DIAMOND

Say, I have a question. Do you know of anyone else that's looking for this silly bird? You see I need to know what I'm up against. If I'm fighting the clock on this one that's something I need to know. I see. Well, I'll keep you updated. Tell Mr. Friday I shouldn't be long.

SOUND: Hangs up the phone.

IMA

What did she say?

DIAMOND

She is unaware of anyone else hunting for the bird.

IMA

Well of course she's lying.

SOUND: Heavy knocks on the door.

ALICE

DICK!!!

STELLA

Mr. Diamond. I kindly ask your assistance with something rather urgent.

DIAMOND

Let her in.

SOUND: Door rushes open; footsteps; ALICE runs in.

ALICE

Oh, Dick! Darling! I'm so sorry! Please forgive me!

DIAMOND

What are you talking about?

ALICE

I'm sorry it was me. I came here last night and destroyed your office. I'm sorry. I just got so jealous when I saw you leave last night with that harlot!

IMA

You have nothing to worry about.

ALICE

AH! Sorry, I was so caught up I didn't even see you. Who are you?

IMA

I'm the harlot. Nice to meet you.

ALICE

So this is why we aren't together? You're in love with her?

DIAMOND/IMA

Oh no no no!

ALICE

After everything we've been through! My murdered husband. Our affair. I deserve some explanation after you grilled me about my husband's secret package. I might die of a broken heart!

SOUND: ALICE starts to sob.

IMA

What did she just say? Your partner had a secret package?

DIAMOND

Yes! Did I fail to tell you? My partner was apparently working to acquire the Pigeon for Mr. Friday. And Alice told me that her husband would sneak out and one time brought home a strange package.

STELLA

That has to be the Pigeon. He must have found it but was murdered before he could make the hand off.

DIAMOND

We have to find it.

SOUND: ALICE sobs.

IMA

She probably knows where it is. We have to get it from her.

STELLA

Sweet talk her, Dick.

DIAMOND

I wish I never slept with my dead partner's widow.

IMA

Go.

SOUND: ALICE sobs.

DIAMOND

There. There. Alice, darling. Don't cry. She's just a client. She means nothing to me. What we have is ...special.

SOUND: ALICE sobs.

DIAMOND

Now, doll, don't do that. You know how much I care for you.

ALICE

Do I? My husband was murdered and you have barely blinked an eye. I'll never make it through without you.

DIAMOND

And I'll always be here, darling. You seem upset. Why don't I take you home and you can get some rest and maybe show me your husband's hiding places.

ALICE

(Sobbing,) Okay.

SOUND: Footsteps out of the office.

DIAMOND

(to IMA and STELLA) Stay here. I'll call when I have the package.

IMA/STELLA

Right.

MUSIC SWELLS.

INT. ALICE BOWMAN'S HOUSE - DAY

13

SOUND: Door unlocks. DIAMOND and ALICE enter her home. She sniffles; footsteps.

DIAMOND

Alright. Take it easy.

ALICE

Thank you for escorting me home. I suppose I let my feelings get the best of me.

DIAMOND

Completely understandable.

ALICE

My head is aching. I can barely see straight. I think I should take to the bed for a while. I'm sorry I've been such trouble.

SOUND: Footsteps. Then a door closes.

DIAMOND

Now, to find this stupid bird.

SOUND: DIAMOND starts to rummage around the place. He comes to a door. He turns the knob but it's locked.

DIAMOND

Locked. This must be Bowman's office. The package must be in here. I think I can pick the lock.

SOUND: Picking the lock. The door opens.

DIAMOND

Yes.

SOUND: Footsteps; more rustling; he opens a drawer.

DIAMOND

Ah ha! This must be it. I need to call Ms. Biscotti!

SOUND: Footsteps. DIAMOND runs to the phone. He lifts the receiver and hears a voice.

ALICE (VOICE)

He's here.

DIAMOND

(Quietly,) Huh? She must be on the other line.

ALICE (VOICE)

The plan is going perfectly.

FRIDAY (VOICE)

Thank you, my dear. You've performed beautifully. My men are on their way.

SOUND: Click. Dial Tone.

DIAMOND

What have you done?

SOUND: Footsteps from the other room.

DIAMOND

She's coming. I have to be quick.

SOUND: He dials the phone. Rings.

DIAMOND

Come on. Come on.

SOUND: STELLA answers the phone.

STELLA

Mr. Diamond?

DIAMOND

Stella! Quick, something's about to go down. Where's Francesca?

STELLA

Ms. Biscotti left.

DIAMOND

What?

STELLA

She left right after you. I tried to get her to stay but she was determined.

DIAMOND

That woman. Stella, darling, I need you to get down here too. I have a feeling I'm gonna need all the help I can get.

STELLA

On it boss.

SOUND: Phone hangs up.

ALICE

Dick?

DIAMOND

Alice? Darling. Are you feeling better?

ALICE

I am. Thank you. What are you doing in here?

DIAMOND

I was just... the door was unlocked. I wanted to reminisce about Hank. I'm gonna miss him. Hell of a partner.

ALICE

Strange. Anyhow, I'm going to make some lunch. Would you like a frankfurter?

DIAMOND

A what?

ALICE

I mean, a hot dog. A good American hot dog.

SOUND: ALICE gives a sly, sinister snicker.

SOUND: Footsteps.

SOUND: Knock on the door. DIAMOND lets IMA in.

DIAMOND

Get in.

IMA

Did you find it?

DIAMOND

Yes, it's in the office. But things are going sideways. Alice is working for the Germans. We have to get out of here.

ALICE

Not so fast.

SOUND: Gun clicks. IMA screams

DIAMOND

Put that gun down, Alice. We are on your side.

ALICE

That's some funny talk coming from you. You and your girl are the reason my husband is dead. Now it's time for you to pay.

DIAMOND

What are you talking about? Alice, baby, don't do this.

ALICE

Enough of your sweet talk. This little Fraulein won't be tricked by you any more. Mr. Friday's men will be here soon and then they will have the package and you. Don't move.

IMA

Listen, I don't know you but trust me when I say we had nothing to do with your husband's murder.

ALICE

You don't believe me? Ask your brother!

SOUND: Gunshot. DIAMOND and IMA scream and jump out of the way. Furniture crashes. Gunshot!

DIAMOND

She's gonna get someone killed.

IMA

I'm on it.

SOUND: IMA gets up and scuffles with ALICE. Then, ALICE falls to the ground.

DIAMOND

Where did you learn to do that?

IMA

I've learned a thing or two in my time.

DIAMOND

I see that. Quickly, let's drag her to the bedroom.

SOUND: Dragging sounds. Footsteps come as STELLA comes rushing in.

STELLA

Dear God, what happened here? I can't leave you two alone for two seconds without you messing up the place.

IMA

This certainly wasn't our intention.

SOUND: Tires screech outside; car doors open. The goons are here.

DIAMOND

Stella, darling, quick, take this.

IMA

Is that?

DIAMOND

I think so. Stella, go out the back and meet us back at my office. Don't stop for anyone and don't let anyone see you.

STELLA

On it boss. Am I getting overtime for this?

DIAMOND

Just go!

SOUND: Footsteps run off. We hear voices from outside.

GOON 1 (OUTSIDE)

Give it up, Diamond! Come out with the package. No one gets hurt.

IMA

We have to go. Out the back.

DIAMOND

Wait, we have to give Stella a head start. Otherwise they'll catch all of us and for sure get the bird. We'll play their game.

GOON 2 (OUTSIDE)

We just want the package. Bring it out nice and easy.

DIAMOND

Quick, bring that blanket. And grab that vase.

IMA

What are you doing?

DIAMOND

They don't know what it looks like. I'm gonna pass this off as the bird and before they get the wiser we will be long gone.

IMA

That a risky move, Diamond.

DIAMOND

Risky is my middle name.

IMA

Sure it is.

DIAMOND

My car is right outside. If we get there we are golden.

IMA

Let's hope this works.

MUSIC SWELLS.

EXT. BOWMAN'S HOUSE, THE STREET - AFTERNOON

14

WALLA: Street noises.

GOON 1

Come out already!

GOON 2

Types like Diamond always have to play it the hard way.

GOON 1

Pity. I was hoping this would be an easy job.

GOON 2

Look! They're coming out.

DIAMOND

Don't shoot! We're coming out. We have the package.

GOON 2

He's holding it. It's right there. See piece of cake.

GOON 1

Bring it over here. Set it down on the ground and step away.

DIAMOND

Whatever you say. Just don't shoot. You're scaring the lady.

IMA

(Dramatically over the top) Yes, I'm so frightened.

GOON 1

No one has to get hurt. We're just here for the bird.

DIAMOND

You want the bird? Then, CATCH! Hmpf!

SOUND: DIAMOND throws the package at the goons. Struggle to catch it. Footsteps and DIAMOND and IMA run away.

GOON 1

Hey!

GOON 2

Don't worry! I got it! Whoa! Whoa!

SOUND: Shatter. GOON 2 has dropped the package. The vase shattered.

GOON 1

That ain't no bird. We've been duped!

GOON 2

You two! Stop!

SOUND: Gunshots ring out.

DIAMOND

Get in! And watch your head!

SOUND: Car doors open and DIAMOND and IMA get in. Engine starts. Tires squeal as they drive off. Gun shots ring out.

MUSIC SWELLS.

INT. DIAMOND'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

15

SOUND: Doors open. DIAMOND and IMA stumble into DIAMOND's office.

STELLA

There you are. I was so worried.

DIAMOND

Don't worry. We got away.

IMA

Do you have it?

STELLA

It's on the desk.

SOUND: Door springs open. Footsteps rush in. Billy is here.

BILLY

Francesca!

IMA

Billy?

BILLY

I heard what happened. Are you okay?

IMA

I'm fine. I can't believe you came.

BILLY

Of course, I came. For a moment, I thought I lost you forever and that was the worst moment of my life. I can't let another second go by without telling you how much you mean to me. I've missed you every day since you left. I love you, Francesca.

IMA

Oh, Billy!

MUSIC: Romantic music.

SOUND: Kiss.

DIAMOND

Okay. Can we focus?

STELLA

Gather around. I'll open it on the desk.

IMA

I can't believe it. Generations of searching has come down to this. All my sacrifices.

STELLA

Shall I?

IMA

Open it.

SOUND: Rustling of papers. Then a gasp.

IMA

It's beautiful!

DIAMOND

Wow. I have to say I didn't believe you but that is honest to God a pigeon sculpted out of parmesan cheese.

STELLA

I've never seen anything like it.

BILLY

Look at it's eyes.

IMA

Rubies.

STELLA

Biggest I've ever seen.

IMA

And inside the cheese is hidden unknown riches.

DIAMOND

Incredible!

IMA

Oh, Mr. Diamond. I can't thank you enough for getting this to me. How can I ever repay you?

DIAMOND

Money is swell.

BILLY

What do we do now? Friday and his gang are still after that thing. You aren't safe in this city.

STELLA

We have to get you back to Italy.

IMA

But I can't. Not without my brother.

DIAMOND

We don't even know if he's still in town.

IMA

Yes, we do. Remember what Alice said? She told me to ask my brother why her husband was murdered. Confirming that my brother was the one who killed Mr. Bowman. Sorry, Dick.

DICK

Eh, I never liked him.

IMA

We now know she was working with Mr. Friday. Which means he must know where my brother is.

BILLY

It's too dangerous. Now that we have the bird we can't jeopardize it falling into his hands. He'd take over half the city with that kind of money.

IMA

Mr. Diamond. What do you think?

DIAMOND

I think, we need to have a meeting with Mr. Friday and get to the bottom of this, once and for all.

STELLA

How do we do that?

DIAMOND

Don't worry. I have a plan.

MUSIC SWELLS.

INT. PLAZA HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

16

WALLA - Hotel lobby.

DIAMOND (V/O)

The next day, I called and set up a meeting with Mr. Friday. I wanted information and he wanted the bird. Billy, Ms. Biscotti, and myself met Ms. Toledo in the lobby of the Plaza Hotel and were quickly escorted to a private room. She looked at Billy's hands and told us her employer would be very happy to see my mission completed. Toledo took us down a long hallway.

SOUND: Footsteps.

BILLY

What are you gonna say?

DIAMOND

Just leave the talking to me.

BILLY

What about you? If they find out you're a Biscotti we're toast.

IMA

Don't worry. I have it covered.

TOLEDO

Here we are.

SOUND: Knock on the door. Then, the door opens.

FRIDAY

Come in. Come in. Ah, Mr. Diamond. Good work. And I see you've brought friends.

DIAMOND

This is Billy.

FRIDAY

The muscle, I presume.

DIAMOND

And this is-

IMA

Olga Fibbenschnauzer.

FRIDAY

Ah, she's German. I like her.

DIAMOND

Let's get down to business. Before I give you the Pigeon, which I have right here in this wrapping, I have some questions.

FRIDAY

An inquisitive fellow.

DIAMOND

We know you know the whereabouts of another man who was after the bird. I've been trying to find him. We know he was looking for the Pigeon. And we know he was the one who killed my partner. Now that I'm about to give you the Pigeon he is of no danger to you. Let us take him off your hands.

FRIDAY

I'm afraid I have no idea who you're referring too. As you well know, I'm not one to take prisoners or keep pets. If I came across someone who stood in my way I would have gotten rid of him.

IMA

Where is he! I need to find my broth- I mean... He must pay for murdering Mr. Bowman.

FRIDAY

Ms. Fibbenschnauzer, please. I am moved by your passion but I have to say once more I don't know where that man is. True, I know the man's identity. Mr. Biscotti. I believe you are acquainted with his sister, Mr. Diamond.

DIAMOND

How do you know that?

FRIDAY

Son, I make it my business to know everything. I'm surprised you haven't already betrayed me for the italian.

DIAMOND

The night is young.

IMA

We are looking for that man. We know you have him. And we won't be doing any business until he walks through that door.

DIAMOND (V/O)

Just then the door flew open.

SOUND: The door bursts open!

VINCENZO

Mr. Friday! Finally I've found you! My name is Vincenzo Biscotti and I am here to reclaim my family's birthright and restore the Sicilian Pigeon to the rightful owner!

IMA

VINCENZO!

VINCENZO

FRANCESCA!

IMA

Brother! I'm so happy to see you!

FRIDAY

Why, it's the Biscotti sister in disguise! I knew there was something off about Ms. Fibbenschnauzer! Toledo! Get them!

DIAMOND

Not so fast. Don't move.

IMA

Oh, I was so worried about you.

DIAMOND

I knew you were that man I was chasing that night by the docks.

IMA

Why were you running?

VINCENZO

I was being chased!

DIAMOND

But then he disappeared.

IMA

Disappeared? Vincenzo, what happened.

VINCENZO

Well, I was trying to get away when he started shooting at my car.

IMA

Dick!

DIAMOND

I did what I had to do! I couldn't catch him. He pulled off into some alleyway and vanished.

IMA

What an insane story.

VINCENZO

It only gets weirder from there.

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

17

MUSIC SWELLS.

SOUND: The sound of a limping car. Gunshots.

VINCENZO (V/O)

I pulled off the road. My tire was flat and my car limped along. I wasn't sure I was going to get anywhere. But then, I saw an open garage door and rolled the car into it. I just got the door shut in time before the man following me, I guess that would be you, Mr. Diamond, passed outside. It was dark. Pitch dark in the garage. I fumbled along the walls for a light switch and when I did a Butler appeared.

BUTLER

You're late. This way please.

VIN

I'm sorry? My car-

VIN (V/O)

But he walked away. I had no other choice but to follow him. He led us up an elevator to the top floor. And the doors opened up to a massive penthouse that had obviously fallen into neglect. It was then I heard her voice.

DOLORES

Is that him, Jack? Please see him in. Come. Come.

VIN (V/O)

I was led to the kitchen where I was greeted by a jarring sight. Some tendriled being laid limp on the linoleum. It took me a moment to recognize the creature.

VIN

Is that an octopus? I'm not hungry but I do like sushi.

DOLORES

NO!

VIN (V/O)

Her voice rang out sharp and quick.

DOLORES

This poor creature is my stage partner. Oh, the act we performed together was glorious. He used to hold a pole in each of his eight loving arms and spin plates to thunderous applause.

VIN (V/O)

It was then that I recognized her.

VIN

Wait, I know you. Your Dolores Kennedy. The old vaudeville star. You were big!

DOLORES

I am big! It's the stages who got small. Audiences used to be fine with our acts. I was world renown. But then writers and directors, oh, they wanted plot. Plot, plot, plot. And

tossed us out last a closing night bouquet. I was the greatest.

VIN (V/O)

She lost herself in her memories. They convinced me to stay and seeing as how I was hiding out at the time, I obliged. Dolores seemed to like my company. Finally an audience to perform for once again. She would perform her acts for me and I would shower her with praise. I could feel her getting attached. She clung to me like grandma's marinara to a spaghetti noodle. One night, I came downstairs in a suit she bought for me to find a banquet and a band playing beautiful music and Dolores dancing.

DOLORES

Ah, Vincenzo, you're here. You look absolutely perfect. Such shoulders. And arms. And a nice, firm buttock-

VIN

Thank you, Dolores. What is all this for? What's the occasion?

DOLORES

Does one need an occasion. Come, let's dance.

MUSIC. They dance.

VIN

Shouldn't we wait for the others?

DOLORES

Hm?

VIN

The other guests?

DOLORES

Oh, darling, there are no other guests. We don't want them ruining our good time. Dance with me.

MUSIC.

VIN (V/O)

I knew then her feelings had grown too strong for me. I had to leave. I had forgotten my mission. Forgotten the Pigeon. Forgotten my sister. But Dolores was... unstable. Everytime I tried to leave she would lock herself in her room and threaten the worst things imaginable. So I stayed. But I couldn't stay forever. And the final night I was there was the strangest. Dolores had opened the window of her penthouse bedroom and threatened to throw herself to the streets below.

DOLORES

I couldn't bear it if you went. What do you want? Money? Do you want money?

VIN

I don't want any money. Get away from there. Don't do anything stupid!

DOLORES

Oh I just can't bear it. Goodbye, Vincenzo. Goodbye world.

VIN (V/O)

Dolores went to jump out of the window but before I could stop her. An ear splitting roar stopped me in my tracks.

SOUND: Roar!

DOLORES

What in the world! Put me down! Put me down! AHHH!

VIN

It was unbelievable! A large ape had grabbed Dolores and was dangling her over the city. The monster kept climbing the building as she screamed. Planes circled the building, shooting at the monster. I ducked for cover.

SOUND: Plane noises. Gunfire. Roar! Screams!

VIN

I had to evacuate the building. By the time I got downstairs I ran. Away from that woman. Away from the ape. I knew it was time to resume my mission. I knew where to find Mr. Friday from my months of research. So, I came to the Plaza and here you all are.

IMA

Oh, Vincenzo. What a heartbreaking story.

VIN

I'm just glad I found you. And you've got the Pigeon.

FRIDAY

Not so fast. A deal is a deal. Mr. Diamond was just about to give us the Pigeon.

VIN

No!

FRIDAY

I'm afraid it's true. After all this searching it's finally mine. Hand it over.

IMA

Diamond. No!

DIAMOND

I have to. A deal is a deal.

FRIDAY

Excellent. Now it's mine. All mine! I have to see it.

SOUND: Ripping paper. FRIDAY starts to unwrap the Pigeon.

FRIDAY

Ah, yes. At long last. The Sicilian Pigeon.

VIN

Wait, that's not- OOF!

IMA

Quiet.

DIAMOND

Well, we've upheld our side of the deal. You can just send payment to my office. You know how to reach me. (to the others,) Go. Go.

SOUND: Footsteps as they all rush out. Door closes behind them.

FRIDAY

Look at it, Toledo. Isn't it fantastic!

TOLEDO

Finally, boss. You have your prize.

FRIDAY

With this, we will be able to take over all of New York City!

TOLEDO

Come on, boss. Let's see what's inside.

FRIDAY

Yes! Yes. Let's see all the jewels. All the wealth! Wait. What is going on? The Pigeon is melting in my hand. This is a fake! It's not parmesan cheese. It's MOZZARELLA! Those scoundrels! After them! AFTER THEM!

MUSIC SWELLS.

EXT. AIRSTRIP - NIGHT

18

SOUND: Driving sounds; airplane overhead.

DIAMOND (V/O)

We quickly drove over the bridge and into Jersey where I had arranged a plane on a private airstrip to get the Biscotti's and the Pigeon out of New York. It wouldn't be long before Friday and the Germans were after us. We pulled

up to the hanger and the plane was already there waiting for us.

SOUND: Airplane noises; car doors, and footsteps.

STELLA

About time you got here.

IMA

Stella!

STELLA

Here you go Ms. Biscotti. One Sicilian Pigeon. The real deal!

BILLY

I'm impressed. How did you get a fake pigeon so fast?

STELLA

Eh. My cousin runs a deli. He's got a lot of cheese.

BILLY

You really saved the day!

STELLA

We're not out of the woods yet. You gotta go.

IMA

Mr. Diamond. I really can't thank you enough for all of your help.

DIAMOND

It was nothing.

IMA

How can I ever repay you?

DIAMOND

Maybe I can come to Italy and visit sometime. You know, after you restore your family's honor and whatnot.

IMA

I'd like that. What do you say, Vincenzo?

VIN

Sounds good to me. Sorry, again, for killing your partner. I had to stop him from getting the Pigeon to Mr. Friday.

DIAMOND

You did me a favor. I don't have to split commissions anymore.

BILLY

I hope you don't forget me.

IMA

Never.

STELLA

Let's give them a minute. I'll load the pigeon on the plane.

SOUND: Footsteps.

IMA

I feel so bad for leaving again. I don't know if I can manage it a second time.

BILLY

Don't be silly. You got a whole new life in Italy without me. You won't even miss me.

IMA

Why don't you come with me?

BILLY

What? To Europe?

IMA

People drink in Europe. You can open a new club. I'll give you a ruby or two for the down payment.

BILLY

Tempting offer, kid. But my home is here.

IMA

Oh, William.

BILLY

Hey. Look at me. One day you're gonna realize that the problems of two crazy kids don't amount to a bowl of pasta in this crazy world. You have to live your life for the both of us. I've thought about this a million times and every option comes to you getting on the plane. Besides, we'll always have Yakima.

IMA

But I can't leave you again.

BILLY

If you don't then you'll regret it. Maybe not today. Maybe not tomorrow. Maybe eventually, probably. And if you don't you can always come back.

IMA

Oh, right. I'm rich again.

BILLY

Plus, apparently there is a giant ape kidnapping women. Now is a good time to leave New York.

IMA

Okay, Billy. I'll do it. I'll get on that plane.

BILLY

Hey, here's looking at you, kid.

IMA

Here's looking at .. what?

BILLY

You.

IMA

Who's looking at me?

BILLY

I just said, 'Here's looking at you kid.'

IMA

I heard you. I just don't know what that means.

BILLY

I don't know! It's just something I said.

IMA

I guess I'm just confused because that sentence doesn't make any sense.

BILLY

Forget it.

IMA

Are you okay? Are you having a stroke?

BILLY

Forget I said anything.

IMA

I love you so much.

BILLY

I love you too.

MUSIC: Romantic music.

SOUND: Kiss.

SOUND: Noise of approaching cars.

DIAMOND

The Germans are coming. You have to go now. We'll hold them off.

BILLY

Go.

IMA

I'll never forget any of you. Especially you, Scarecrow.

DIAMOND

Go!

SOUND: Footsteps as they run. The plane takes off.

MUSIC SWELLS.

DIAMOND (V/O)

The plane took off just as Friday and his gang drove onto the tarmac. It was too late. They were gone. The Pigeon had flown the coop. The Biscotti's flew back to Italy and with their restored wealth, were able to buy back their family's estate. They were once more the noble family of Sicily. Billy went back to his club and kicked out all of the criminals, even the mayor. He was going straight. And as for me, well I went back to the office. Started the next case. I got a new partner. And I vowed I wasn't gonna sleep with his wife. And so far, I haven't. Looks like I've turned over a new leaf.

INT. SEEDY DIVE BAR - LATE NIGHT

19

BARTENDER

Incredible story.

DIAMOND

All in a day's work.

BARTENDER

Your order's up. I'll be right back.

SOUND: Footsteps.

DIAMOND (V/O)

I am positive I'll never forget that fateful day when Ms. Francesca Biscotti walked into my office. It changed me for the better.

BARTENDER

Here you go, Dick. Spaghetti Marinara. Would you like some parmesan cheese?

MUSIC: Sting.

SOUND: Roar!

END OF PLAY