

THUGS: A Mafia Farce

A comedy in two acts

By D. Richard Tucker

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THUGS

A Comedy in Two Acts

By D. Richard Tucker

CAST of CHARACTERS

MAMA Risotto, the owner of the local sidewalk café (F, 40 or older)

JULIA Cappuccino, in love with Romy (F, 18-25)

ROMY Montecarlo, the poetic lover, in love with Julia (M, 18-25)

GINA Sartori, disguised as a man, her brother Anthony (F, 25-35)

LOUIE, an unemployed thug (M, 30-45)

VITO, another unemployed thug (M, 30-45)

JOEY Testeroni, disguised as Anthony Sartori (M, 25-35)

Don CAPPUCCINO, a crime lord, father of Julia (M, 40 or older)

Don MONTECARLO, a crime lord, the father of Romy (M, 40 or older)

The SHARK, an effeminate hit man (M, 25-40)

Setting: Shady Groves, Illinois, a small town outside Chicago, in the spring of 1929.

Set description: A sidewalk café, with two tables and a café entrance next to a hotel entrance with a park bench.

Synopsis: A Mafia farce inspired by Goldoni's "Servant of Two Masters." It's 1929 and our two not-so-bright thugs have been banished from Chicago's gangland community to hide out in the lazy town of Shady Groves. Penniless and hungry, they hatch a plan to gain employment as bodyguards from two strangers, both of whom are disguised as Anthony Sartori paying a visit to the local Mafia Dons to collect money on a gambling debt. Now they have to keep the two bosses from finding out about each other, which becomes more complicated when the impostors ignite the rage of both crime bosses and are forced to put out contract on each other. Added to this are the feuding crime lords' lovesick children and an effeminate hit man, resulting in a whirlwind of mistaken identity.

Winner, 2003 Hunt Playwrights Festival, Burien, WA

Winner, Pigeon Players 2003 New Script Festival, San Jose, CA

THUGS
By D. Richard Tucker

ACT ONE
Scene One

Lights up on Main Street of Shady Groves, Illinois, a very small town outside Chicago. There is a restaurant, Mama Risotto's Café, with two tables for outdoor dining and a hotel with a park bench situated next to main entrance. It has the look of a small Italian villa. JULIA is sitting at one of the tables with spoon in hand. GINA enters warily, wearing ladies traveling clothing and carrying a man's suit and hat. GINA exits into the hotel, unseen by Julia. MAMA enters from restaurant and serves ice cream to JULIA who begins to eat. MAMA exits. ROMY enters, moving in a combination of skipping and ballet moves. He pirouettes.

ROMY

Dearest Julia, my heart aches for your gentle love.

JULIA

(eating ice cream)

I love you, too, Babe.

ROMY

It is the visage of your beauty that allows me to awaken each day knowing that life is worth living.

JULIA

Uh-huh.

ROMY

Your delicate smile delights my soul and fills my dreams.

JULIA

Uh-huh.

ROMY

The music of your voice echoes in my heart with the orchestrations of eternal passion.

JULIA

(scraping the bowl to get the last bite)
Romy, this is so good. You gotta try this Spumoni.

ROMY

The finest confections of our mortal world cannot compare to the sweetness of your lips.

JULIA

Yeah, I know. Do you want some of this or can I have the last bite?

ROMY

Take it all, my Dearest – the ice cream....my heart..... my love....

JULIA

(gulping down last bite)
Thanks.

ROMY

Julia, marry me and be my love until the end of time.

JULIA

Oh, Honey, nothin' doin' - we been through this a thousand times already.

ROMY

But Dearest, I could not live another day without the hope of eternity with you.

Enter MAMA Risotto from Restaurant.

JULIA

You know better than that. It's not gonna happen, that's all.

MAMA

Hey! You two better snap to it. If your daddies see you talkin' to each other you'll both be in hot water.

ROMY

But alas Mama Risotto, my heart cries out for the affection of this beauty.

MAMA

Oh, yeah, and if Don Montecarlo sees you with her, you'll be crying even more. He's so temperamental that the very sight of you two would cause his self-righteous pea brain to spontaneously combust. Of course, I don't mean that in a bad way.

JULIA

She's right, Romy – you know the deal.

ROMY

Why? Why? Why, cruel world, dost thou betray me so? The feverish hatred of our fathers has squelched the joy and love of our youth like a taper extinguished in the darkness of night.

MAMA

(picking up empty ice cream bowl)
Does he always talk like that?

JULIA nods “yes” as MAMA exits.

JULIA

Well, I gotta run. See you tomorrow?

ROMY

Yes, my love.

ROMY kisses JULIA’s hand and she exits.

ROMY (cont’d)

Til the morrow shall I anxiously await our next meeting.

ROMY sits, buries head in hands, and begins to moan. GINA enters. She is disguised as a man, wearing the suit and fedora with a false mustache, and carries a newspaper. She sits at the other table and begins to read. GINA, hearing ROMY’s moaning, grows uncomfortable.

GINA

You all right over there, slick?

ROMY moans.

GINA (cont’d)

Come on, it can’t be all that bad, huh?

ROMY moans. GINA shrugs, rolls eyes, puts down paper, gets up and sits next to ROMY.

GINA (cont’d)

Okay, champ, tell me what’s the matter.

ROMY

(sobbing)
I'm in love!

GINA

Oh, well, that explains it.

GINA gets up to leave as ROMY looks up.

ROMY

Don't you fancy to apperceive my anguish as the jewel of my life is whisked out of these loving arms?

GINA

Um, look – I was just trying to be polite. All I really want is a cold drink.

Enter MAMA.

GINA (cont'd)

(to MAMA)
Lemonade, please.

MAMA nods and exits.

ROMY

Are you not concerned with the passions of youthful love being silenced by the hateful judgments of the ancient patriarchs?

GINA

Do you always talk like this?

ROMY

Oh! The woe that befalls all those named Montecarlo!

GINA

Come again? Did you say "Montecarlo?"

ROMY

Alas, my troubled heart!

GINA

"Montecarlo?"

ROMY

A curse upon him - the wretched troll from whose loins I have sprung!

GINA

Um...does that mean he's your pop?

ROMY

Alas, tis true.

GINA

Well, that's great. I'm here to see Don Montecarlo. Where is he?

ROMY

You may find him in the midst of all that tortures my aching soul.

GINA

(with resignation)

Okay.... I've got the feeling you've got a story to spill.

ROMY

When I was but a lad – not some distant six months ago, my eyes beheld a maiden, more gentle than a whisper...

Enter MAMA with drink.

ROMY (cont'd)

Her eyes were the color of emeralds, her complexion like that of fresh moonlight. Her hair was as fine as angel breath and her smile would wake the sun each morning –

GINA

(to MAMA)

Is there a shorter version to this story?

MAMA

Romy loves Julia, but they can't get married because he's a Montecarlo and she's a Cappuccino, and their fathers have it in for each other. You see, their daddies are two of biggest bastards outside of Chicago, hiding behind their over-inflated egos and looking down on everyone else, even though they themselves are lower than the scum on the soap dish of the ladies room at the local service station. Of course, I don't mean that in a bad way.

GINA

And why is that?

ROMY

This twisted pair of malicious fools –

GINA

(to ROMY)
 Hey! The lady was talking.
 (to MAMA)
 And why is that?

MAMA

Montecarlo and Cappuccino are the heads of the biggest crime families in Shady Groves – well actually, they're not really crime "families," they're just two lame brain idiots pretending to be crime families. And they really don't do much crime-

GINA

I believe you're digressing.

MAMA

Well, the two guys hate each other – not that they have any reason, they just think they're supposed to. And if they catch Romy and Julia together, they'll blow a gasket.

GINA

So that explains Cry-Baby here.

MAMA

Right.

MAMA exits

GINA

Say, Romy, I'll tell you what, you tell me where I can find your dad, and I'll see if I can't put in a good word for you.

ROMY

Alas, I fear your efforts would be in vain!

GINA

Alas, my ass, I'll give it a try, okay? Just tell me where I can find him.

ROMY

Gentle sir, my desperation requires that I depend upon your charity. If you assent to plead my case, I will ensure your paths do cross.

GINA

Fair enough.

ROMY

You must
(staring at her breasts)
you must.....

GINA

I must what?

ROMY

Gentle sir, I know you not and yet....I feel a strange enticement..... a bizarre fancy in my heart...when I look upon your face.

GINA

Umm...yeah, whatever. What about your dad?

ROMY

Yes....Inscribe a message inviting him to converge with you. He will, upon reading your script, agree to this encounter.

GINA

How am I supposed to get the letter to him?

ROMY

Have your servant deliver it. That will make the best impression.

MAMA enters to pick up glass.

GINA

(to MAMA)
Excuse me, can I get some paper? To write a letter.

MAMA

Sure.

MAMA exits.

GINA

But I don't have a servant.

ROMY

Kind sir, my father places great confidence in a display of wealth. Show him your entitlement and he will comply. Should you fall short of his expectations, however, he will withdraw his favor. And that would be unfortunate for such a tender soul as you.....umm....Fare thee well.

ROMY exits skipping.

GINA

Great. Now I've got to rent a mail man.

MAMA enters with writing paper.

MAMA

Paper?

GINA

(taking paper and writing)

Thanks.

MAMA

So do you have business with Don Montecarlo?

GINA

That's right. The Don owes me a stash of lettuce.

MAMA

Well, I'm sure he's got the cash. He's got more money than God. That rich, whiny blockhead, does nothing but sit on his sorry ass raking in the dough and then rubbing it in the faces of all the average joes who actually work for a living. Of course, I don't mean that in a bad way. Nobody knows how much he's got in his bank account.

GINA

Well, by this time tomorrow, two grand is gonna be movin' from his account into the pocket of Anthony Sartori.

MAMA

You know Anthony Sartori?

GINA

(finishing letter, folding it, and putting it in her jacket pocket.)

I am Anthony Sartori.

MAMA

No you're not.

GINA

Yes I am.

MAMA

You aren't Anthony Sartori. I know Anthony Sartori and you, sir, are no Anthony Sartori. You, sir, are a lying scum sucking dog and a dubious duplicitous donkey-dating impostor. Of course, I don't mean that in a bad way.

GINA

On the contrary, Madam, I assure you, I am Anthony Sartori.

MAMA

Oh, yeah? Anthony Sartori has a scar on his right index finger.

GINA shows MAMA her finger.

MAMA(cont'd)

Well, Anthony Sartori has two small moles behind his ear.

GINA shows MAMA her moles.

MAMA (cont'd)

Well Anthony Sartori has a small tattoo of a ballerina in the middle of his chest.

GINA starts to rip open her shirt and then stops.

GINA

Okay, you got me there. How come you know so much about Anthony Sartori?

MAMA

I was there when little Tony was born. I was his first nanny and raised him until he was five years old.

GINA

Well, I'll be – you're Nanny Risotto!

MAMA

Yeah. Who are you?

GINA

I'm Gina, Tony's little sister.

MAMA

Gina! Just look at you! You've grown up to be so big! And sobutch. I never would have recognized you, but now I can see it. You got your father's eyes. And your mother's moustache.

GINA

Oh, Mama Risotto, I can't believe this. I'm so lucky to have found you. How could you tell I wasn't Tony, if you haven't seen him since he was five years old?

MAMA

Well, Tony has a different smile, a different face, and different eyes. Plus, Tony is dead.

GINA

Yes, this is true.

MAMA

I heard the news last week. That is very sad.

GINA

It is.

MAMA

How did it happen?

GINA

Don Cannelloni took him on a long walk off a short pier.

MAMA

That's too bad.

GINA

Yes, but that is why I am here.

MAMA

Really?

GINA

Tony has an gambling debt owed to him by Don Montecarlo and I came to collect it. I know that Montecarlo won't repay the money if he finds out Tony is dead, and so by impersonating Tony, I can claim the money quickly and then use it to start a new life with my lover, Joey Testeroni.

MAMA

Joey Testeroni! I heard he was one of the guys who did away with Tony in the first place.

GINA

No, Joey is innocent, but was there when it happened, so Don Cannelloni placed the blame on Joey. He went into hiding, but I'm going to meet up with him after I collect this money and we'll make a new life for ourselves in Iowa.

MAMA

I wish you the best of luck, Gina.

They embrace.

GINA

I've gotta get this letter to Don Montecarlo.

MAMA

If you need anything – you let me know.

MAMA exits through restaurant. GINA exits. Enter VITO and LOUIE. They case the joint and VITO picks up GINA's newspaper. They sit at a table. VITO reads paper while LOUIE looks around for awhile.

LOUIE

Vito.

VITO

(from behind paper)

What?

LOUIE

I'm hungry.

VITO

So?

LOUIE

I need something to eat.

VITO

I too am hungry, Louie, now shut your trap.

LOUIE

When are we gonna get some food?

VITO

Just as soon as you get some dough.

LOUIE

But I'm broke.

VITO

We both are, Louie.

Enter MAMA. She approaches VITO and LOUIE.

MAMA

What can I get you?

VITO
Just water for me, thanks.

MAMA
Just water. What about you?

LOUIE
How much is water?

MAMA
It's free.

LOUIE
You got anything cheaper than that?

MAMA
No.

LOUIE
Okay, I'll have water, too.

MAMA
Two waters, coming right up.

MAMA exits.

LOUIE
I wish I had some money.

VITO
Louie, quit jawing! This is all your fault. You are the reason we have no money. You are the reason we have no jobs. You are the reason we cannot go back to Chicago.

LOUIE
Was it really such a bad thing?

VITO
You stupid palooka! Stupid - that is what you are, Louie – stupid. Were it not for you, we would still be workin' and we would not be hungry and stuck in this no-good one-horse town. The Boss gives us a simple job to do, and you are too stupid to pull it off.

LOUIE
I didn't understand him!

VITO
Oh, yeah? What is so puzzling about "make him sleep with the fishes?"

LOUIE

It just wasn't clear, that's all.

VITO

Well, here is a lesson in clarity for you, Louie, it does not mean "put an aquarium in his bedroom."

LOUIE

I didn't know.

VITO

Well, now you do.

Enter MAMA with water glasses. She serves.

MAMA

Will this be all?

LOUIE

Do you have anything else on the menu that's free?

MAMA

No.

LOUIE

Just checkin'.

MAMA exits.

LOUIE (cont'd)

We need to find work.

VITO

Doing what? You are not even good at being a punk.

LOUIE

Maybe somebody in town could use us . As bodyguards or something.

VITO

Oh, sure, this place looks real dangerous. Probably a shortage of bodyguards.

Enter GINA.

LOUIE

What about that guy?

What guy?

VITO

LOUIE

(motioning toward GINA)
Him. He looks like a bit of a nance.

VITO

Maybe you are right.

VITO approaches GINA.

VITO (cont'd)

Excuse me, sir.

GINA

Yes.

VITO

My partner and I were observing you and happened to notice that you were alone.

GINA

Is that a problem?

VITO

Oh, no, sir, it is just that we thought a distinguished gentleman like yourself might need someone to assist him. To provide protection from the lower elements and attend to his needs ... run errands... pick up the dry cleaning...whatever.

GINA

Well, now that you mention it, I do have something I need done.

LOUIE

Then we could do that for you.

VITO

We would be most appreciative of the employment.

GINA

It's just one thing.

VITO

Well, we had hoped you would hire us.

GINA

I don't know –

VITO

Of course, with times being tough like they are, we would work at a reduced rate –

LOUIE

Like food.

VITO

We would not want to be a financial burden, but would simply want a fair wage.

LOUIE

Or just a sandwich.

GINA

Okay, I tell you what – I'm not going to be in town for long, and I don't have a lot for you to do, but if you two will do whatever I need it, I'll make sure you get three meals a day.

LOUIE

It's a deal.

GINA

(pulls letter from coat pocket)

Fine. Here's the first thing. I need this delivered to Don Montecarlo.

VITO

Don Montecarlo?

GINA

Take this to him. It's very important.

LOUIE

What about the food?

GINA

(yelling into restaurant)

Hey, Mama!

MAMA appears in doorway.

GINA (cont'd)

Could you get these two some pizza? Just put it on my tab.

MAMA

Yes, Mr. Sartori.

MAMA exits.

VITO
Mr. Sartori?

GINA
Anthony Sartori.

LOUIE
It is our pleasure to make your acquaintance.

GINA
Yeah, likewise. Take that letter to Don Montecarlo, and then come back and tell me when it's done.

LOUIE
Can we eat first?

GINA
Yeah, go ahead, but snap to it.

GINA exits. MAMA enters with pizza.

VITO
Well how do you like that? Louie, that was the best idea you ever had.

LOUIE
Oh, yeah, this is swell.

VITO and LOUIE begin to eat. MAMA exits.

VITO
Nothing like a couple of slices of pizza when you are hungry.

LOUIE
How many is a couple?

VITO
How many is a couple? A couple is two.

LOUIE
Then why do you say couple? Why don't you say "two?"

VITO
It is a fancy way of saying it. I learned that in night school. See, the word "couple" comes from the Latin word ... "couple" which means ... "a couple."

LOUIE

Oh, okay, I get it.

VITO

Like when you see a guy with his wife – that is a couple – a man and a woman – two people. A couple.

LOUIE

A couple.

VITO

Yeah, or a guy with his girlfriend. That is a couple. Or guy with his mistress. That would be a couple.

LOUIE

Or a guy with a hooker?

VITO

Yeah, that is a couple. But only for one night.

Enter JOEY, carrying a small piece of luggage. He is handsome, stylish, and wears a false moustache.

LOUIE

Hey, there's another guy. Vito, maybe we can work for him, too.

VITO

You wanna work for two guys?

LOUIE

Why not – how much can there be to do around here? And if we work for two guys, maybe we can even get a room for the night.

VITO

I suppose if we play it smart, we could probably pull it off without each of them knowing about the other.... This just might work.

(to JOEY)

Excuse me, sir.

JOEY

Yes?

VITO

My partner and I saw you and happened to notice that you were alone.

JOEY

You're very observant.

VITO

Yes, we are. I mean, it is just that we thought a distinguished gentleman like yourself might need someone to assist him.

JOEY

So you're looking for work, huh?

LOUIE

We would be most depreciative of the employment.

JOEY

Do you have a resume? Any references?

VITO

Well, no.

LOUIE

We had to leave Chicago in a hurry so we didn't have the chance to get any letters of recommendation.

JOEY

Why such a hurry?

VITO

Well, we were –

LOUIE

We screwed up a job pretty bad and the Boss canned us.

VITO

It is actually not as bad as it sounds.

JOEY

I'm not sure. I could use a couple of goons, but I couldn't have you screwing things up -

VITO

Oh, we would be most careful, I assure you. And, of course, with times being tough, we would work for a reduced rate –

LOUIE

Like room and board.

VITO

Perhaps you could hire us on a contingency basis, and instead of paying us, you would simply provide us with a place to sleep while we are in your employment?

JOEY

I guess that would work. Take my bag and go check in. And get a room for yourself.

VITO

And what name should we use to check you in?

JOEY

My name is Anthony Sartori.

VITO and LOUIE exchange looks.

LOUIE

Anthony Sartori?

JOEY

Once you check in, come back here. I'll be inside – I need to use the telephone.

JOEY exits through restaurant. VITO and LOUIE move toward hotel.

LOUIE

There's somethin' funny goin' on here. Can you believe that guy's name?

VITO

Anthony Sartori?

LOUIE

Wasn't that the other guy's name, too?

VITO

Yeah, we are working for two guys that have the same name.

LOUIE

So we're working for "a couple" of guys named Anthony Sartori?

VITO

Yeah. Let us just hope there are not any more of them. That could be confusing. We come to town and find a handful of guys, all named Anthony Sartori –

LOUIE

How many is a handful?

VITO
Five.

LOUIE
How do you get that?

VITO
How many fingers do you have on your hand?

LOUIE
(after counting)
Five.

VITO
Exactly. So a handful of something is five of something.

LOUIE
So there are three more guys out there named Anthony Sartori?

VITO
Let us hope not. I would not want to work for five bosses.

LOUIE and VITO exit through hotel.
JULIA enters, sits and begins to freshen her
make up. MAMA enters from restaurant
and picks up leftover pizza plate.

MAMA
Are you back again?

JULIA
Oh, Mama, I just can't stay away from that Spumoni.

MAMA
You keep eating that ice cream, Julia, and you'll get so fat that your ass will have its own
congressman.

JULIA
Please.

MAMA
All right, I'll get you some.

JOEY enters from restaurant.

MAMA (cont'd)

Would you like something, sir?

JOEY

Yes, thank you. Perhaps a cappuccino?

JULIA bursts into laughter.

MAMA

I'll bring it out to you.

MAMA exits.

JOEY

Did I say something funny, girlie?

JULIA

Oh, yes, it was hilarious. You said "perhaps a Cappuccino."

JOEY

And that amuses you?

JULIA

Oh my god, yes. You see, my name is Julia – Julia Cappuccino – so when you said "Perhaps a Cappuccino," it sounded like you wanted me.

JULIA laughs again.

JOEY

Oh. Well, I'm sorry for the misunderstanding – as amusing as it was for you. You say your name is Cappuccino – do you know Don Cappuccino?

JULIA

Oh, yeah. That's my daddy.

Enter MAMA with cappuccino and spumoni. She serves exits.

JOEY

So where might I find your father?

JULIA

What do you want with him?

JOEY

My name is Anthony Sartori. Your father he owes me some money – I came to collect.

JULIA

Oooo, Daddy hates to part with his money. Maybe you should wait a little while until he's not so grumpy. See, Daddy heard Don Montecarlo bragging about his bank account this morning and Daddy is so very jealous of him.

JOEY

I see.

JULIA

Of course, Daddy's always upset with Don Montecarlo which is why I can't marry my sweet Romy so I'm gonna grow up to be an old maid and then die a bitter and wrinkled old woman at the age of twenty-seven. Oh gee, this Spumoni is mushy.

JOEY

I'm sure it can't be as bad as all that. Your predicament, that is – not the ice cream.

JULIA

Oh, you bet it is. I'm gonna die a virgin. We ain't never gettin' married. Not while Daddy's alive, anyhow.

JOEY

Maybe Maybe I could help?

JULIA

Really?

JOEY

I can give it a shot.

JULIA

Gee willickers! You'd do that for me? You'd kill Daddy?

JOEY

No! I thought I could talk to him....give him an objective opinionconvince him to allow you to marry.

JULIA

Oh. All right, I guess that might work.

JOEY

But I need to see your father.

JULIA

Maybe you should write him a letter. That might go over better than showing up on his doorstep and demanding your money.

JULIA (cont'd)

(yelling into restaurant)

Hey, Mama! Bring some paper for this guy to write a letter.

(shows JOEY the photo in her locket)

See, that's my Romy there. Cute, ain't he?

JOEY

Nice looking kid.

Enter MAMA with paper.

JOEY (cont'd)

Thank you.

MAMA

(while exiting)

I should start selling stationery on the side.

JULIA

I'm gotta scoot. Make sure you don't say nothin' stupid in that letter. Daddy is very sensitive.

JOEY

(writing)

I'll remember that.

JULIA exits as VITO and LOUIE enter.

LOUIE

Hey Boss, we got you a room.

VITO

(handing key to JOEY)

Here is your key.

JOEY

(still writing)

Thanks. I need you to deliver a letter for me.

VITO

Certainly, Boss.

JOEY

Do either of you know Don Cappuccino?

No. LOUIE

But we can find him. VITO

(finishing letter and folding)
Good. Take this to him. JOEY

(taking letter)
Right Boss. LOUIE

JOEY
I'll be in my room. Come give me the scoop when you get that done. It's real important.

JOEY exits through hotel.

LOUIE
Okay, so we got a letter for Don Montecarlo and a letter for Don Cappuccino –

VITO
Hey, do not mix those up!

LOUIE drops letters on ground.

Uh-oh. LOUIE

VITO
Now we do not know which one is which.

VITO picks up one letter and LOUIE picks up the other.

VITO and LOUIE
(reading)
“Dear most honorable Don.”

Oops. LOUIE

VITO
I ought to knock your block off! You are so stupid. I guess we will just have to hope they get to the right Don.

LOUIE

(trying to make light of the situation)

So we got a couple of letters for a couple of Dons.

VITO

And it is going to give us a handful of problems.

LOUIE and VITO exit as the lights fade
down.

THUGS

ACT ONE

Scene Two

Lights up as CAPPUCCINO enters from the restaurant. MAMA enters from restaurant with a pizza and serves it to him. CAPPUCCINO sits.

MAMA

There you are, Don Cappuccino. Two slices of pepperoni and mushroom. But watch out – it's hot.

CAPPUCCINO

I know that. Don't you think I know that pizza is hot?

MAMA

Can I get you anything else?

CAPPUCCINO

No, thank you.

MAMA exits while CAPPUCCINO wrestles with pizza. He take a bite and then drops the piece.

CAPPUCCINO (cont'd)

Owww! That is hot!

Enter VITO and LOUIE.

VITO

Excuse me, sir, we are looking for Don Cappuccino-

CAPPUCCINO

I am Don Cappuccino.

LOUIE

Oh, what luck.

VITO

Our boss sent you a letter.

LOUIE fumbles with the letters and finally gives one to CAPPUCCINO who reads.

CAPPUCCINO

Dear most honorable Don blah blah blah..... two thousand dollars! What? blah, blah, blah, blah your child is in love with a beautiful woman...what? Who is this idiot? First he insists that I owe him two thousand dollars, and then he tells me my daughter is in love with a woman.... And that I should let them get married! Who is this idiot?

LOUIE

Anthony Sartori.

CAPPUCCINO

I know that. Do you think I don't know who wrote this letter?

LOUIE

It's just that you asked –

CAPPUCCINO

I know that.

LOUIE

And so I was just answerin' -

CAPPUCCINO

I know that. Do you think I don't know that?

VITO

Is there a message you would like us to take to our boss?

CAPPUCCINO

I want to see this moron. I want to know who he is that makes him think he can waltz into my town and demand money from me –

LOUIE

Like I said, Anthony Sartori –

CAPPUCCINO

I know that. I can read his signature. Don't you think I can read?

LOUIE

Oh, sure –

CAPPUCCINO

You tell your boss that I want to see him – that I want to know how he can write me this piece of tommy-rot and tell me that my daughter is involved in an unnatural love affair.

(yelling at Café')

Mama! Check, please.

(to the thugs)

You tell your boss that. You tell him that he has made Don Cappuccino very angry. Understand?

VITO

Yes, Don Cappuccino.

CAPPUCCINO

Any questions?

LOUIE

Just one.

CAPPUCCINO

What?

LOUIE

Are you gonna eat the rest of that pizza?

CAPPUCCINO glares at LOUIE and walks away as MAMA enters with the bill.

LOUIE (cont'd)

I guess that means “no.”

CAPPUCCINO gives MAMA exact change as VITO and LOUIE sit down to eat.

CAPPUCCINO

Mama, I need you to get a message to the Shark.

MAMA

The Shark?

CAPPUCCINO

The Shark. Tell him I need to see him. I have a job for him.

MAMA

What's up, Don?

CAPPUCCINO

There have been a lot of suspicious characters in town lately. I think Don Montecarlo may be planning a hostile takeover. I need reinforcements.

CAPPUCCINO exits.

MAMA

Didn't you boys just eat a pizza and hour ago?

LOUIE

Yeah, you make a great pizza.

VITO

We have not eaten for quite a while. At least a few days now.

MAMA

Well, eat up.

MAMA exits.

LOUIE

Has it been that long since we left Chicago? A few days? How many is a few?

VITO

A few is four. They sound kind of the same. Few- four.

Enter Don MONTECARLO.

LOUIE

Few – four. Few – four. I get it.

LOUIE runs into MONTECARLO.

LOUIE

Hey, Buddy – you wanna watch where you're going?

MONTECARLO

I beg your pardon

LOUIE

Next time, say "Excuse me." That's the polite way.

VITO

Louie!

MONTECARLO

Do you know who I am?

LOUIE

No, but I bet your gonna tell us.

VITO

Louie!

MONTECARLO

I, dear sir, am Don Montecarlo, the richest man in all of Shady Groves. Do you have any idea how much money I have?

VITO

No, sir, we do not know. We are terribly sorry, Don Montecarlo. We did not mean to show any disrespect.

MONTECARLO

Go ahead, guess how much money I have. Tell me how much is in my bank account.

LOUIE

Um...fifty bucks?

MONTECARLO bursts into laughter.

VITO

We are so sorry, Don Montecarlo, we do not want to cause any ruckus. We will just be – oh – we have a letter for you.

MONTECARLO

For me?

VITO

(gives him the letter)

Our boss asked us to deliver this to you.

MONTECARLO

(takes letter and reads)

Two thousand dollars! How dare you!

LOUIE

It wasn't us, Don. It was our boss.

MONTECARLO

Two thousand dollars! How ridiculous!

LOUIE

What's the matter – ain't you got that much?

MONTECARLO stops and stares at LOUIE
– then bursts into laughter.

MONTECARLO

Oh, you silly little man.

(continues reading)

And what's this – “your child is in love with a handsome young man?” Oh, I knew this was coming. I was afraid to face the truth, but why else would Romy run around spouting poetry like an Ivy League pansy? And two thousand dollars!

Enter MAMA.

VITO

Would you like us to pass on a message to our boss for you?

MONTECARLO

Yes, tell him I want to see him right away. If he wants his money, he must see me to get it. Thank you, gentlemen, for your service. This is for your trouble.

MONTECARLO hands them a dollar.

LOUIE

A buck? Thanks, Don.

MONTECARLO

Mama, I need you to send a message for me. I need you to get in touch with the Shark.

MAMA

The Shark?

MONTECARLO

The Shark. I need to see him immediately. There's something funny going on around here and I'm certain that Cappuccino is behind it.

MONTECARLO exits.

LOUIE

Mama, bring us two more slices of pizza. With onions and peppers. We can pay for it – we got some money now.

MAMA

Haven't you two had enough to eat?

VITO

We have been without food for quite a while. We could probably eat several pizzas, given the opportunity.

MAMA

Well, I'm not gonna turn away business.

MAMA exits.

LOUIE

Several pizzas?

VITO

Just an expression.

LOUIE

So how many is several?

VITO

Several is seven. They both start with "sev."

LOUIE

Then how many is six?

VITO

Some.

LOUIE

Eight?

VITO

Eight is a bunch.

LOUIE

How do you get that?

VITO

Eight sounds like grape, which come in bunches.

LOUIE

That's pretty confusing. I'm glad you went to college, Vito, so you can teach me these things.

Enter GINA.

GINA

Hey, guys, did you do that thing for me? For Don Montecarlo?

Don Montecarlo? LOUIE

Right. Did you give him the letter? GINA

Oh, well, we ... um ... well LOUIE

You see, he was ..a ... VITO

Did Don Montecarlo get the letter? GINA

Yes, boss, he got the letter. LOUIE

Yes, boss. VITO

Well ... what did he say? GINA

He was not too pleased. VITO

Did he say he was going to give me my money? GINA

Well, actually – LOUIE

Don Montecarlo did not say anything about that. He seemed to be more concerned about his son. VITO

What's wrong with his son? GINA

Umm... someone told the Don that his boy was a little...um.. VITO

Swishy. LOUIE

GINA

Really? So what about my money?

VITO

We don't know. But Don Cappuccino said he wanted to see you.

GINA

Don Cappuccino? Why would he want to see me?

LOUIE

He said he wanted to talk to you. He was very angry.

GINA

That's funny. What would he want with me?

Enter MAMA with pizza. She serves.

MAMA

Good afternoon, Mr. Sartori. How are you today?

GINA

Fine, thanks, Mama.

MAMA

Mr. Sartori –

GINA

Yes?

MAMA

(sotto voce)

I gotta warn you – something is going on in town and I think you better be careful. Cappuccino and Montecarlo are thinking there's some kind of opposition against them – so much so, that they have both called for the Shark.

GINA

The Shark?

MAMA

The Shark. The Shark has a reputation for taking care of people's problems – if you know what I mean.

GINA

I see. Thank you.

MAMA

The Shark is a mean one - supposedly wiped out the entire Gambino family over lunch and then attended the funeral service the following week to spit in the faces of the grieving widows like some sadistic demon spawn with a stick up his butt. Of course, I don't mean that in a bad way.

GINA

I'd better be careful. But first I gotta see Don Cappuccino.

GINA and MAMA exit.

LOUIE

This pizza is swell.

VITO

Yes, it is.

LOUIE

Okay, so gettin' back to these numbers – this is kind of fun, you know – what's nine?

VITO

Nine is a group.

LOUIE

A group?

VITO

Yeah.

LOUIE

That doesn't make sense.

VITO

That is mathematics for you.

Enter JOEY with newspaper.

JOEY

There you are.

LOUIE

Hey there, Mr. Sartori.

JOEY

Did you two drop off that letter with Don Cappuccino?

VITO

Yes, Mr. Sartori, we dropped off a letter with Don Cappuccino.

JOEY

And did he say when he'd be giving me my money.

VITO

Actually, he did not mention that.

JOEY

He didn't say he'd pay me my money?

LOUIE

No, but he did have some very strong words about his daughter.

JOEY

What about his daughter?

VITO

It seems that the Cappuccino girl is ... um

LOUIE

She's a thespian.

JOEY

What?

VITO

It appears that she prefers the love of a woman to the love of a man.

JOEY

Really? That doesn't sound right. She said she loved the Montecarlo kid. Of course, that would explain why she's still a virgin.

VITO

Don Cappuccino was very upset.

JOEY

That's not good.

LOUIE

And Don Montecarlo wants to see you.

JOEY

Montecarlo? Why?

VITO

He...uh... he ... did not say.

JOEY

Great. Okay, I'd better go see him right after dinner. You guys let me know if you hear anything from Don Cappuccino about my dough.

LOUIE

Right, boss.

JOEY sits and reads paper.

LOUIE (cont'd)

(moving to hotel)

So what about the number zero?

VITO

Zero? Zero is a nothing.

LOUIE

A nothing? A zero is a nothing?

VITO

Yeah. Don't you remember – what did Tommy Two-Fingers call you when he first took you on?

LOUIE

A zero.

VITO

Exactly.

VITO and LOUIE exit into hotel. JOEY puts down paper and starts toward Restaurant entrance. Enter ROMY skipping. JOEY stops in doorway to observe. ROMY looks around, obviously waiting for someone.

ROMY

Oh, dear clock – tick away the minutes, tock away the moments – for time holds no meaning while I am cast about in the tumultuous sea of love.

JOEY

What's up, sport?

ROMY

Tis my heart – it aches with ancient anguish of lost love’s lucid longing.

JOEY

Whoa! Go easy on the alliteration. Do you always talk like this?

ROMY

Sit here, gentle stranger and I will pour out my heart and fill your ears with weary words of woe.

JOEY

I don’t think I can handle it.

ROMY

My soul is shred from stem to stout in judicious jousts of the jewel Julia –

JOEY

Hold it! Are you the Montecarlo kid?

ROMY

Tis I.

JOEY

So how’s that thing working out with Julia? Any word from you fathers yet?

ROMY

Dear sir, my situation grows worse, for though I love dear Julia, alas my heart is confused by such feelings that did spring forth after meeting a gentleman whom, I dare say, did entice me with his gentle spirit, charming manner, and delicate looks.

JOEY

You’ve fallen for a guy?

ROMY

I am sir, greatly bewildered by this turn of events. For I have never experienced the likes of this phenomenon.

JOEY

So it’s the first time, huh? Well, look, I wouldn’t worry. It’s probably just a one time thing – no big deal. I remember when I was in college I had a thing for one of the guys on the wrestling team who- but...um.... everybody did a little experimenting in college - anyway, don’t worry about it. The important thing is that you love Julia.

ROMY

Thank you, stranger, for this opportune encouragement.

JOEY

I'm gonna go grab something to drink. You want anything?

ROMY

Many thanks, kind sir, but it is I who should repay you for your kindness.

JOEY

Forget about it.

JOEY exits into restaurant. JULIA enters.

JULIA

Romy! Oh, Romy! Have I got great news!

ROMY

Speak, my love, and tell me of your glorious tidings.

JULIA

I met this guy – Anthony Sartori – and he said he was gonna talk to Daddy and convince him to let you and me get married.

ROMY

Behold, what fortune, for I, too, met Anthony Sartori, a friendly yet fragile fellow, who did agree to speak to my father and persuade him to allow us to wed.

JULIA

Holy cow! What a co-inky-dink!

ROMY

I do hope his aspirations are successful. Such news would cross my ears like the melodious song of a nightingale.

JULIA

Romy, you gotta go easy on this poetry stuff, man, rumors are getting out that you might be a little swishy.

ROMY

Swishy?

JULIA

Yeah, hon, that ain't gonna go over so good.

ROMY

Julia, my love – tell me true – do you think that I might be swishy?

JULIA

No, baby, I know better than that.

ROMY

Then whywhy did I have such feelings for that fellow? That dear sweet Anthony Sartori did with his gentle nature so touch me.

JULIA

What did he touch you with?

ROMY

I saw in his sparkling eyes and tender smile, a visage that did call my soul. His delicate features, those cheekbones, the soft eyelashes –

JULIA

Oh, gimme a break. Are you losing it, Buster?

ROMY

I cannot be certain. I only know that I felt a strange attraction to this man as though my heart were a honey bee flying towards this luscious flower.

JULIA

What? So what's the deal there, Romy? Don't tell me you'd rather have this guy Anthony more than me.

ROMY

I.....Julia, I love you with all my heart and yet there is some strange attraction to this most engaging gentleman. I know not what to say.

JULIA

What? Well, how about this? "Screw you, you stupid bastard!"

JULIA strikes ROMY who goes unconscious and falls under the table, out of sight. JULIA exits in a huff. JOEY enters with a beverage glass and sits at table.

JOEY

Hey, where'd he go? Probably ran off to find his girl.

Enter MONTECARLO.

MONTECARLO

Mr. Sartori?

JOEY
 Yes. Don Montecarlo?

MONTECARLO
 Yes.

JOEY
 What can I do for you?

MONTECARLO
 I received your letter.

JOEY
 What letter?

MONTECARLO
 The letter you wrote to me to demand money and slander the good name of Montecarlo.

JOEY
 I would never -

MONTECARLO
 What grieves me most, Mr. Sartori, is your accusation that my son is a little light in the lasagna, if you know what I mean.

JOEY
 That's not true. I never said such a thing. I hardly even know your son. This whole thing is a hoax.

MONTECARLO
 And while you demand that I owe you two thousand dollars—

JOEY
 (puzzled)
 I never demanded any money from you!

MONTECARLO
 I am quite willing to pay it.

JOEY
 (changing attitude)
 Because I knew I need not demand what you fully acknowledge.

MONTECARLO
 Because the Montecarlos never welch on their debts.

JOEY

Never. Of course, I understand if you do not have sufficient funds at the moment.

MONTECARLO

Mr. Sartori, do you have any idea how wealthy I am?

JOEY

Please, Don, I meant no disrespect.

MONTECARLO

Guess how much money I have in my bank account. Go on, guess.

JOEY

I have no idea.

MONTECARLO

Come on, guess, Sartori. Tell me. I bet you can't.

JOEY

I don't know, Don Montecarlo.

MONTECARLO

Nobody knows. Nobody knows how wealthy I am or how much money I have. So don't insult me, Sartori.

JOEY

I did not mean to, Don Montecarlo.

MONTECARLO

And watch what you say about my son.

JOEY

Don Montecarlo, I assure you, I did not say anything about your son.

MONTECARLO

Then where did that letter come from?

JOEY

I don't know, Don Montecarlo. I assure you I did not write it.

MONTECARLO

(rising)

I wonder....Cappuccino may be behind this..

ROMY moans from under table.
MONTECARLO does not notice it, but

JOEY does and looks underneath, looking back up in shock.

MONTECARLO (cont'd)

It would be just like him.

JOEY

Don Cappuccinno?

ROMY sticks his head up and JOEY shoves it back down. MONTECARLO looks back at table as JOEY coughs to hide ROMY's voice, but MONTECARLO sees nothing.

MONTECARLO (cont'd)

He's a notorious trouble-maker, very jealous of me. Actually, he used to be a pastry chef at the casino.

JOEY

Then how did he get to be don?

MONTECARLO

That's his name – Donovan Cappuccino. He's not even a good don. Only interested in prestige. Makes a wonderful creampuff, though. Melts in your mouth. But in spite of his dastardly ways, I have made a name for myself here. I have a legacy to leave to my son, Romy.

ROMY

Huh?

ROMY's head pops up, JOEY pushes it down, MONTECARLO looks at JOEY.

JOEY

Huh?

MONTECARLO

A legacy. But it bothers me to hear thatwel, granted, his uncle Morris was like that, but I had hoped that Romy would provide me with grandchildren. That is why I'm bothered by your letter.

JOEY

But Don Montecarlo, I swear, that was not my letter. I never wrote those things.

MONTECARLO

Then, there must be an impostor in town, writing letters using your name. Take care of him before your reputation is damaged.

JOEY

Yes.

MONTECARLO

Get rid of this phoney and I will give you your money. And you assure me that this rumor about my son did not come from you?

JOEY

I swear it.

MONTECARLO

Very well, take care of your business. Come by and see me later for your money.

JOEY

Yes, Don Montecarlo.

MONTECARLO exits as JULIA enters.

JULIA

There you are!

JOEY

What's up?

JULIA

I just found out that Romy doesn't love me. Actually, he doesn't love any woman.

JOEY

What?

JULIA

Oh, yeah. He told me. In fact, you're the one he loves. But I kinda understand. A handsome guy like you would attract more than just women.

JOEY

That's not true, Julia. I'm sure he loves you.

JULIA

No he doesn't. He's just waiting to get his hands on you-

ROMY's hand pops up, but JOEY pushes it down.

JULIA (cont'd)

but I know you're not that way. Hey! Why don't you marry me, Anthony? Take me away from here.

JOEY

I can't do that. But Julia, Romy loves you. He really does. You've got to believe me, this is just a big mistake.

JULIA

Do you really think so?

JOEY

I'm sure of it. I talked to him and he has it for you - really bad.

JULIA

You're saying Romy really does love me?

JOEY

Yes.

JULIA

Then he can't be in love with you...

JOEY

No.

JULIA

And this whole thing about him bein' a swishy-pants...

ROMY pops up from under the table, rising up between JOEY's legs.

ROMY

It was merely a rumor, my love.

JULIA

Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhh!

JULIA screams at the sight of ROMY under the table and exits running.

JOEY

Swell move, Lover Boy.

ROMY

What could have frightened her so?

JOEY

Think about it, kid. She may be a virgin, but she's not totally innocent.

ROMY

Alas, Alas! I felt this strange attraction towards a man, and now my true love has forsaken me. Oh, my life is as tumultuous as the crashing waves on the rocky crags.

JOEY

Really?

ROMY

She called you Anthony.

JOEY

Yeah, that's my name. Anthony Sartori.

ROMY

This cannot be, for I have seen Anthony Sartori. In fact, it was he who did draw me closer in the web of sexual confusion. You are an impostor!

JOEY

Hey! Keep it down will you?

ROMY

You are a villain!

JOEY

No, I'm not. Now shut up and I'll explain.

ROMY

Speak, you vile devil.

JOEY

Cut the crap, will you? The fact is, I'm not Anthony Sartori – I'm just disguised as him so that I can collect on a debt the don owes him.

ROMY

And what gives you the right to extort money from another?

JOEY

Tony would want me to have this money – we were best friends since we were kids.

ROMY

Then why does he not just give you the money?

.....'Cause he's dead.

JOEY

No!

ROMY

Yeah.

JOEY

So suddenly.

ROMY

Yeah. And with this money, I'm going to marry his sister Gina and we're going to move to Iowa to start a new life together. We know that he would want us to do this – kind of a memorial to him.

JOEY

That is so gruesome.

ROMY

Yeah, he died so very young.

JOEY

Actually, I was speaking about Iowa.

ROMY

But you better not tell anybody.

JOEY

You can rely on my silence. For I know that you must abide by Cupid's bidding. But I beg of you, help me to win back my lovely Julia and convince my father to allow us to wed.

ROMY

I'll see what I can do. Look, I've gotta run. I'll talk to you later.

JOEY

Fare thee well.

ROMY

JOEY exits. ROMY exits skipping. GINA enters from hotel and paces in front of the bench. Enter Don CAPPUCCINO.

Are you Anthony Sartori?

CAPPUCCINO

GINA

Yes. Don Cappuccino? I've been waiting for you.

CAPPUCCINO

I know that. I got your letter.

GINA

What letter?

CAPPUCCINO

The letter you sent demanding the repayment of two thousand dollars and insulting my daughter.

GINA

I didn't send you a letter.

CAPPUCCINO

I know that.

GINA

Then why are you busting my chops about a letter I didn't send?

CAPPUCCINO

Well..... I received a letter, with your signature, and I'm upset at the things that were said.

GINA

But I didn't send a letter.

CAPPUCCINO

I know. The question is: If you did not send this letter, who did?

GINA

I don't know.

CAPPUCCINO

I know that. I know that you don't know.

GINA

I didn't know that you knew.

CAPPUCCINO

I know that, too. I know that you don't know that I knew that you don't know.

GINA

Look, maybe somebody else wrote it.

CAPPUCCINO

I know. I wouldn't be surprised if it were Montecarlo behind all this.

GINA

Don Montecarlo? Really?

CAPPUCCINO

Do you know how he came to be Don Montecarlo?

GINA

No.

CAPPUCCINO

That was a rhetorical question – I know you don't know. His full name is Donald Montecarlo. "Don" isn't his title; it's his name. He's not much of a Don, either. He used to be a wine connoisseur, but lost his job at the onset of Prohibition.

GINA

Really?

So if you didn't write the letter, the someone else did.

GINA

Then there must be some other guy out there writing letters using my signature.

CAPPUCCINO

I know. Find this impostor - dispose of him. If you do not, I will never repay this debt. You'll get your money once you've taken care of this matter. Good day, Mr. Sartori.

GINA

See you later.

CAPPUCCINO

I know that.

CAPPUCCINO exits. VITO and LOUIE enter.

GINA

Guys, come here. We got work to do.

LOUIE

What's up, boss?

GINA

All right, first of all, there's some guy coming to town – they call him the Shark.

The Shark?

VITO

The Shark. And it's possible he could mean trouble.

GINA

You're scared of a fish?

LOUIE

This guy is a torpedo. He takes care of people, if you know what I mean.

GINA

So he wants to take care of you?

VITO

Could be. I need to keep out of sight. He can't find me.

GINA

Boss – maybe you should wear a disguise-

LOUIE

Enter JOEY

Hey guys!

JOEY

LOUIE shoves GINA into restaurant.

Yes, sir.

VITO

We've got a little mix up here.

JOEY

What's up, boss?

LOUIE

JOEY pulls VITO and LOUIE aside and looks around to make sure no one sees them.

You see, both Cappuccino and Montecarlo think they owe me this two grand, so I want to collect from both of them.

JOEY

That's sweet.

LOUIE

JOEY

Yeah, but I can't let them know about each other, because..... well, it could get complicated.

VITO

Right.

JOEY

So I need to make sure that neither one of them sees me with the other one.

LOUIE

Right.

JOEY

Because, if they do –

MONTECARLO (offstage)

Gentlemen!

LOUIE shoves JOEY into hotel. Enter
MONTECARLO

VITO

Yes, Don Montecarlo?

MONTECARLO

Have you two seen the Shark?

LOUIE

The Shark?

MONTECARLO

The Shark. Has he been here?

VITO

No, Don, nobody here but us.

MONTECARLO

Very well.

MONTECARLO exits. GINA emerges.

GINA

Hey fellas, there's more to this story.

LOUIE and VITO whisk GINA aside.

VITO

What, Boss?

GINA

There's some guy around here who's been writing letters and signing my name.

LOUIE

Anthony Sartori?

GINA

This guy wrote Don Cappuccino a letter saying a bunch of bad things about his daughter and now the Don is blaming me.

LOUIE

That's not good.

GINA

So you guys need to take care of him – if you know what I mean.

VITO

Um...well... we ...uh...

CAPPUCCINO (offstage)

Hey, you two!

LOUIE shoves GINA under a table. Enter
CAPPUCCINO.

VITO

Yes, Don Cappuccino?

CAPPUCCINO

I'm looking for someone.

LOUIE

He's not here.

CAPPUCCINO

I know that..... Who do you think I'm looking for?

VITO

.....The Shark?

CAPPUCCINO

The Shark?

The Shark.

LOUIE

How did you know?

CAPPUCCINO

Word gets around.

LOUIE

But he is not here.

VITO

I know that.

CAPPUCCINO

CAPPUCCINO exits. JOEY emerges.

Guys, one more thing.

JOEY

What's that, boss?

LOUIE

Somebody has been sending out letters with my name on them and Don Montecarlo did not take this lightly.

JOEY

He is not one to ignore such an offense.

VITO

He says he'll pay me the two large, but first I have to get rid of this fake letter writer.

JOEY

The guy who has been using your name.

LOUIE

Right. So I need you two to take care of him.

JOEY

Well....

VITO

What? Oh, I suppose you want a bonus for doing this, huh?

JOEY

ROMY (offstage)

Excuse me.

LOUIE shoves JOEY behind the table. Enter ROMY, who prances, pirouettes, and stops.

ROMY (cont'd)

Where can I find Anthony Sartori?

VITO and LOUIE point in different directions. VITO glares at LOUIE who changes the direction he's pointing to match VITO's. ROMY exits. GINA emerges.

GINA

Look, take care of this guy, and I'll give you fifty bucks.

LOUIE

Fifty bucks? For fifty bucks, we'll be right on it.

GINA

Great, but you gotta work fast. Let me know when it's done.

GINA exits. MAMA enters from the restaurant.

MAMA

Hey, where's your boss?

VITO and LOUIE point in the same direction. LOUIE, changes directions, and then changes it back again. MAMA exits.

VITO

Are you thinking what I am thinking?

LOUIE

That in order to make Anthony Sartori happy, we have to whack the other Anthony Sartori.

JOEY emerges and sits at table.

JOEY

So can you take care of this guy for me? I'll give you forty bucks, all right?

VITO

(also sitting)

The going rate for what you propose is a little higher than that.

JULIA (offstage)

Hey, Mister!

LOUIE, in a panic, doesn't know how to hide JOEY, so he sits on his lap to cover him up. Enter JULIA.

VITO

Yes?

JULIA

Where's your boss?

VITO and JOEY point in the same direction. LOUIE moves JOEY's arm to point in the wrong direction. VITO glares at LOUIE who moves JOEY's arms so that JOEY is pointing in the same direction as VITO. JULIA exits. LOUIE hops off of JOEY.

JOEY

Forty-five?

LOUIE

The last time we got fifty.

JOEY

All right – fifty bucks. But take care of this fast.

JOEY exits.

VITO

Now we truly have a dilemma.

LOUIE

Yeah, we could make some serious cash, but if we whack both Sartoris, how would we collect the money?

BLACKOUT

END of ACT ONE

THUGS

ACT TWO

Lights up on VITO and LOUIE sitting at a table in front of the café. VITO is reading the paper.

LOUIE

So, Vito, how are we gonna whack Anthony Sartori?

VITO

Louie, I am still not certain that we should.

LOUIE

Why not?

VITO

Because he is our boss. It is not ethical to whack your own boss.

LOUIE

Even if your other boss tells you to?

VITO

I think this is the reason why the city of Chicago imposed a one boss limit. It reduces the confusion.

LOUIE

This is true.

(pause)

Have you ever whacked anybody before, Vito?

VITO

Well, there was the Mulligan Street Massacre –

LOUIE

Really? Were you in on that?

VITO

No, not exactly. I was home that night. I had a really bad cold.

LOUIE

That's tough.

VITO

It was horrible - runny nose, hacking cough, the works.

LOUIE

So you never really whacked anybody, then?

VITO

Have you ever heard about Varicose Vinnie?

LOUIE

Oh my god, you were in on that? That was a real mess.

VITO

Well, actually, I was watching the telephone while the other guys did it, but they told me about it afterwards.

LOUIE

Wow.

ENTER Don MONTECARLO.

MONTECARLO

Gentlemen.

LOUIE

What's up, Don?

MONTECARLO

I'm expecting someone to meet me here. Have you seen anyone?

VITO

No, Don Montecarlo, nobody but us.

MONTECARLO

Well, I can't wait all day. If he comes, let me know, will you?

VITO

Sure, Don. And just who are we looking for?

MONTECARLO

Have you ever heard of the Shark?

LOUIE and VITO

The Shark?

MONTECARLO

The Shark. He's from Cincinnati - a very distinguished gentleman. You can't miss him. Let me know when he arrives.

VITO

Yes, Don Montecarlo.

Exit Don MONTECARLO.

LOUIE

So, Vito, what does he mean by "distinguished?"

VITO

"Distinguished?" Um...well.... I think that means we can recognize him really easy.

Enter SHARK. He is dressed in a flashy, bright-colored double breasted suit, fedora and a fake moustache. He conducts himself in a dramatic effeminate manner and looks and acts like a cross between a frustrated drag queen and Bugsy Malone. He speaks with a bad Italian accent.

LOUIE

Like this guy here?

VITO

Now, that's distinguished.

SHARK

Hello, gentlemen, how are you?

VITO

Hello.

LOUIE

Hi.

SHARK

So this is Shady Groves, is it now? Such a delightful little village. Is there much excitement here? Lots of night life? Plenty of fun, fun, fun?

LOUIE

Not really.

Are you the Shark?
VITO

The Shark?
SHARK

The Shark.
VITO and LOUIE

Don Montecarlo told us you'd be coming.
LOUIE

Don Montecarlo. And how is the Don, anyways? Is he up to his old tricks again?
SHARK

I didn't know the Don did tricks.
LOUIE

Louie, perhaps you should go tell Don Montecarlo that the Shark is here.
VITO

The Shark ... is here.
SHARK

Um....yeah... that's a great name.... Shark.
LOUIE

Yes, I just love it. The Shark. The Shark is smooth ...and slinky ...and sexy. Ooooo, the Shark!
SHARK

Right.
VITO

Enter Don CAPPUCINO.

Gentlemen, I'm waiting on someone, have you seen anybody around?
CAPPUCINO

No, Don Cappuccino, just me and Vito and the Shark.
LOUIE

The Shark?
CAPPUCINO

SHARK

The Shark. That is what they call me. The Shark (growl)!

CAPPUCCINO

I know that.

VITO

Louie, we should go.

LOUIE

Right.

LOUIE and VITO exit quickly.

CAPPUCCINO

Have a seat. I have some business to discuss with you.

SHARK

What can I do for you?

CAPPUCCINO

I am concerned that a number of strangers have been moving into the area. I believe that Don Montecarlo is responsible for this.

SHARK

Really, so Don Montecarlo has been a naughty boy, has he?

CAPPUCCINO

Those two thugs that just left – I think they are part of his plan.

SHARK

They were so very uncouth. They didn't even look housebroken.

CAPPUCCINO

Their boss is also in town, and has sent me a letter, slandering my daughter – which he denies.

SHARK

Ooo, slander, how very juicy.

CAPPUCCINO

So I want you to take care of him for me. Get rid of this problem.

SHARK

And why should the Shark do such a thing as this?

CAPPUCCINO

Because you are known for your discretion in handling such matters. That's why I asked for you. I'll pay you one hundred dollars.

SHARK

A C note? And what must I do for this one hundred dollars?

CAPPUCCINO

Take care of this guy – for good. Use whatever means you want – cement overshoes, car bomb, push him down an empty elevator shaft – I don't care - just do it.

SHARK

Those are very attractive suggestions, but they are a little on the near side of brutal. Couldn't we just give him a good spanking?

CAPPUCCINO

Do you think that would work?

SHARK

I don't know, but it would be great fun.

CAPPUCCINO

I want him out of my hair permanently.

SHARK

Maybe we could just give him a bad haircut.

CAPPUCCINO

Permanently!

SHARK

Or wash his clothes without fabric softener. How much more dreadful can you get?

CAPPUCCINO

I said "permanently!"

SHARK

Oh, very well! I'll see what I can do – but it's going to cost you more than that.

CAPPUCCINO

I know that..... How much more?

SHARK

Three C's.

CAPPUCCINO

That's outrageous.

SHARK

Well, if you'd rather, I'll do the spanking for free.

CAPPUCCINO

All right, I'll pay you the money. Just get this guy out of my hair.

SHARK

So you will pay me once I have removed him from your hair?

CAPPUCCINO

Yes. His name is Anthony Sartori.

SHARK

Anthony Sartori! What a charming name. I'll be by to see you for my money, Don.

CAPPUCCINO

I know that.

Exit Don CAPPUCCINO. The SHARK pulls out a cigar and searches his pockets for matches, but finds none.

SHARK

How dreadfully simple he is. It would be much more barbaric just to install shag carpet in Mr. Sartori's living room.

Enter Don MONTECARLO.

MONTECARLO

It's about time you got here.

SHARK

Oh?

MONTECARLO

I am Don Montecarlo – I sent for you. I need you to do something for me.

SHARK

But of course. Do you have a light?

MONTECARLO pulls out matches or lighter and lights cigar.

MONTECARLO

There are some unsavory elements in town -

SHARK

How distasteful!

MONTECARLO

And I believe Don Cappuccino has brought them in to pull off a hostile takeover.

SHARK

No!

MONTECARLO

Yes. I need you to take their kingpin out of the picture. I think that the others will give up and leave if you can knock off their head honcho.

SHARK

And who is that?

MONTECARLO

His name is Anthony Sartori.

SHARK

No!

MONTECARLO

Yes, have you heard of him? So I guess you want the Shark to give Mr. Sartori a little whacky-whack.

MONTECARLO

Exactly.

SHARK

Well, I can do this thing, but it will cost you a pretty little sum.

MONTECARLO

I'm willing to pay.

SHARK

I may be easy, but I'm certainly not cheap...

MONTECARLO

(laughing)

Do you know how much money I have? Do you know how much is my bank account?

SHARK

No, I can't say that I do.

MONTECARLO

Guess. Guess how much I have in my bank account.

SHARK

I don't know.

MONTECARLO

Go on – guess. Tell me how much money I have.

SHARK

Hmmm.....Seventeen million trillion zillion baquillion dollars. And forty-two cents.

MONTECARLO

(pause)

No.

SHARK

It was only a guess. Actually, I will only ask three hundred dollars to give Mr. Sartori the whacky-whack.

MONTECARLO

Fine. I'll pay you once you've done the job. I want him out of my plans. Quickly.

SHARK

So you will pay me as soon as I eliminate Mr. Sartori from your plans?

MONTECARLO

Yes.

SHARK

Very well, Don Montecarlo. I believe we have a deal.

They shake hands as LOUIE and VITO enter.

VITO

Don Montecarlo – oh, I see you've met.

MONTECARLO

Yes, thank you.

MONTECARLO exits.

SHARK

So, boys, tell me – where can I find your boss?

