

THE STONECUTTER

An Original Screenplay

by

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THE STONECUTTER

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - DAY THE PAST: 1980

ANTONIO RUCCI (50) strikes a granite statue with hammer and chisel. His son (YOUNG RAY, 16) also cuts stone - a gifted apprentice. Young Ray glances over, watches his father's traditional technique, his artistry, his strong hands.

EXT. RUCCI HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY

Antonio, his wife SILVANA (40), Young Ray and his sister (YOUNG CARLOTTA, 14) smile. Their dwarf neighbor, MRS. ZAPATINO (72, in peasant black) attempts their family photo.

Antonio's brow furrows: Mrs. Zapatino's shakey fingers are having trouble holding his new camera. Young Ray tweaks his sister. She slaps him. Silvana raps his other cheek with the backside of her hand, directs his attention forward. Young Carlotta busts up. Mrs. Zapatino takes a picture.

ANTON

Hey. We're not ready - why you take picture, eh? Ray, Carlotta, pose right. Happy, like family should look.

The Rucci's 'smile' again. The camera slips from Mrs. Zapatino's grasp, bounces off the frozen ground.

ANTON (cont'd)

Oh! My just brand new camera!
What's wrong with you?

Mrs. Zapatino barks at him in Italian, gestures like she's giving him an ancient curse. She tries to bend over, can't.

CLOSE ON: Young Ray hands the camera to her, to us:

YOUNG RAY

Try one more, Mrs. Zapatino.

MRS. ZAPATINO

Ray - you the sweetest boy.

WE DISSOLVE INTO:

INT. CAR - TRAVELING - LOS ANGELES - LATE NIGHT THE PRESENT

RAY RUCCI (now 33) parks his well-worn car near his apartment building. LISA ALVARADO (31) is with him. They're happy, returning from a night out.

MRS. ZAPATINO (VO, CONTS)

Get into middle of picture. You the good one, the sweet boy.

ON THE SIDEWALK: Ray and Lisa get out, walk toward Ray's apartment. He stops - hears something.

LISA
What is it, Ray?

Ray moves quietly to the driveway, peers around.

Back along the parking area, LUIS ESPARANZA and two other GANG MEMBERS are beating on someone who lies by the dumpster. Ray heads toward them.

LISA (cont'd)
Ray, stop. They'll hurt you. Ray!

IN THE PARKING AREA: Ray approaches. The gangsters see him coming. They recognize him.

RAY
Hey, neighbors. Looks like he's had enough.

Luis and Gangster 1 face Ray. Gangster 2 keeps kicking the 15 YEAR OLD BOY in the head. The boy's head is bloodied.

LUIS
Ain't your business, old man.

Ray advances toward the boy. Luis cuts him off:

LUIS (cont'd)
It's all family, homes.
(to Lisa, in Spanish)
He's my homey's cousin.
(to Ray)
Get the fuck outta here.

LISA
(to Luis, in Spanish)
Have you finished? Let us take him to the hospital.

Gangster 2 kicks the boy's head against the dumpster's edge, spits on him. They're far from finished with him. Ray shoves Luis aside. And it all happens very quickly:

Luis slices at Ray with a knife. The other two Gangsters rush him as well. In one motion, Ray advances past the knife, strikes Luis, heel-palm to the chin, and hip-throws him head first to the pavement. As Luis looks up, Ray's deathly cold eyes stare into his.

Gangster 1 lunges at Ray. While pinning Luis, Ray ducks and Gangster 1 slips past him. With a vast rage, Ray's elbow crushes down with full body weight behind it. Luis's head, flush against the sidewalk, takes it full force.

Ray looks up as Gangster 1 lunges at him and

WE INTERCUT TO:

EXT. ROSSI FRONT YARD THE PAST

The scene continues:

 ANTON
 Enough! I take picture.

Silvana steadies the camera in Mrs. Zapatino's hands.

 SILVANA
 Anton - it's our FAMILY picture.
 You have to be in it.

She hastens back to her family. Her movements and her voice are spirited, unrefined, sensual. Silvana slides into the family. Anton catches her. Mrs. Zapatino takes a picture.

 ANTON
 What you take picture of? My
 wife's backside?

Silvana, Young Carlotta crack up. Silvana whispers to Anton:

 SILVANA
 It's a good backside don't you
 think?

Anton has to smile. She kisses him. Young Ray watches.

 MRS. ZAPATINO
 Camera no good. Back. Back.

 YOUNG CARLOTTA
 You step back, Mrs. Zapatino.

 MRS. ZAPATINO
 I old lady. Everybody back. Back.

The Rucci's step back. Mrs. Zapatino can't see through the viewfinder, tries her other eye.

Antonio looks up and down the block for anyone else to take the picture. Mrs. Zapatino snaps it.

 ANTON
 I was looking over there.
 Couldn't you see that?!

 MRS. ZAPATINO
 Don't you bad temper me. I doing
 you favor. You are man with bad
 temper. Bad temper.

WE INTERCUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - PARKING AREA - NIGHT THE PRESENT

The scene continues: Gangster 1 grabs Ray as Gangster 2 slices at him with a knife.

MRS. ZAPATINO (VO CONTS)
Very bad...

Ray leans back - the blade just missing. Ray slips the hold and locks Gangster 1's hand behind his back. Ray's martial arts techniques are lightning fast. He controls Gangster 1's body keeping it between him and Gangster 2. Gangster 2 races away around the building.

LISA
Run, Ray!

Ray throws Gangster 1 to the cement and separates his shoulder. The BOY staggers to his feet. He strikes Ray in the back of the head. Ray turns, surprised.

LISA (cont'd)
LET'S GO, RAY!

Ray follows Lisa's lead and they flee, ducking between cars.

Gangster 2 returns, gun in hand. He wildly fires several shots. Ray and Lisa are gone.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - LATER THAT NIGHT

A dark tenement. A lit window.

INT. RAY'S SINGLE

Ray's fingers guide a tiny hammer and chisel with amazing dexterity as he finishes a beautiful stone necklace. Sharp eyes scrutinize his work. He wears a striking stone bracelet. A bottle of whiskey and a glass are nearby. On the inside of his open toolbox is his unit patch from the Navy: UDT SEAL. QUICK, DEADLY, MY LIFE FOR FREEDOM.

In the dark run-down room, a crucifix and a framed photograph of his mother (Silvana, 40) hang on one wall. A night wind sends the curtains wafting. As they cross lamp light, their motion reflected on the glass of Silvana's photo gives her watchful image a haunting lifelike character.

Lisa emerges from the bathroom.

LISA
I guess tomorrow's gonna be moving day, right?

RAY
This is where I live.

LISA
You can't stay here now. You've
got enemies. What ya doin'?

RAY
One minute. It's a surprise.

Lisa hangs her purse over Ray's military field jacket.

LISA
Where did you learn to fight like
that?

In the closet door mirror, she glimpses Ray as he draws the necklace into the light and inspects it with a magnifying eyeglass. She smiles.

He gives her the necklace.

LISA (cont'd)
Oh, Ray...

As she raises her dark hair off her neck, Ray moves behind her and clasps it on. She pulls her shirt open and the light stones rest on her rich dark skin.

LISA (cont'd)
It's so beautiful! I love it.

She embraces him, holds him tight to her heart.

The phone rings. Ray answers it. Lisa turns into the mirror.

RAY
Hello?

ESTELLE (VO)
(British accent remnants)
Ray Rucci?

RAY
Who's this?

ESTELLE (VO)
Ray? I'm Estelle. Your step-mum.

Pause. Lisa notices that Ray's mother wears a similar necklace in the photograph. She smiles.

RAY
I have a step-mom?

ESTELLE (VO)
You do. Ray, your father's not
well. I was hoping you could come
back here, and see him. ...

Ray reaches for his drink. He swallows hard. Lisa listens.

RAY
What's wrong?

ESTELLE (VO)
He was having trouble breathing.
The doctor found... An x-ray
showed a large mass - your father
has inoperable lung cancer. ...
(fights back tears)
Ray, he talks to you in his
sleep.

RAY
How 'bout when he's awake?

ESTELLE (VO)
Can you come back home?

RAY
No. I can't go back. How'd you
find my number?

ESTELLE (VO)
You can't come, or you won't? ...
Ray, your sister might not want
you here. That doesn't matter.
You father's-

Ray hangs up. Lisa lights a cigarette. Ray watches her: the match flame casts a wavering glow across her beautiful face. Her eyes never leave his. And for an instant, the reflection of the flame burns under Silvana's eyes - fires a hard stare, then is gone, leaving her vigilant image dark, ghostlike, still.

INT. RAY'S SINGLE - NIGHT

Ray and Lisa make love. Hot, sweaty, erotic - yet on closer inspection Ray's thrusts are violent, he pins her hard, tries desperately to lose himself in the act.

LISA
Ray, easy. You're hurting me,
Ray. Ray.

A knock on the door. Again.

POLICE OFFICER (OS)
Police officers. Open up.

LISA
Coming!
(eyes Ray)
Bad joke.

Ray rises, dresses, answers it. Two POLICE OFFICERS have their guns drawn.

POLICE OFFICER
 Are you Ray Rucci?
 (Ray nods)
 Were you involved in an
 altercation outside earlier this
 evening?

RAY
 Yes.

POLICE OFFICER
 You're under arrest.

Ray allows himself to be handcuffed. The other Officer enters.

RAY
 Hey. Give the lady a second to
 dress.

LISA
 We tried to stop a beating. We
 were attacked. We were shot at.

POLICE OFFICER
 There's a fatality on scene.

WE DISSOLVE INTO:

INT./EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - DAY THE PAST

Young Ray cuts a gravestone alongside his father. They work under the shelter of the roof as a snow falls in the yard. Antonio turns off the sandblaster, wipes his marker. He glances over as Young Ray finishes with a stencil - he's designed an unconventional tiered inset.

ANTON
 Why you do that?

YOUNG RAY
 Do what?.

ANTON
 (shakes his head)
 This is forever, this is not
 play. Mrs. Zapatino asked I cut
 her stone. She wants it in
 tradition, like she lived her
 life - not to make waves in God's
 garden.

YOUNG RAY
 Dad, I just put a frame around it
 - like the pictures she took of
 us.

ANTON
 Do like I tell you. First thing -
 start over.

Young Ray rises to do so. Anton resumes work with hammer and chisel. The beauty of the gravestone he's cutting stops his son in his tracks. Anton is cutting his father's stone. He sets a porcelain photo-image of his father into the marker. As Young Ray watches, Anton chokes up - a rare display of emotion. Anton smokes, composes himself.

YOUNG RAY

You feel sad about your father dying, Poppa?

ANTON

Haven't visit him for maybe twenty years. This stone hav'ta go all the way back to Italy. Long way. ... One day, you cut my stone. Keep in tradition.

Young Ray nods.

ANTON (cont'd)

None of this not see each other for twenty year. Not you. Not my son. Too long. Too much lost time.

Young Ray smiles.

INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE - MORNING PRESENT DAY ONE WEEK LATER

JOE (42) sits behind a desk crowded with repair orders. Memorabilia on his desk and wall: he's a vet too. Ray arrives in the doorway, tools clicking on his work belt.

JOEY

Ray. Good you're back. You're gone one week and it turns into a war zone here - my phone's been ringin' off the goddamn wall.

RAY

Don't swear in the Lord's name, Joey - not when I'm around.

JOEY

What kinda country is this turnin' into? Man risks his life to save a kid and goes to jail for it?

RAY

I'm on parole. Cops assume the worst, whatever I do.

JOEY

Well, you done fixin the streets - now it's time to fix some pipes, whatdaya say.

RAY'S POV DOWN THE HALL: Joe's son (CARL, 16) appears. Ray smiles greeting him.

JOEY (cont'd)
Ray - you're the repair man. Show my kid how to fix things right. He won't listen to me.

RAY
Try asking him.

JOEY
I don't ask - he's my kid. More than that, he works for me.

Ray takes work orders, looks them over. Joey's phone rings loudly. He lifts the receiver, pops it right back down.

JOEY (CONTS) (cont'd)
Half the jobs Carl did you're gonna hav'ta re-repair. Work's twenty klics short of halfass.

Carl listens, hurt. Ray eyes one work order. The phone rings. Ray heads out. Carl, ashamed, avoids his eyes.

JOEY (cont'd)
(into the phone)
What broke?! Hold on.
(to Ray)
This weekend we have'ta fix up three empties.

IN THE HALL: Ray walks, smiles to Carl, places a reassuring hand on his shoulder.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Ray sways precariously on a rickety ladder. He reaches up, his insulated pliers twine the wires of an unscrewed light fixture which dangles from its hole. Carl works down the hall.

CARL
I'm gonna quit, Ray. I've had it with this goddamn-
(Ray flashes hard eyes)
-with this fuckin' job.

That's better.

CARL (cont'd)
What about you, Ray? Why you stuck doin' this stuff?

The bulb goes bright in Ray's eyes.

WE DISSOLVE INTO:

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - DAY

THE PAST

Searing sunlight. Young Ray and Antonio work under the black overhang. Something is really bothering Young Ray. Antonio senses this. Sparks fly at the welding station: LUKE (42, black) repairs cutting tools. Antonio strikes his thumb, recoils, silent in pain.

Young Ray looks at his father, at his own work, and stops.

YOUNG RAY
I quit, Dad. I can't work here anymore.

ANTON
Your work is good.

The pattern on Young Ray's stone is intricate, excellent. With a savage strike he drives a chisel across it, defacing it. He watches the pain in his father's eyes, strikes it again.

ANTON (cont'd)
Why you do this?!

Young Ray throws his tools down and walks out.

ANTON (cont'd)
RAY. Why you go?

Young Ray crosses the yard without looking back, and is gone.

INT. CORRIDOR - PRESENT DAY

The scene continues. A leg on Ray's ladder SNAPS. As the ladder falls, Ray raises a quick hand to the ceiling. He presses up holding his precarious balance, the ladder tilting. Ray steps up, presses his shoulder into the ceiling.

Ray lifts the white bright light into its socket, screws it in.

WE DISSOLVE INTO:

INT. RUCCI HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY THE PAST

Silvana flashes a school note at Young Ray:

SILVANA
So that's it then! You've failed out of school. You didn't try, Ray. So what are you going to do now? Huh? You won't work with your father anymore. You want to go join the Army? You want to pump gas for a living? What?

Outside the door, Young Carlotta listens.

SILVANA (CONTS) (cont'd)
I know why you're doing this. I know why! To get back at me. To
(MORE)

SILVANA (CONTS) (cont'd)
 punish me for something I've done
 that you can't understand. I
 won't let you, Ray.

INT. CORRIDOR - PRESENT DAY

The scene continues. Last screw in, Ray lets go, falls away
 from the searing light.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Ray prays during Mass.

RAY (VO)
 Dear Lord, please defend the
 helpless and the weak, especially
 the children. Please heal that
 boy's wounds. Do not let his face
 be badly scarred. Do not let
 wickedness or hatred darken his
 heart. Lord forgive me for my
 sins-

INT. RAY'S SINGLE - NIGHT

Ray downs some whiskey. There's a knock on his door. He opens
 it, lets Lisa in. She kisses him, beaming. She wears his
 necklace - it looks lovely on her.

LISA
 Guess what?! I showed this to
 Linda. She loves it! She wants to
 display them in her store on
 consignment. Isn't that cool? If
 they sell, they've got six
 stores!

RAY
 I made that one for you. I'm not
 into knockin' off a bunch of 'em.

LISA
 C'mon, Ray. You could create a
 really cool job for yourself.
 Make some money.

He drinks.

LISA (cont'd)
 You could get paid doing
 something you like. What could be
 better than that?

RAY
 Quit trying to plan my life.

LISA

I want to see you improving your life! By this time next year, I'll be codirector of the homeless hospice. I hope you'll be doing something that makes you happier. ... I want to share your life, Ray. But you can't share anything. You're just a wall of stone.

He shoves her away. She takes off the necklace, lays it down. Tears well in Lisa's eyes. She puts her coat on.

RAY

Stay.

She opens the door.

RAY (cont'd)

Please stay.

LISA

Your step-mom calls. Something's on your mind ever since - just one more thing you won't talk about, right? ... Where'd she call from?

RAY

Cicero. Chicago. Where I'm from. My father's dying.

LISA

(pointing to the photo)
This is your real Mom, right?
(he nods)
Why can't you talk about that?
About where you're from?

He downs his drink. Silence. She steps out the doorway.

RAY

My father. He's a coward. A gutless little man who wasn't man enough to face up to things. He had no honor. All right? I left them when I was seventeen. I walked out.

LISA

You haven't gone back since?

She steps back in. He shakes his head.

LISA (cont'd)

No-one ever really runs away from anything, Ray.

INT. RAY'S SINGLE - DAWN

Lisa sleeps. She stirs, feels Ray's absence, looks over at:

Ray crouches in the corner, back to the wall, field jacket on. He stares at a photograph. The trunk beside him is unlocked.

RAY'S POV: The photo. One of Mrs. Zapatino's family portraits.

Lisa moves beside him, regards this photo for the first time.

LISA
How old is your father?

RAY
Sixtyeight. ... I have to go
back, to see him.

EXT. CHICAGO - DAY

Sleek skyscrapers. The El, on antiquated railings, glides past, disappears behind old warehouses.

INT. EL

RAY'S WINDOW POV: The modern skyscrapers are eclipsed by tenements, older buildings. Three elderly women converse in Italian. Ray's only luggage is a shoulder bag.

EXT. CICERO - 54TH. AVE. PLATFORM - DAY

Brakes screech as the El pulls into the terminal station.

EXT. 6TH. ST. - DAY

Ray walks down the street he grew up on. The Rucci house hasn't changed much. He passes through the gate, the tiny yard, knocks on the door.

The door opens. ESTELLE SLAYTON RUCCI (45, British with 20 years stateside, attractive) is there.

ESTELLE
Yes?

RAY
Estelle?

ESTELLE
Yes.

RAY
I'm Ray.

ESTELLE
Oh? Come in! Do come in.

INTO THE LIVING ROOM: Ray closes the door.

ESTELLE (cont'd)
Did you fly? - I mean, of course
you flew. How was it? - your
flight.

RAY
Fine.

Estelle faces him, ill at ease in her home.

ESTELLE
Can I get you something to drink?
What would you like?

RAY
Whiskey. Rocks.

Estelle goes into the kitchen. Ray walks slowly about the room. On the chimney mantle are family photographs: Silvana, Antonio, Ray, and Carlotta; Carlotta (now 31) and her husband, GUIDO ACCINELLI (45) with Antonio; Estelle and Antonio smiling together, an odd pair.

Estelle returns with his drink.

RAY (cont'd)
Carrie's married?

ESTELLE
Carlotta? Yes.

She lets go a second early and his drink tumbles to the floor, splatters. Estelle bends down embarrassed before him.

ESTELLE (cont'd)
Oh, forgive me.

She grabs the glass, collects the cubes, and brushes his pant leg with her hand. Ray takes a step back as she rises.

ESTELLE (cont'd)
I'll fix you another. That's her
husband, Guido, their children,
Lucia and Guidolino.

She exits. Ray looks at the photos closely, breathes the room's air, distantly familiar scents.

RAY
Dad upstairs?

ESTELLE (OS)
He's at work.

RAY
He's working? I thought-

ESTELLE
(returns)
He shouldn't be working. But he's
working... Let me take your bag.
Anton'll be home in two hours.

Ray doesn't give it to her. Estelle reaches, her fingers glide under the shoulder strap, lift it away from his side. She places it by the couch.

ESTELLE (cont'd)
Make yourself right at home - I
mean, of course, welcome home.

Ray drinks, watches her nervousness.

ESTELLE (cont'd)
You look a lot like your father.
A younger edition or something.

He places his empty glass on the stone mantle, leaves.

ESTELLE (cont'd)
I'm sorry. Did I embarrass you?

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - DAY

55th. St. near the Pershing Race Track and just north of Stickney is lined with warehouses and factories. Ray approaches RUCCI STONECUTTERS, opens the door.

IN THE SHOWROOM: Ray advances past statues in stone and marble: saints and angels, nymphs; garden statuary. He hears voices around back, swings up the half counter door, and heads

DOWN A CORRIDOR: Ray glances into the:

BUSINESS OFFICE: ROBERTO ABOTTO (45, rotund) argues on the phone, hangs up. LOUIS MARTIN (38, suited, exuding a Northern Italian sophistication) listens seated behind his desk.

MARTIN
What's the matter with our work?

ABOTTO
They said it's not ageing well.

MARTIN
What are they expecting? They pay
top dollar, they get hand worked
stone. Otherwise it's cast.

They glance over as the stranger passes their doorway.

ABOTTO (OS)
Can I help you?

IN THE CORRIDOR: Ray takes a deep breath, runs his hands through his hair before stepping out into the

EXT. WORK YARD - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Antonio (now 68) is in the cutting area working on a gravestone. TONY (30) prepares to sandblast another stone. Luke (now 59) works in the welding station.

Anton looks over. He recognizes his son as Ray hops down out of the loading dock shadow. As Ray crosses the yard, neither man smiles. Anton resumes work until Ray arrives beside him. Neither offers embrace or even handshake greeting. Father and son regard one another.

RAY
You look good.

ANTON
What you expect?

RAY
Long time. Maybe you're bald now,
face falling off.

ANTON
None of that in this family. What
you want?

Ray catches Tony's eye. Luke slices pipe - the whir becomes a GRINDING SCREAM.

Anton smokes, resumes work. Ray watches him. Steady hands wipe a marker clean.

Abotto and Martin look on from the shadowy loading dock.

RAY
Business looks good.

ANTON
We're not hirin'.

RAY
Not lookin'.

ANTON
You just nostalgic or somethin'?

Anton resumes his work with full concentration - no time for a man with no answers. Ray walks away.

Anton's sharp eyes rise under jagged brows and creased forehead: he watches his son disappear down the driveway.

From the shadows, Martin and Abotto head back inside.

INT. RUCCI HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A knock on the front door.

ESTELLE (OS)
Come in.

Ray finds the door unlocked. His bag has been moved.

Estelle appears at the top of the stairs. She has changed into a flattering form fitting dress. She's brushed her hair, wears make-up.

RAY
Where's my bag?

ESTELLE
Up here.

Ray starts up the stairs towards her. She leads him down the

SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY: and into a

BEDROOM: Ray spots his bag on the bed. It's been opened. Two of his shirts hang in the closet.

ESTELLE (cont'd)
Was this your bedroom or your sister's?

RAY
Mine.

ESTELLE
I thought so. I-

He moves past her, takes the shirts, repacks.

ESTELLE (cont'd)
Ray - I apologize for opening your bag. Just wanted to welcome you, to be helpful. ...
(he packs)
What did you expect? Open arms? To come back and be one of the family again?

RAY
What would you know about the family? ... Anton looks strong.

He closes his bag, moves for the door.

ESTELLE
Ray. Let me show you something.

IN THE BATHROOM: Estelle enters, opens the medicine chest and hands Ray a steroid inhaler.

ESTELLE (cont'd)
 You know anything about these?
 You haven't seen him gasping for
 breath after just coming up the
 stairs.

He hands back the inhaler. Painted nails transport it to its shelf. Her eyes regard him with a quiet command, sway.

ESTELLE (cont'd)
 He has two more at work, in case
 there's a problem there. Doctor
 wants to give him radiation to
 buy a little time but he won't do
 it. The cancer's so far along,
 it's incurable anyway.

RAY
 I watched him work. He's strong.

ESTELLE
 Maybe he was as strong as he
 could be - while you were there.

She advances past her step-son into the

MASTER BEDROOM: Estelle opens the top drawer of a chest of drawers. Ray enters the familiar room. Sounds carry in: children playing, the distant clackity rumbling of the El.

She hands Ray a framed family photo: one taken by Mrs. Zapatino.

ESTELLE (cont'd)
 He keeps his spare change on the
 glass, looks at it every day.
 Everything in this whole house is
 you or your sister.

She watches him closely. He hands the photograph back.

ESTELLE (cont'd)
 I've been cooking all afternoon.
 Your sister and her family will
 be over tonight for dinner.
 Anton'll have you at his table -
 I know that. He won't say so, but
 it will mean a lot to him - both
 his children with him once again.

She shuts the picture away.

ESTELLE (cont'd)
 Then you can go, knowing in your
 heart it was his choice, not
 yours. That'll matter, next time
 I call.

He doesn't answer. She leaves him alone in his father's room. Ray regards a framed picture of Silvana. Curtains sway, their movement reflected on the glass animates her gaze.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Estelle has slipped her heeled shoes off, and has an apron on as she cooks. She hears Ray come down the stairs. She slips her shoes on. The front door closes. Estelle races into the

LIVING ROOM: She moves to a window:

ESTELLE'S WINDOW POV: Ray walks away down the street. He hasn't taken his bag.

She breathes a sigh of relief, slips out of her shoes, smiles.

EXT. ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL - DUSK

Spires rise dark before the setting sun.

INT. ST. PAUL'S - CONFESSIONAL

The heavy curtain parts. Ray kneels in, crosses himself, head bowed, waits. Sounds outside: feet softly scrape across the floor of stone, whispery voices, indecipherable souls.

FATHER VINCENTI (64) slides open his half of the vented window. The outline of his face is barely visible through the grating. Ray keeps his screen sealed.

RAY

Bless me Father for I have
sinned, in thought, word, and
deed. It's been two weeks since
my last confession and these are
my sins. I have...

Ray takes a deep breath, shifts around in the cramped space. Revealing feelings is excruciating, even in strictest confidence.

RAY (CONTS) (cont'd)

I have taken a man's life while
protecting my own. I have
continued to have sexual
relations with a woman who is not
my wife. I have done these things
because...

WE DISSOLVE INTO:

INT. ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL - DAY THE PAST

Young Ray (16) enters in haste, looks around the cavernous expanse. He advances along the side, peers across searching for someone. Passing a confessional, he hears his mother's voice.

RAY (VO, CONTS) (cont'd)
I did these things because...

SILVANA (OS)
(to the priest)
Carlotta gets straight 'A's now.
And she plays her violin so
beautifully. Ray's work pleases
his father no end. He's really
got a gift. I want my children...

His mother breaks down, cries as she speaks.

SILVANA (OS, CONTS) (cont'd)
to be special. Father, I can't go
on. I can't live any longer with
what I've done.

Two elderly women exit along the center aisle. They notice Young Ray by the confessional. He stares back. They carry on.

WE DISSOLVE INTO:

INT. CONFESSIONAL THE PRESENT

RAY
-because... ... What if you could
truly change things. What if...

Ray's voice is shakey. The priest waits patiently, trying to fathom this man's sorrow.

RAY (CONTS) (cont'd)
Do you ever question scripture,
Father? Why do you always perform
communion exactly the same way?

FATHER VINCENTI
It is our Lord's holy sacrament.
It is not our place to tamper
with an ordained rite, but
instead, to be thankful that we
are privileged to share in the
body and blood of his son-

Ray cuts him off, shifts like a caged animal:

RAY
Man has a right to question. He
has a responsibility to question
things. To change.

FATHER VINCENTI
Why should man question the
Lord's holy word, his holy
sacrament?

RAY
 Because people hide there. Sheep
 flocking to be like everyone
 else, to be safe.

WE DISSOLVE INTO:

INT. CATHEDRAL THE PAST

Young Ray listens: His mother's lost it now, crying:

SILVANA (OS, CONTS)
 I can't help myself. I can't stop
 it. Sometimes it's once a month,
 sometimes I see him every week.

YOUNG FATHER VINCENTI (OS)
 You have sexual relations when
 you see him?

IN THE CONFESSIONAL:

SILVANA
 Yes. Sexual relations when we are
 together alone. Sexual thoughts
 when we are apart. I lust for him
 all of the time. Since my last
 confession, Father, I have
 continued this adulterous
 relationship with Benito Rucci,
 my husband's brother. I tell
 myself never again. When he comes
 over with his family to visit
 family. But in his eyes, his
 eyes... I feel like a flower
 opening up when he watches me.

OUTSIDE THE CONFESSIONAL: Young Ray's eyes are blank -
 something inside him dies. He sinks to the floor and sits back
 against the wall of stone beside the dark wooden confessional.

SILVANA (cont'd)
 I can't live with myself, Father.
 Anton is a good husband. I can't
 stand myself... This love for
 Benito -it's stronger than I am.
 I'm beyond forgiveness, Father.

YOUNG FATHER VINCENTI (OS)
 No-one is beyond forgiveness,
 Silvana. That is the Lord's
 teaching. You have strayed but
 are seeking the path back.

ADULT RAY (VO, CONTS)
 Sometimes it burns inside of me
 to stand up and tear everything
 down, to blasphemy the
 sacraments, to expose the cobwebs
 and filth behind the altar, to
 (MORE)

ADULT RAY (VO, CONTS) (cont'd)
 reveal people for the cowards
 they really are. I took a man's
 life.

INT. CONFSSIONAL THE PRESENT

RAY (CONTS)
 He and his friends were beating a
 defenseless youth. He tried to
 cut me with a knife. I took him
 to the ground and I hit him.
 Things were moving very quickly
 but inside it all, things were
 slow and clear. Striking him felt
 good, Father, really good... In
 the instant before I hit him,
 there was nothing he could do.
 His eyes turned into a child's...
 In the Navy, I didn't know what I
 wanted to do, but I always signed
 up for the toughest thing. I
 pushed myself - seeing how strong
 I was, how much I could take.
 What I was really trying to do
 was burn away every trace of who
 I was. It doesn't go away,
 Father. The stains and the hurt -
 they never go away. ... In
 Special Forces there was a
 Special Op, Central America. I
 was part of a headhunting team.
 We were sent in to take out a
 senior rebel commander in the
 mountains. The killing was hand
 to hand - it felt good. We made
 our way back knowing we had done
 everything just right. Who can
 say it was right, Father? Who on
 earth has the right to judge
 that?

WE INTERCUT TO:

INT. CATHEDRAL THE PAST

Young Ray sits on the stone floor his back against the
 confessional.

RAY (VO, CONTS)
 And what made it feel so good?

Silvana opens the curtain, emerges. She is shocked to discover
 her son. She motions for him but he can't rise - just looks up
 at her with hollow eyes. She extends her hand. He denies it.
 She yanks him to his feet.

EXT. ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL - DAY THE PAST

Along the side of the church, Silvana swings Young Ray's back against the wall.

SILVANA
What are you doing here?

YOUNG RAY
Carrie cut herself. Mrs. Zapatino told me to come find you.

SILVANA
Let's go.

He can't face her, just looks down - his faith in his mother, in life, gone.

SILVANA (cont'd)
You say nothing of what you heard. Nothing to no-one. Ever.

WE DISSOLVE INTO:

INT. CATHEDRAL THE PRESENT

An elderly woman dressed in black lifts her age-spotted hand to light prayer candles on the rack. The confessional is down the way. Ray's anguished voice just carries:

RAY (OS)
These thoughts, these acts,
Father - these are my sins.

IN THE CONFESSIONAL: After a moment:

FATHER VINCENTI
You were angry when you were a child, Ray Rucci.

ON RAY: His eyes lift up: after all these years, this priest recognizes the man this voice belongs to.

FATHER VINCENTI (CONTS)
(cont'd)
Some of us carry the hurt child inside us for a long time. You must accept the hurt child in you before you can lead anyone.

RAY
I'm beyond forgiveness, Father.

FATHER VINCENTI
No-one is beyond forgiveness. That is God's teaching.

As the priest speaks, Ray anguishes in excruciating silence - one question burning in his heart.

FATHER VINCENTI (CONTS)
(cont'd)

A man who questions everything
walks uncertain even of the
ground on which he steps. I pray
that the Lord will give you the
insight to know what to question
and what must simply be accepted.

RAY

Did my mother forgive me, Father?

FATHER VINCENTI

She made her peace with God, Ray.
The Lord's hand extends to all.

Ray raises his haunted eyes, tormented by the real answer in
the priest's evasion.

EXT. RUCCI HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

A warm porchlight, lights inside are on.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM

Estelle assists Anton with his tie. His hair is neatly combed.

ESTELLE

How do I look, Anton? Good for
you?

He smiles, his eyes sparkle.

ANTON

My little honeylamb...

He kisses her affectionately, kisses her beauty. She smiles.

Anton searches for a tie pin in a top drawer jewelry box.

ESTELLE

Ray came because I phoned him.

ANTON

You call him?! Why? Why you call
him?

ESTELLE

I thought it would be a nice
surprise. It was hard enough to
find him - I'll tell you. ...
He's leaving in the morning.

ANTON

He say that?

Estelle nods. Anton coughs. He glances at the family photo and closes the dresser. He coughs some more, steps into the hall.

ANTON (cont'd)
First thing - go downstairs. I
see you there.

IN THE BATHROOM: Anton's coughing fit racks him - he grasps the sink to steady himself. He lifts a handkerchief to his mouth - coughs up deep fluids. As the coughing spell ends, he glances down: the handkerchief is red with blood.

EXT. RUCCI HOUSE

The Accinelli family, bundled against the cold, arrives. CARLOTTA (now 31), her husband GUIDO (45) and LUCIA (9) step onto the porch. GUIDOLINO (6) misses the turn at the gate - the little wanderer keeps on cruising.

CARLOTTA
Shh shh shhh. Behave yourselves
now. Guidolino, this way.
Guidolino. HEY!

Carlotta uses her key to open the door. She enters

INTO THE LIVING ROOM: Carlotta loses her coat, heads toward the kitchen. In the kitchen doorway she stops, dumbfounded:

IN THE KITCHEN: Ray is at the stove, apron on. He eyes her surprise.

CARLOTTA (cont'd)
Oh my. What are you doing here?

RAY
Helping with dinner.

Estelle arrives in the doorway. Carlotta glances at her. Lucia and Guidolino enter. From first sight, Lucia stares wide-eyed, spellbound by Ray's darkly handsome form.

GUIDOLINO
Mom - I'm hungry.

CARLOTTA
But you left us.

Out of a deep ritual obligation, Carlotta nears her older brother and offers him the side of her face. He barely kisses both cheeks.

LUCIA
Momma, who's that?

CARLOTTA
Lucia, this is your... this is...

ESTELLE
Your Mum's brother! Meet your
Uncle Ray.

Ray nods to the kids.

ESTELLE (cont'd)
Thanks, Ray. I can take over now.

Ray trades the apron for his drink. Carlotta fixes a drink for Guido.

CARLOTTA
Guidolino. Take this to your
father.

The children exit - Lucia walks backwards, staring at Ray. Carlotta pours herself a glass of wine from the cooking bottle.

CARLOTTA (cont'd)
You didn't tell me we'd be having
a guest.

ESTELLE
Thought it would be a nice
surprise, Carlotta.

Carlotta drinks. Ray watches her.

CARLOTTA
What made you decide to drop in?

RAY
See Anton.

CARLOTTA
What about?

RAY
Just to see him. Estelle phoned.

Carlotta watches them, turns to go.

CARLOTTA
I hear Poppa on the stairs.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Everyone eats. Anton glances at Ray's stone bracelet - their eyes meet briefly.

GUIDO
That's a unique bracelet, Ray.

ESTELLE
Beautiful, isn't it? Did you
design that yourself?

Carlotta looks over. Ray nods.

Lucia stares at Ray, blushes. Guido smiles as he chews his food - quick little bites. His gentle manner masks a darker harder aspect, his eyes direct, surmising.

GUIDO
You were in the Army at one time,
weren't you?

RAY
Navy.

GUIDO
How long?

RAY
Eight years.

GUIDO
What are you doing now?

RAY
Nothing much really.

CARLOTTA
Everybody does something.

RAY
I'm a repair man for an apartment
building in Los Angeles.

CARLOTTA
A maintenance man?

RAY
Yeah. What do you do?

GUIDO
I have a small law practice.
Makes ends meet, pays for violin
lessons.

Anton coughs, wavers at the table. Pasta slips off his raised fork. Ray looks over, Carlotta too. Anton tries not to cough.

CARLOTTA
You look tired, Poppa.

Estelle walks around and leans behind him to whisper:

ESTELLE
Time to rest, Anton.

He looks at all gathered, smiles, and then, to Ray:

ANTON
Excuse me.

Estelle is quick to notice this. Carlotta chooses not to. She helps him up by the arm, walks Anton up the stairs.

ESTELLE
I'll be right up, Anton.

Ray notices how slow his father is on the stairs.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lucia plays the violin. Guido and Guidolino play checkers.

Ray stands by the chimney, a fire in the stone hearth. He and Carlotta continue to drink. Guido smiles reassuring Lucia. As she hits a searing note:

RAY
How bad is she?

He incurs Carlotta's hard eyes - this is one protective mother.

RAY (CONTS) (cont'd)
I mean he? How bad is Anton,
Carrie?

CARLOTTA
Don't call me Carrie. No-one's
called me that since high school.
(Estelle arrives)
It's bad. He's got three months
at best. That concern you?

GUIDOLINO
Dad, make her stop.

CARLOTTA
Guidolino - shush. Why are you
here, Ray? You didn't care about
Momma. I didn't see you here when
she was ill, when we buried her.

ESTELLE
Carlotta, your brother's back!
Can't you leave the past-

CARLOTTA
NO. No, I can't leave it. Ray,
you're the one who should leave.

Lucia stops playing. Carlotta's anger chills the children. Guido applauds Lucia. Estelle too.

CARLOTTA (cont'd)
Very nice, Lucia. Guido, why
don't you take the children home.
It's late for them.

Guido moves to the coatrack by the door. Guidolino joins him. As they put their coats on, Lucia stands transfixed, staring at Ray. She still has her violin against her chin.

CARLOTTA (cont'd)
Why come back now? Just now. Why?

GUIDO
Come on, Lucia. Lucia.

Guido returns, guides Lucia to the coat rack.

ESTELLE
Carlotta - don't say anything
you'll regret.

CARLOTTA
REGRET? How could I possibly say
anything to Ray I'd regret?
(to Ray)
I know it's more than a
coincidence you're back now.

RAY
No coincidence. Estelle phoned.

With the children bundled and looking on:

GUIDO
Good night.

Everyone exchanges 'good nights'. Guido herds the children out.

CARLOTTA
Mamma'll be home soon.
(as the door shuts)
It's no coincidence that you try
to come back just when there's a
Will to be executed.

ESTELLE
Carlotta! Anton's not-

RAY
I don't care about any will. I'm-

CARLOTTA
You don't? What about the
business? It's a success.

RAY
You keep the business.

CARLOTTA
Poppa wouldn't have a daughter in
business. You know that.
(to Estelle)
She knows that.

It's true; Estelle does.

RAY

Then sell it. Pay for more violin lessons.

CARLOTTA

Family's stick together. I raise my kids just like Momma tried with us. We believe in Family, we stand for something. Nothing, short of death, will break us apart. Tonight, what do I see?

ESTELLE

Carlotta-

CARLOTTA

A barfly sweeps in once Momma's gone.

Carlotta looks Estelle right in the eye with a fury that holds Estelle's anger frozen.

CARLOTTA (CONTS) (cont'd)

To grow on Anton, feed on him as he weakens. And now a scavenger comes sniffing around now that Poppa's life savings are-

RAY

Carrie - get the hell out.

CARLOTTA

I leave this house when I want to leave this-

Ray picks her up and carries her over his shoulder.

CARLOTTA (CONTS) (cont'd)

-house. Put me down! This is my house!

He grabs her coat, drops her outside the front door and slams the door. Ray moves toward Estelle. With her key Carlotta lets herself back in.

CARLOTTA (cont'd)

Don't you ever-

RAY

What?! You never understood anything when you were fifteen, why change now?

CARLOTTA

That's all you can remember. When I was fifteen. Why is that Ray? WHY IS THAT? ... I had to live through the pain, Momma's illness, her suffering. You know something? I tried calling you

(MORE)

CARLOTTA (cont'd)
 when Momma got really sick. You
 disappeared! I tried calling the
 Army, I tried calling everywhere.

RAY
 The Seals are Navy.

CARLOTTA
 You never gave anyone the chance
 to leave a 'Ray's a Seal' post-it
 by the phone! You deserted this
 family. You deserted me.

A venomous anger rises through her heartbreak:

CARLOTTA (CONTS) (cont'd)
 Momma died without a son. Want to
 know something? She never forgave
 you. Never. And now, after twelve
 years?! ... You don't skip out on
 the hard times, waltz back in
 when you feel like it and become
 part of the family again.
 (softly, as she leaves)
 No more, Ray. It's over.

Ray's sister leaves, closing the door.

Ray and Estelle stand motionless.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Estelle cleans pots and pans which are piled on the counters.
 Ray enters with dinner glasses.

ESTELLE
 It's a shame - I noticed you
 didn't get barely a word in with
 your father all night.

RAY
 Carrie always had her way of
 being the center of attention.

ESTELLE
 Anton loves to see her.
 Especially now. He stayed at the
 table as long as he could.

Her tears fall into the dishwasher pond.

ESTELLE (cont'd)
 She won't accept me as family,
 Ray.

RAY
 To Carrie it must seem a
 sacrilege that Anton even
 considered marrying again. The
 (MORE)

RAY (cont'd)
 thought that our Mother, the love
 of his life, could somehow be
 replaced must give her big
 willies.

(Estelle smiles)
 Were you married before?

ESTELLE
 Twice. One of my husbands was
 killed; one went away.

RAY
 Kids?

A despondency overwhelms her.

ESTELLE (CONTS)
 Two. I don't know where they are.
 ... I'm sorry.

RAY
 Estelle... You're Anton's Wife.
 You're as much a part of this
 family as-

She laughs wildly, overjoyed, lunges against his chest. This
 surprises him. Her embracing hands wet him. They separate.

RAY (CONTS) (cont'd)
 -she is. You just have to start
 standing up to her. That's all.

ESTELLE
 What about you, Ray?

RAY
 I just stood her out on the front
 porch!

ESTELLE
 I mean deep down, fundamentally.
 How come you won't challenge her,
 Ray? Truly?

RAY
 She's right. I left.

ESTELLE
 Why?

He opens the wine, pours two glasses.

RAY
 I'm now forming a chapter of the
 'I don't take any crap from
 Carrie club'.
 (lifts a glass)
 Member. Member?

ESTELLE

Member.

She smiles. They toast.

INT. ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL - DAY

Mass. The congregation sings.

As Carlotta sings she glances down her pew: Guido, Guidolino, Lucia's sweet voice, Anton's gruff voice reciting every fifth syllable, Estelle and Ray standing in silence.

Anton glances over at Ray, cocks an eyebrow.

EXT. CATHEDRAL - DAY

The congregation emerges. Anton leads Ray around the side of the church.

At the same spot where, years back, Ray's mother slammed him against the wall, Anton points skyward with his walking stick: One saint adorning the top corner is recent, is striking.

ANTON

These stones were cut almost one hundred fifty years back. Saint Anthony had a crack, a flaw in his character.

(laughs)

Head fell off last year. Almost kill somebody. I cut the new one.

Ray doesn't say anything.

ANTON (CONTS) (cont'd)

Talk to Father Vincenti. He'll take you up there - you can see it close. Saint Paul I start now.

Anton points across the street to GUECI'S BAR.

ANTON (cont'd)

We go.

INTO GUECI'S: Men line the counter, others shoot billiards in back. Anton and Ray enter. Anton sits at a table, motions to PAULO GUECI (21). Paulo brings over a bottle and glasses.

PAULO (IN ITALIAN)

Good morning, Antonio.

ANTON (IN ITALIAN)

Morning, Paulo. Your father back yet?

PAULO
Still at his 'Mass after Mass'.
Plenty of sweet courtyard
confessions.

ANTON
How many girlfriends your father
have now?

PAULO
Maybe twenty.

They laugh. Paulo nods in greeting to Ray and leaves them.

ANTON
All talk. All harmless. You like
Estelle?

RAY
Yeah.

ANTON
Met her two years ago. Married
her a week later. I love Estelle.

He laughs robustly, coughs. They drink. Anton lights a
cigarette. He smiles wide as ROBERTO GUECI (52) enters.

ANTON (cont'd)
Roberto! How are things in the
courting yard?

ROBERTO
Women's voices are sweeter than
birds! Oh! The shape of a woman -
the shape of life!

They both laugh. Roberto fondly regards Ray, shakes Ray's hand:

ROBERTO (cont'd)
Greetings. Anton - a game? I must
play. I must. Join me later.

Roberto ambles past.

RAY
You couldn't introduce me as your
son?

ANTON
Ray, he knows who you are! You
don't remember Roberto Gueci?

Ray shakes his head. Anton looks away. Ray looks away. Each
spends a little time, looking away.

ANTON (cont'd)
You work tomorrow?

RAY
Suppose to be workin' today.

ANTON
Then what you sitting here for?

A crisp pool break resounds from the back of the room.

RAY
Wanted to see you, to talk.

ANTON
I hate that. People who talk about needin' to talk. 'Honey, I must talk to you.' People who talk about talkin' most times have nothin' to talk about anyway. So now you're outta work.

Ray lifts his drink. Anton's eyes his bracelet.

ANTON (cont'd)
You still cutting stone? ...

Anton takes his walking stick and raps it loudly on the floor.

ANTON (cont'd)
How can you not answer? With a stonecutter, it's your trade, your craft, your life.

RAY
I'm not a cutter.

ANTON
Why? Nobody dies in Los Angeles? What about statues of nude men?

Men laugh loudly in the back as the billiards crack.

ANTON (CONTS) (cont'd)
Why you say, "Cutter"? What is this? You a basketball player? Cut down the lanes? What do you cut? You a butcher? Okay, so now I know where to go for my meat. Huh?

There is a silence. The old man studies his son, his face.

ANTON (cont'd)
You want work? I take you on tomorrow. First thing: You ask for your Mamma's blessing. Go visit her. She's over with her family at Saint Lucas Cemetery. Tranquility Drive, all the way up the hill. Couldn't rest at the bottom - to this day she makes me
(MORE)

ANTON (cont'd)
walk all the way up the high hill
to see her.

Anton laughs. Roberto motions to Anton - their game is set.

ANTON (CONTS) (cont'd)
Then speak with Carlotta. She's
like Momma now. Tell her I said
tomorrow you work with me. That,
or you better get back where you
come from, get unemployment
check.

Ray stands. Anton as well. He watches as Ray leaves.

ROBERTO
Don't be a stranger, Ray.

ANTON
You say goodbye if you get on a
plane.
(joins Roberto)
Every time I look up I see my son
walking away. Roberto, this happy
boy has turned into the sorriest
man I ever see.

EXT. ST. LUCAS CEMETERY - DAY

Ray finds his mother's gravestone: a beautifully cut monument
inlaid with flowers. He crouches, faces his mother. Wind blows.

WE DISSOLVE INTO:

INT. RUCCI HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT THE PAST

A large festive gathering. Anton laughs loudly. Young Ray (16)
threads his way across

INTO THE KITCHEN: Young Ray hears Anton's brother, BENITO (45)
and his mother's laughter. Around the pantry corner: Benito's
hand guides her hip as they bring wine bottles up from the
basement. Silvana is flushed.

Young Ray hears his sister approaching. He doesn't want her to
see this - he cuts her off as she enters the kitchen, backs her
into the living room.

YOUNG CARLOTTA
Hey! Get outta my way - I'm
getting something.

As they re-enter the kitchen, Benito and Silvana have collected
themselves. Benito's gold watch and large gold ring glisten as
he puts wine bottles on the counter. He pinches Young Ray.

Anton enters. Young Ray watches as Anton and his brother joke
together, each uncorking a bottle.

INT. RUCCI HOUSE - HALL - DAY THE PAST

Young Ray arrives upstairs. He hears a struggle, looks in on:

IN THE MASTER BEDROOM: His mother fights off Benito's rough embrace. Benito stalks her around the bed. Silvana is flushed. Both are breathing heavy.

BENITO
Come here. I said, come here.

Benito tears at her blouse, forces a kiss on her mouth.

SILVANA
Ohh, Ray... Get off me!

Silvana slaps Benito across the face. Young Ray charges him.

YOUNG RAY
Get away from my mother.

As Benito turns, Young Ray catches him with a glancing punch to the chops. Incensed, Benito hurls him into the wall.

BENITO
You don't touch me. Ever.

He slaps Young Ray back and forth across the face, slams him into the wall. Silvana lunges between them embracing her son.

YOUNG RAY
Stay away from my mother.

Mother and son fall in a heap. Benito clenches his fist to strike Ray.

SILVANA
Leave, Benito. I'll handle this.
GET OUT!

Young Ray tries to struggle past her, to get at Benito. Benito exits. Young Ray fights to get clear of his mother's embrace. She holds on tight. He fights back tears:

YOUNG RAY
What are you doing, Momma?

SILVANA
My son - I love you.

YOUNG RAY
No. No you don't.

EXT. ST. LUCAS CEMETERY THE PRESENT

Ray is now kneeling before his mother's grave. He reads the beautiful epitaph hand cut by Anton: IN LOVING MEMORY.

Ray lifts off his stone crucifix necklace. He hangs it over the corner of the monument. The crucifix comes to rest on a stone bouquet of roses.

Ray rises, brushes off his knees, and walks away.

EXT. ACCINELLI HOUSE - NIGHT

Ray arrives before his sister's house, checks the address. He spots Carlotta and Guido inside. Ray stays outside the gate.

IN THE LIVING ROOM: light amber ominous, the gathering a cabal: Martin and Abotto are there.

ABOTTO

I don't understand the anxiety level here. Ray could be on a plane right now.

CARLOTTA

He'll stay. He might not realize it yet, but he's going to stay.

MARTIN

No harm in planning ahead then.

GUIDO

We will control the business. It's already arranged. It's all clearly stated in Anton's will.

OUTSIDE: Ray remains on the sidewalk. He watches the window: Carlotta crosses within. Voices don't carry. He walks away.

IN THE LIVING ROOM:

MARTIN

You're handling all the legal matters for Anton's estate?

GUIDO

Yes. It's all taken care of.

ABOTTO

What if, once we expand to the south side, we hire Ray on over there?

GUIDO

No. It's best if Ray gets nothing.

ABOTTO

Carlotta - he's your brother.

CARLOTTA

Ray left at the same time my father's brother, Benito,

(MORE)

CARLOTTA (cont'd)
disappeared. Benito was never
heard from again.

ABOTTO
You think Ray had something to do
with that?

GUIDO
If Ray wants to cut stone and
he's good at it, I'm sure he can
find work back where he came
from.

INT. RUCCI HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Ray sits with his father eating breakfast. It's a work day. Ray
wears one of Anton's work shirts. Estelle fixes them lunches.

ESTELLE
Ray, you like liverwurst?

ANTON
Why you buy liverwurst? I hate
that. You know I hate that.

ESTELLE
Ray?

She asks Ray as his mouth is full. He shakes his head.

ANTON
You like liverwurst?

ESTELLE
It's okay.

ANTON
Only okay? Then why you buy it
for? Market full of food and you
can't find something you like?

Estelle laughs, raises a hand to her mouth.

ANTON (cont'd)
Why is this funny?

ESTELLE
I buy it for Carlotta.

ANTON
She hates liverwurst!

Estelle laughs, nods. Ray smiles. Anton folds his newspaper in
frustration and looks over at his son.

ESTELLE
A little in her lasagna, a little
here and there.
(MORE)

ESTELLE (cont'd)
 (laughing, eyes tearing)
 It's not just that. Anything left
 over. Ever notice the color of
 her salad's a little different?
 Her pasta?

Estelle laughs out of control. Ray laughs. Anton surveys these
 oddballs gathered around him in this house.

ANTON
 That's not funny. Don't do that.
 First thing- my lunch ready?

Estelle hands it to him. He opens his sandwich, inspects it.
 This cracks her up. Estelle hands Ray his lunch and breaks up
 again. He smiles shaking his head. Anton leans in, kisses her.

ESTELLE
 Chew before you swallow.

Ray follows his father out, Estelle laughs hysterically.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - FRONTAL VIEW - MORNING

Father and son approach the building.

INT. OFFICE - MORNING

Martin and Abotto at their desks. Anton steps in.

ANTON
 Mornin'.

ABOTTO
 Good morning.

MARTIN
 Morning, Antonio. Your saint has
 arrived.

Ray enters, steps beside his father.

ANTON
 Good. Lou Martin, Roberto Abotto,
 my son Ray. Ray worked here as
 apprentice stonecutter for three
 years. Long time ago. I want him
 to start first thing today as
 yard assistant.

MARTIN
 You got it, Anton.

ANTON
 He is a hod carrier if any mason
 is short.

ABOTTO

Good to have you with us, Ray.

Ray follows his father out. Martin and Abotto regard each other.

ON THE LOADING DOCK: As Anton clocks in, Luke is there.

LUKE

Mornin', Anton.

ANTON

Mornin', Luke. Ray's back on.

Luke smiles broadly, reaches out to shake Ray's hand.

LUKE

That's good.

They cross the yard. Tony works in the cutting area.

ANTON

Tony, Ray - our new assistant.

TONY

Mornin'. Your saint stone's here,
Anton.

Anton moves back under the overhang to a tool bench. He and Ray put their lunches down.

ANTON

First thing: check that stone.
Tiniest flaw you show me.

Anton fixes strong coffee, lights his morning cigarette.

ANTON (cont'd)

Martin and Abotto - good men. I like 'em, I don't like 'em. Some things, new things they right on top of, everyone is busy. Tony's a good stonecutter. He also good with new things, the casting. But they don't understand this, Ray.

(points to a gravestone)

I cut this for Anna. They don't understand that. Now they want to advertise the cast statuary, mass produce. I don't like this.

(picks up a chisel)

This is our art, Ray. This they don't understand.

(the saint stone)

Saint Paul has to be like the others in just one way: By skilled hand on best stone. Or the whole church is maybe a little weaker.

As Ray inspects the large saint stone, he watches as his father leans close to Tony, his first apprentice, sharing insights - reminiscent of Anton guiding Ray as a kid.

INT. RUCCI HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Estelle casts a bedsheet in air, spreads it across the mattress. Carlotta arrives in the doorway, watches Estelle, unnoticed. As Estelle bends to tuck the sheet in, she looks like an English maid.

CARLOTTA
Estelle. Hello.

ESTELLE
Carlotta. You scared me.

CARLOTTA
Is Ray here?

TIGHT ON: The photograph of Silvana. As Carlotta moves by the dresser and Estelle casts a topsheet wide on the air, Carlotta's face is reflected over Silvana's. For a fascinating frightening instant they become one.

ESTELLE
He's gone.

CARLOTTA
Oh. He didn't say goodbye.

ESTELLE
He's gone to work. Anton hired him on.

CARLOTTA
Anton did what? Well... Good for Ray. I'll call later then.

Carlotta leaves.

IN THE GUEST BEDROOM: Carlotta enters. She stalks an intruder, looks through Ray's few things.

The stone bracelet is on the dresser. She takes it in hand: beautifully inlaid pieces of stone with a tiny bronze hasp joining them, pins inset in stone.

Carlotta tears it apart, casts it aside, hastens away.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - DUSK

Ray sweeps the floor. The endofday shift whistle shrills at the adjacent factory. Anton and Tony stop work.

RAY
Need anything else done?

ANTON

Nope.

Ray eyes Tony's cutting: he's a fine craftsman yet short on artistry.

RAY

I'm clockin' out then - gonna get a drink before coming home.

ANTON

Good.

Anton smiles to himself, hearing Ray call home "home".

On the loading dock, Martin smokes, surveys the yard, white shirt windripping against his lean flanks. Ray and Tony approach to clock out.

MARTIN

You cut stone here years back?

RAY

Years back.

MARTIN

Any good?

RAY

Might've been once.

Martin times this as Tony punches out:

MARTIN

You interested in cast statuary?

RAY

No.

Clocked out, Tony steps towards Ray, toward the door, as Martin knows he has to.

MARTIN

No desire to learn it?

RAY

Just don't see any artistry in it.

TONY

You don't like my work?

RAY

It's good. Can you cut stone in the traditional way like my father?

TONY

Not much call for the hand chisel anymore.

RAY

Walk around this city - the stonework that catches your eye. It's all the old work.

TONY

Maybe you outta walk around the city - keep tradition alive somewhere else.

Ray stands with that calm hunger, a cold menace deeply seeded in dark eyes riveted on a foe.

MARTIN

Tony. Ray's yard boy here - that's all. That's understood.

Anton arrives, clocks out.

ANTON

Martin, they wanna fight, you let 'em go. But no-one can work for me with broken fingers. Anyone who can't work for me, first thing - give 'em two weeks pay, let 'em go. Anyone who hurts someone who works for me, give 'em no pay, let 'em go. ... Good night everyone.

TONY, MARTIN

Good night, Anton.

Anton exits. Ray steps around Tony and follows. Tony and Martin watch him go.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Ray downs a shot of whiskey, chases it with beer. He drinks alone, reflecting on:

WE DISSOLVE BACK IN TIME, INTO:

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - DAY THE PAST

Young Ray (16) brushes a finely cut piece of garden statuary clean as his father carts a Barrie-granite stone into place.

YOUNG RAY

Dad... In Church, I heard Momma telling Father Vincenti about her and your brother.

ANTON

She and my brother what?

His son can't say it, but what can't be spoken is in his eyes.

ANTON (cont'd)
Bible says 'Honor thy father and
mother'. That's the first thing.
First thing - above all.

Anton shifts the heavy burden onto his cutting brace. His son's eyes remain on him.

ANTON (cont'd)
I pay you to work, not to watch.

YOUNG RAY
Dad? ... Dad, tell me...

ANTON
What did I just say?

Anton threatens to come over and whack him. Young Ray can't back down. The look in his son's eyes.

ANTON (cont'd)
We go see.

EXT. RUCCI HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY THE PAST

As Anton and Young Ray arrive, Benito's on the front steps with Silvana. His ring glistens in the sunlight.

SILVANA
Anton, what brings you home so
early?

ANTON
We take rest of day off. Benito,
come in for a drink.

Anton slaps his larger brother on the back, follows him inside. Silvana glares at her son, certain he's said something, that he's broken his word to her. She follows the men in.

INTO THE LIVING ROOM: The brother's indecipherable conversation in the kitchen erupts in laughter. Young Ray watches: Silvana heads their way, deftly leans by the china cabinet mirror - checks her makeup before going in.

YOUNG RAY'S KITCHEN DOORWAY POV (MOS): As Anton and Benito have a drink, Silvana moves between them beginning a meal. Silvana casts Benito a reassuring glance.

Young Ray watches his father who hasn't the guts to challenge Benito. Young Ray turns away.

EXT. RUCCI HOUSE - LATE NIGHT THE PRESENT

Ray is drunk. He arrives at the door; he doesn't have a key. The house is dark. He pounds the door. Waits. Silence. He pounds again. Waits. He punches the door, the house. The lock slides over: Estelle is there in her robe.

ESTELLE
Ray, shhh. You all right?

IN THE LIVING ROOM: Ray follows her up the stairs.

INTO RAY'S BEDROOM: Ray turns on the light, discovers his bracelet in pieces. He slams the dresser top. Estelle sees it for the first time.

ESTELLE (cont'd)
Ray! Shh shh shhh. You'll wake Anton. I'm so sorry. Carlotta was here today. Why would she do that? Can you fix it?

He takes off his work shirt, pulls off his undershirt. He moves around her into the hall.

IN THE BATHROOM: Ray sets the shower running.

He knocks one of his father's inhalers off the sink. It clatters on the floor. They crouch to retrieve it. The bathroom is tight quarters. Two punching knuckles on Ray's hand bleed.

ESTELLE (cont'd)
Hurt your hand?
(Ray shakes his head)
It's over folks! Hurray! First round - Ray Rucci knocks out the house! ... I'm sorry.

RAY
I don't know what I'm doing here. Feelings come back strong. It's not gonna change this.

Ray hands her the inhaler. Blood drips.

ESTELLE
Since you've been here, we have a complete family. And in case you still don't realize it, you mean the world to him. ... Good night. Don't slip in the shower.

She smiles, then vanishes into the darkness of the hall.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - DAY

Anton guides Tony as he hammers at the saint stone with a pneumatic drill. It's deafening. Ray cleans the work area. He watches as Anton advises Tony.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - DUSK

Ray clears stone debris. The factory whistle blows. Luke, Tony and others head over to clock out. Anton moves over to resume work on a marker.

Ray carts a flawed stone over. He sets up and begins practicing. Anton smiles.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - DAY

Anton's saint stone progresses. Ray watches as his father has a coughing fit. Bent over, Anton coughs into a handkerchief.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - NIGHT

Ray cuts stone. His dormant skills return.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - DUSK

Ray works late, cutting stone. Anton now works the saint stone with hammer and chisel. His wrist quivers, he makes a bad cut. Anton stares at the saint deeply upset, then cuts some more.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - DAY

A Saturday: the yard is deserted. Except for Ray cutting stone. Abotto and Martin watch from the shadowy recesses of the dock.

END MONTAGE

INT. RUCCI HOUSE - DINING AREA - NIGHT

Ray, Anton, and Estelle share a hearty meal.

ESTELLE

Anton not working you too hard?

She asks Ray with his mouth full. He mumbles, shakes his head.

ANTON

What you do with paycheck?

ESTELLE

Anton.

ANTON

How do I know what habits he's into? You addict maybe?

ESTELLE

You talk to Ray like he was
seventeen.

ANTON

Problems of seventeen problems of
life. How to make a living. How
to survive. How to find the right
woman. That most difficult of all
- in fact, impossible.

Anton laughs. Ray smiles. Estelle's concern vanishes.

ANTON (CONTS) (cont'd)

You fix things? First thing you
can do: roof and electrical box.

RAY

"First thing"?

ANTON

House needs work. This weekend
you help out, carry weight - get
on Estelle's good side. Maybe
then she won't have to buy
anymore liverwurst.

Estelle smiles.

ANTON (cont'd)

You don't fight with Tony. You
must learn to control your
temper. With everybody. With
anybody. You're strong man. You
hurt someone, kill someone -
you'll always be sorry.

Ray regards him.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ray sits in the fireside chair, a fire in the hearth, phone to
his ear, distant number ringing.

INT. HOLLYWOOD HOSPICE - LISA'S OFFICE

Lisa is counseling a HOMELESS PERSON. Her phone rings.

LISA (INTO PHONE)

Lisa. Ray! How's your father?

BEGIN PHONE INTERCUT:

RAY

Not so good. You workin' late?

LISA

Yeah. There's two people in particular I'll really making progress with. One's just started working full time. I'll give you the details later. When are you coming back?

RAY

I don't know. I need you to send me some things.

There is a silence on the frail line.

LISA

All right.

RAY

My footlocker. The key for the lock is on the nail holding my mother's picture on the wall. Send me everything on the top two trays - everything. Throw in some clothes too. Okay?

LISA

Okay. I miss you, Ray.

She waits, ear pressed to receiver.

RAY

I miss you too.

LISA

... Good night, Ray.

Lisa hangs up.

ON RAY: He holds a dead line.

END PHONE INTERCUT.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - DAY

Gusty winds cross the yard, storm clouds darken the sky. Ray blasts a flower bouquet into the frosted surface of a granite stone. Dark goggles shield his eyes. On this Saturday, he works alone except for Luke who locks up the welding area.

LUKE

Who. That's one nice bouquet. Have a good weekend, Ray.

RAY

What's left of it. You too. Luke... thanks.

INT. ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL - DAY

Sunday Mass. The congregation kneels in prayer. The Accinelli's now sit a few rows away from the Rucci's.

Estelle, Anton, and Ray. We hear their unspoken prayers:

ESTELLE (VO)

Thank you for sending Ray. Please keep him strong and wonderful and

ANTON (VO)

Do not let my mistake flaw the stone, Lord. Do not let your saint be flawed.

RAY (VO)

Please steady and strengthen my hand so my work can please my father.

ANTON (VO, CONTS)

Don't let Estelle buy any more food that noone likes, and

Anton catches his son smiling at him, shrugs it off:

ANTON (VO, CONTS) (cont'd)

first thing, Lord - make my son normal, not imbecilic. Fix whatever his problem is.

INT. LOS ANGELES - RAY'S SINGLE - DAY

Silvana's photo: the glass has been punch-broken, her face distorted, monstrous. The wall beside it is spraypainted: WHORE

Lisa enters Ray's single. It's been trashed: Gangsters have broken most everything. The walls are spraypainted: DEAD MOTHER FUCKER and DEAD MAN.

Lisa's reflection appears over Silvana's, grows until her face fills the frame as if about to devour her. Silvana's image is lifted away revealing: The key on the nail.

Lisa takes it.

Lisa crosses over to the trunk. She places a black travel bag beside it. She opens the trunk, goes wide-eyed in amazement with what she sees. She lifts out a wooden box, opens it - and has the same reaction.

INT. GUECI'S BAR - DAY

Anton sits with Roberto after Mass. Smoke rolls off Roberto's cigar as his hands incarnate his tale:

ROBERTO

With all those daughters, best thing she can do is marry 'em off quick as she can. She invites me over to dinner. Me! Sits me across from Rosanna.

His eyes roll, fingers waft - clearly Rosanna is a jewel.

AT THE FRONT DOOR: Carlotta arrives, peers in.

ROBERTO (CONTS) (cont'd)

I sit down. We eat. After the meal, the mother and all the youngest clear the table. Rosanna stays. Just Rosanna. I say, "Rosanna, I look over and I see you and I think to myself, 'Heaven's lost an angel'."

Anton laughs. Carlotta approaches. She sees Anton smoking - this angel's not smiling.

ROBERTO (CONTS) (cont'd)

Rosanna says, "Save that for your coffee with my mother."

They share a rollicking laugh together. Roberto has that quality: once you're laughing with him, you keep laughing just at his laughter. Anton notices Carlotta.

ANTON

Something can't wait? You can't see me at home?

ROBERTO

Anton, it's all right. I go.

Roberto moves to the billiard tables. Carlotta takes his chair.

CARLOTTA

Poppa - you're not suppose to smoke.

ANTON

Don't tell me this. I tell you before, don't tell me this.

CARLOTTA

Why is Ray working for you?

ANTON

Ask him.

CARLOTTA

You have to let him go. Momma would-

ANTON

What would Momma do, Carlotta?

CARLOTTA

Poppa, Guido did some checking on Ray. He found out horrible things. Ray was discharged from the Navy after fighting with an officer. He has a criminal record. He's on parole right now! Just one month ago, he killed a man! He-

ANTON

So it's your business who I hire?

CARLOTTA

He can't hold a job.

ANTON

It's not your business to talk about business.

CARLOTTA

Poppa, Ray walked out on all of us at the same time your brother disappeared. You ever think about that?

ANTON

Enough. No more. I will hear no more. ...

A moment passes.

CARLOTTA

So he stays with you! A killer under your roof.

ANTON

My son sleeps in my house. Things change when he save up some money. Thank you for this news. How are the kids? Better?

CARLOTTA

Better.

ANTON

Get them well - I want to see them. Who's with them now?

Carlotta rises and leaves him. Billiards crack in the back.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - DAY

Tony sits with Luke on the dock edge eating lunch. Ray relaxes in the cutting area. Anton inspects the finished saint.

ANTON

Your sandwich taste okay?

RAY
Yeah. Why? I think Estelle likes me.

ANTON
Wasn't sure about mine.

He motions for Ray. They walk over to Ray's practice stones which lean against the rear building side. Anton regards them. He smiles, pleased. Ray's gift as a stonecutter is strongly in evidence. Anton reacts to one name:

ANTON (cont'd)
'Benito'? That's funny.

RAY
How so?

ANTON
Benito disappeared about when you left. Haven't seen my brother since. No-one has. Carlotta thinks maybe he's dead, maybe you kill him.

RAY
No.

ANTON
I know that. First thing - recut faces. You practice more. You can get as good as I am. Maybe one day, better.

Ray looks at his father, inwardly elated. Anton coughs.

ANTON (cont'd)
I go to bathroom. Back to work.

Ray watches his father walk away across the yard.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - DAY

Fifteen minutes later. Ray and Tony work in the cutting area. Ray glances across the yard: no Anton in sight. He heads over.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Ray passes Martin and Abotto's office, enters the

INTO THE BATHROOM: Anton lies collapsed on the tiles in a pool of blood. He's unconscious, face a deep purple, suffocating.

Ray quickly props his father on his thigh and uses quick jabs of a martial arts technique (Nuki-katsu) to keep his father alive. He gives a loud martial arts yell (ki-ai) with each thrust. Anton spits out a flood of blood as Martin enters.

MARTIN
 Hey - what the hell you doin?
 What's that?

RAY
 Bring Poppa's inhaler. Call
 paramedics. Move!

INT. ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE - NIGHT

Anton lies in bed, IV in one arm. On oxygen, he is conscious though his eyes are glassy. Carlotta cups his limp hand in her's. Guido, Guidolino and Lucia are there. Ray and Estelle look on. Ray wears his field jacket, feeling security in its veteran insulation.

LUCIA
 I love you, Nonno.

Teary, she kisses his cheek. Guidolino trades places.

GUIDOLINO
 Goodbye, Antonio.

CARLOTTA
 Guidolino!

Guido leads the children out. Guidolino turns at the door:

GUIDOLINO
 I'm sorry, Grand-dad.

Anton gives him a wink. It's difficult for Anton to whisper, let alone breathe. You get the feeling that even a hard cough could be his last:

ANTON
 Carlotta - cheer up. You're
 making me sad. I hate that.

Anton raises a hand toward Estelle. She leans in and kisses him. Carlotta retreats. Father Vincenti enters.

ANTON (cont'd)
 My beautiful daughter, I love
 you. You've always been my joy.
 Ray, tell me about the Special
 Forces. About those years.

Anton points and Estelle brings out a box, opens it. Ray sees, for the first time, his distinguished service commendation.

ANTON (cont'd)
 They sent this home. I'd take it
 to Roberto's, show it around. My
 son, Special Forces. Make
 everyone proud.

Ray glances at Carlotta: She nods - it made her proud as well.
Estelle presents another tiny box: Ray's purple heart.

ANTON (cont'd)
Purple Heart. What for? How bad?
Probably look like mine right
now.

His lips move to laugh but his chest only quivers.

ANTON (CONTS) (cont'd)
People ask me, 'What happened?' I
don't know. ... I never know.

Ray takes his father's hand in his: similar hands,
stonecutter's hands.

RAY
Forgive me father for leaving.
Please.

Anton nods. Carlotta, Estelle and Father Vincenti watch.

ANTON
You did what you thought was the
right thing.

Anton motions for Father Vincenti. Estelle and Carlotta step
out. As Ray lets go of his father's hand and rises:

ANTON (cont'd)
Ray, forgive me for not always
being man of my own house. You
are, you always will be, my
lovely son.

The priest looks on. He knows through years of Anton's
confessions exactly what he's referring to.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Ray sits vigilant outside his father's room. He watches as a
boy tries to open a door up the corridor. It's locked.

ANTON (VO)
Ray, forgive me for not always
being man of my own house.

WE DISSOLVE INTO:

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - DAY THE PAST

Young Ray (17) tries the front door: it's locked. He moves to
the gate, peers through a crack: At the rear of the yard, Anton
moves around the building side.

YOUNG RAY
Anton. ANTON.

Anton looks over, surprised. Young Ray moves by the front door, sits down, waits. After a time, Anton opens the door.

YOUNG RAY (cont'd)
You working on a Sunday?

ANTON
No work today - God's rule.

Anton steps out. As he locks the door, Ray notices that his fingernails and cuffs are dirty. One knuckle is scraped.

ANTON (cont'd)
Why do you come here?

RAY
To tell you: I'm leaving.

ANTON
There is no more reason for you to go.

Young Ray walks away.

ANTON (cont'd)
Ray - don't go. Ray!

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT THE PRESENT

CLOSE ON: Ray, reflecting.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - DAY THE PAST

The scene repeats: Anton opens the door.

YOUNG RAY
You working on a Sunday?

ANTON
No work today - God's rule.

Anton steps out. As he locks the door, Ray notices that his fingernails and cuffs are dirty. One knuckle is scraped.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - EARLIER THAT DAY THE PAST

The scene repeats: Ray peers through a crack in the gate: From the back, Anton looks over, surprised. Anton squints, tries to see where his son's vantage point is.

REPEAT AGAIN: CLOSER ON Anton standing.

YOUNG RAY
ANTON.

Anton's uncharacteristic surprise as he turns around. He glances over, moves away from this remote part of the work yard. As he steps toward the loading dock: the snowy ground at his feet is broken by a patch of fresh earth.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT THE PRESENT

Ray looks in on Estelle, Carlotta and Anton. Anton sleeps.

RAY
I'll be back.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - NIGHT

Ray hops off the loading dock. No-one else is there. A single yard light sways in the gusting wind. The saint is lit by the moon. Ray crosses over to the back side of the yard, the narrow corridor between the storage garage and a side wall. His practice stones rest against the storage garage. Palettes are stacked on the spot where Anton was that day. Ray clears them.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - LATER THAT NIGHT

Palettes cleared, Ray crouches, tests the sleety earth with a chisel. He digs.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Anton is conscious, yet drained. Estelle is alone with him. Her motions: She hands him the framed family photo Mrs. Zapatino took that he keeps in his dresser.

ANTON
Paper.

He stares at the photo. She slips a paper across the glass and slides a pen between his shaking fingers. He begins a codicil to his Will. Estelle holds the glass steady for him.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - LATER THAT NIGHT

Digging out a small hole in tough ground, Ray strikes something. He feels with his fingers, rubs. Metal glistens. He shifts aside, waits for the swaying yard light to illuminate his hole. It reveals: a ring, skeletal knuckles of a hand.

Ray digs alongside it revealing: A man's hand and jacketed forearm. The gold ring is one we've seen. Ray lifts the sleeve revealing: a gold watch - Benito's. He's dressed for church.

ON RAY.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - DAY THE PAST

The scene repeats: Anton opens the door.

YOUNG RAY
You working on a Sunday?

ANTON
No work today - God's rule.

Anton steps out. As he locks the door, Ray notices that his fingernails and cuffs are dirty. The skin scraped off Anton's finger is the skin that covers a knuckle of a fist.

ANTON (VO) (cont'd)
There is no more reason for you
to go.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD THE PRESENT

Ray sits on his rear. The light sways back catching his markers. The gravestone with 'BENITO' is right in his face.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - DAY TWO DAYS PRIOR

The scene repeats: Anton and Ray regard Ray's practice stones which lean against the rear building side. Anton smiles, pleased. He reacts to one name:

ANTON
'Benito'? That's funny.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD THE PRESENT

Ray laughs, understanding Anton's joke. He sits on frozen ground as the wind gusts and the light sways, shifting in and out of darkness, his mind racing: this discovery changing his understanding of his entire past.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - LATER THAT NIGHT

Ray emerges from the elevator, runs toward us.

INTO ANTON'S ROOM: Estelle holds his father's hand.

RAY
Is he?

She squeezes his hand. Anton's eyes open. Ray drops beside his father, his tears fall:

RAY (cont'd)
I love you, Poppa.

ANTON
 (whispers)
 You do good marker for me.
 Simple. First thing.

RAY
 I promise.

WE DISSOLVE INTO:

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - DUSK THE PAST

The opening scene continues: From his work, Young Ray observes his father at work. Anton glances over at his son, smiles.

INT. RUCCI LIVING ROOM - DUSK

Estelle stares out a window, watches the neighborhood, the day.

RAY
 Estelle. It's time to get ready.

INT. RUCCI HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Ray faces his reflection: his hair is neatly cut, his face cleanshaven.

IN THE BEDROOM: The travel bag that Lisa packed for Ray lies open on his bed. Ray enters. He wears the perfectly pressed pants of his Navy dress uniform.

Estelle steps in, dressed for the funeral. Impressed with Ray's new appearance, she hands him the boxes of medals.

A jacket wrapped in opaque plastic hangs in the closet. As Ray reaches for it we glimpse striped detail on one sleeve.

INT. ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL - DAY

People are seated, others arriving: Roberto, Paulo, everyone from work. Anton's casket is there.

Heads turn with a buzz of whispers: Ray escorts Estelle in.

Carlotta's eyes widen as she watches him: Ray wears his Navy dress blues proudly, immaculately. His distinguished service commendation and other medals adorn his chest. He meets people's eyes as he escorts Estelle to the front. They sit by Carlotta and the Accinellis.

EXT. ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL - DAY

Ray, Guido, Roberto, Luke, Martin and Abotto carry the casket outside.

FROM A HIGH ANGLE: Anton's masterfully cut St. Anthony watches them descend steps of stone.

INT. RUCCI LIVING ROOM - DUSK

Friends and relatives throughout the house drink, eat, talk. The front door, draped in black, is open to the vanishing day.

As Ray speaks with Roberto, they glance over at Estelle, hostess circulating from group to group bravely masking her fundamental isolation. Children race past her. She nears.

ESTELLE

I'm so glad you're here. Oh, Ray.

She starts crying, melts into his arms. Carlotta and Guido watch. Roberto too.

Lisa arrives. In contrast to those gathered, she wears a bright, colorful, shapely dress. Her hair shimmers. She scans the funeral gathering, sees Ray in a woman's (Estelle) embrace.

He sees her, smiles. Lisa is impressed beholding him in uniform for the first time. They embrace, subdued, appropriately for the moment.

LISA

Ray. I'm sorry.

RAY

It's what I came back for, isn't it?

Carlotta watches this new arrival, surmising. As Ray leads Lisa to Estelle and Roberto, she joins them.

LISA

I'm so sorry.

CARLOTTA

Thank you. But you didn't know my father.

LISA

I did. I know Ray.

Roberto's eyes overflow with an acceptance, a tremendous pleasure in Ray's return. He clasps him at arm's length.

ROBERTO

We must go. Please visit my house
- anytime, you are welcome. One
day soon, I'll show you how to
play pool.

Ray smiles. Roberto embraces Estelle, looks her in the eye:

ROBERTO (cont'd)
 Be strong Estelle. Anton picked
 such a lovely wife! The moment
 you change your clothes, leave
 the house, Cicero's gonna have a
 sex riot!

His laugh commands the room. She can't help smiling. As he and his son leave and Ray introduces Lisa to others, Estelle again finds herself in the center of the room, alone.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ray and Lisa make love. Bodies grasping, desperate to be closer still. Ray's lovemaking now in full contrast to their lovemaking in Los Angeles: he makes love to Lisa's body, to Lisa, the woman he loves.

LISA
 I missed you so much, Ray.

RAY
 I missed you. I never realized I
 could miss you so much.

IN THE MASTER BEDROOM: Estelle lies alone in the big bed. The sounds of Ray and Lisa making love carry through the wall.

She sits up, turns on the lamp. As the lovemaking continues, Estelle's tears fall.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Ray eats breakfast as Estelle fixes his lunch. She puts an orange into Anton's lunch box.

ESTELLE
 Lisa doesn't feel like joining
 us?

RAY
 It's barely seven, Estelle. She
 had a long flight, short night.

ESTELLE
 I think you both had a short
 night. Have you known her long?

Ray notices: she slices meat erratically.

RAY
 You don't like her?

ESTELLE
 She's beautiful, Ray. She was
 dressed so pretty - it was
 perfect for the funeral,
 (MORE)

ESTELLE (cont'd)
 actually. Oh, Ray. I only had two
 years with Anton. Not even that.

She drops the knife, despondency overwhelms her. Ray stands.
 Her arms sweep around him. She cries deeply into his chest.

ESTELLE (cont'd)
 Why couldn't he have come into my
 life years ago. We could've
 shared a proper life together.
 ... Oh, forgive me. Here.

She hands him the lunch box.

RAY
 That's Anton's.

ESTELLE
 Does it matter?

RAY
 Any liverwurst in there?

She smiles. He wipes the tears from her face.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - LOADING DOCK - MORNING

Ray clocks in. Luke's there.

RAY
 Mornin', Luke.

LUKE
 Mornin', Ray. Didn't expect you
 back so soon.

RAY
 Best to get back to work.

Ray hops off the dock, crosses the yard. Tony works on a
 beautiful marble stone set in his cutting brace. The design
 sheet flaps in the breeze. Ray takes it, flattens it on his
 table: It's the design and epitaph for Anton's marker.

RAY (cont'd)
 I cut my father's stone.

TONY
 I'm in charge of the stonecutting
 now, Ray.

RAY
 Cutting a father's monument is a
 tradition in my family. It's
 Anton's wish.

TONY
 Whatever the boss says.

Ray crosses the yard.

IN THE OFFICE:

MARTIN
 (into the phone)
 You have to pay your bill. ...
 Then give us a collateral. How
 'bout your Mercedes! We'll use it
 to transport cement starting
 tomorrow!

Abotto swivels around as Ray enters hard.

ABOTTO
 What's the matter, Ray?

Martin hangs up. He subtly slides open his side desk drawer. A handgun is there.

RAY
 C'mon out back - both of you.

Ray heads out. They follow him.

ON THE LOADING DOCK: Ray emerges, leads Martin and Abotto across the yard into the cutting area.

RAY'S POV: Tony continues work on Anton's gravestone. Ray passes behind him, grabs a sledgehammer. Everyone watches as:

MARTIN
 Ray!

RAY
 Watch out, Tony.

The sledgehammer whistles past Tony's head, STRIKES the stone with truly Biblical force - crushes stone and brace.

Tony, shocked, incensed, lunges at Ray. Ray throws him to the ground, stands over him barring his arm. Tony can't rise and is helpless, elbow set to snap across Ray's thigh. Ray's skill is so superior, he still holds the sledgehammer in his free hand. His eyes are again the eyes of the hunter, only now he's got reason not to hurt this man - something to strive for. Anton's Saint Paul faces them in the background.

RAY (cont'd)
 When they read the Will, maybe
 this is my company, maybe not.
 Who stays on, who goes - depends
 on who backs me, who doesn't.

MARTIN
 If you've decided not to break
 Tony's arm, why not let him up?

Ray does. Tony backsteps shaking out his arm. He turns to rush Ray again.

MARTIN (cont'd)
 Tony. Don't be stupid.

TONY
 (to Martin)
 You told me I'm taking over
 Anton's position as master
 cutter. You need one master
 cutter. Just one. You decide.

A silent second passes.

TONY (cont'd)
 Call me when you've decided.

Tony walks away. He leaves the yard. Ray begins to set up, to cut his father's stone. Other's return to work. Martin watches.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - DAY

As rain pelts the metal roof, Ray crafts his father's monument.

INT. RUCCI HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Estelle crosses to the closet wearing bra and skirt. Her breasts are attractive. The door to her room is open.

ESTELLE
 Almost ready, Ray? We're gonna be late.

IN RAY'S BEDROOM: Ray buttons his long-sleeve shirt. He wears his best jeans. Lisa is there.

LISA
 I've never seen Chicago, Ray.

RAY
 We'll do it. It's a great city.

IN THE MASTER BEDROOM: Estelle buttons her blouse. Ray enters.

RAY (cont'd)
 I'd like to wear a tie.

She regards what he's wearing, selects one of his father's.

ESTELLE
 Try this one.

He puts it on. She helps him with it. Lisa appears in the doorway.

LISA
 Sure I can't come along?

ESTELLE

It's a private reading. I'm
sorry.

RAY

I didn't get an 'invitation'.

ESTELLE

You did. Trust me - you'll be
mentioned in the Will.

INT. CARLTON LAW OFFICES - NIGHT

The Will-reading is in progress. MR. CARLTON, the estate
executor, sits behind his antique desk. Ray, Estelle, Carlotta,
Guido, relatives and friends are gathered.

MR. CARLTON

That was the Will dated November
first. We now proceed to the
codicil dated December third of
this year, executed on the day of
Antonio Rucci's passing and
witnessed by his surviving wife,
Estelle.

GUIDO

Excuse me if I may, Mister
Carlton. This codicil was
submitted to you when?

MR. CARLTON

Five days ago by Estelle Rucci.
I've had it transcribed as the
handwriting was erratic. Everyone
mentioned herein will be copied
with a copy of both the original
and my transcription. It reads as
follows. "I, Antonio Rucci, being
of sound mind at the time of this
writing, do hereby make the
following change to my Will. To
my son, Ray,-

Estelle lays her warm hand on Ray's shoulder. Carlotta and
Guido look them over.

MR. CARLTON (CONTS) (cont'd)

-I turn over the family business,
Rucci Stonecutters, -

Whispers, a heated disquiet arises from Carlotta's faction.
Chairs scrape the wooden floor.

Estelle puts an arm around Ray, smiles.

MR. CARLTON (CONTS) (cont'd)

-for him to run and maintain, in
the hope that traditional

(MORE)

MR. CARLTON (CONTS) (cont'd)
 business will be good business
 under his care and supervision."

Ray glances at the relatives and family friends opposing him.

EXT. CICERO STREET - NIGHT

Estelle clings to Ray's arm as they walk down their street, passing neighbor's houses. A light pretty snow falls.

RAY
 He never said anything.

ESTELLE
 Did he have to?

They turn through their gate and arrive at the front door. Estelle regards him, thrilled. She hugs him tight. He unlocks the door and she follows him in.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - WORK YARD - DAY

An icy wind blows across the sleety yard. Metal doors are drawn down on all but two sections of the work area.

IN THE WORK AREA: Ray shapes the fine marble face of his father's gravestone. His work is first-rate. Sparks fly from Luke's welding station. Abotto steps in, watches as Ray finishes a perfectly beveled corner line. Ray looks up.

ABOTTO
 Ray, could you come inside a
 minute?

IN THE OFFICE: Martin is seated behind his desk. Guido is seated in a chair. Tony stands in a corner. They wait silently.

Abotto leads Ray in.

MARTIN
 Ray, as of now, you no longer
 work here.

Martin's hand rests close to his side drawer, and his hidden gun. Ray regards him, cold eyes burning. He notices Guido.

MARTIN (CONTS) (cont'd)
 You can't get along with Tony.
 Tony's been with us a long time.

ABOTTO
 A long time, Ray. You can
 understand that.

RAY
 The Will says that-

GUIDO

A Will is nonbinding, Ray. The estate is in probate. For the moment, there is no Will.

RAY

There is a will. My father's will - what he wanted.

MARTIN

But there is some disagreement about what he wanted, isn't there? Nothing's changed. We're in charge. And you've just been laid off.

Ray's set to explode.

GUIDO

Ray. The problems you've had in Los Angeles: the jail time, the parole violation. A man's actions stay with him. You lose your temper around here, I think you'll find Chicago jails in winter considerably less comfy.

Ray walks out. He heads back toward the yard.

Looks are exchanged. One by one, everyone follows. Martin, the last to exit, secretly tucks his gun into his belt, draws his coat over it.

IN THE WORK YARD: Ray moves into the cutting area. He regards his father's gravestone. Tony, Abotto, Guido, and Martin cross the yard.

MARTIN

Ray. Don't go back to work. You're trespassing in this yard.

Ray wraps Anton's gravestone in canvas.

MARTIN (cont'd)

That stone is company property, Ray.

Ray wheels a cart to the stone, loads it. Tony blocks his path.

GUIDO

Let him go.

Tony backs clear. Ray carts the stone by him.

MARTIN

You'll pay for that, Ray.

EXT. RUCCI HOUSE - DUSK

Ray enters the yard. He places the cart and wrapped stone against the front side of the house.

IN THE LIVING ROOM: Estelle and Lisa are there. Ray enters.

LISA

Hello, Ray.

RAY

Listen up. No family dinner tonight - we're not setting foot in Guido's house. Guido, Martin, Abotto - they're all in this together.

ESTELLE

(nods)
Carlotta phoned. They're contesting the Will.

RAY

They fired me.

ESTELLE

Oh my God... Then take a quick shower. All the more reason for dinner tonight - find out what's really going on and why.

EXT. ACCINELLI HOUSE - NIGHT

Through one window: Dinner is in progress - a full table.

INSIDE:

CARLOTTA

One day my Lucia will grow up to be as beautiful as Lisa. Right, Lucia?

Lucia looks bashfully at Ray, blushes. She takes pasta from her mouth, puts it on Guidolino's plate.

GUIDOLINO

Hey!

CARLOTTA

Guidolino, behave yourself or leave the table. Got it? Behave or leave.

Ray watches as Guidolino turns sheepishly to his dinner. Lisa is cool to Carlotta's flattery. Estelle downs her wine.

CARLOTTA (CONTS) (cont'd)
 It seems like a household out of
 balance - two single women and
 only one man.

Guidolino places his napkin down and leaves the table.

GUIDO
 Guidolino - who gave you
 permission to leave the table?

CARLOTTA
 Do you know what's been going on
 there, Lisa? Do you?

Lisa is troubled by Carlotta's insinuation. Guidolino returns.

RAY
 Maybe what Lisa doesn't
 understand, Carrie, is what goes
 on here. Our dinners. This big
 happy family, everyone together
 because of some force of habit,
 some tradition, thinking this is
 how families should be, how they
 should act. While the two of you
 plot behind my back. You betray
 family.

Guido calmly sips his fork clean, places it on his plate.

GUIDO
 No betrayal, Ray. What happened
 at the office is a professional
 matter. For seven years I've been
 retained as legal counsel for
 Rucci Stonecutters.

RAY
 Who decided to let me go?

GUIDO
 Guidolino, Lucia - go upstairs
 and watch TV. There'll be desert
 later.

The children leave. He sips his wine.

GUIDO (cont'd)
 I advised it. In the work yard,
 in front of several witnesses,
 you destroyed company property
 and acted in a threatening manner
 to another employee. You then
 took company property off the
 premises without permission.
 That's theft, Ray. Plain and
 simple.

RAY

There's more to it than that.

GUIDO

There is. We, Lou Martin, Carlo Abotto, Carlotta and I, don't believe in this new Will. Estelle wrote in the second half.

RAY

Estelle? Is that true?

Estelle eyes plead to Ray. It's true. He holds a fury down.

CARLOTTA

That's why Estelle found you, Ray. In the real Will, the house is mine. The business stays in the family to be overseen jointly by Guido, Louie and Carlo.

GUIDO

We don't believe Anton was in his right mind during his final hours. He was under heavy sedation. He was weakened. His writing was illegible to the point he couldn't even hold a pen. I believe that, under closer scrutiny, the executor and any magistrate will concur. It is also my considered opinion that Anton was unconscious while most of the codicil was written. What do you think, Estelle?

Estelle adamantly shakes her head, yet she quivers. Ray notices.

ESTELLE

Not so. On my life I swear it.

RAY

It's not the Will.

GUIDO

Right again, Ray. It is, but it's more than that. It's what it stands for.

CARLOTTA

He hired you out of pity, Ray, as a yard boy - something far beneath anything he thought you'd lower yourself to accept. He could never truly accept you back after you walked out. Anton never forgave you.

ESTELLE

He did! I was there! You were too!

RAY

Carrie-

CARLOTTA

I was there. Through those final hours where the drugs and the exhaustion had taken over and clear thinking left him.

RAY

You were there. Not two feet from his face. And you can look me in the eye and say that?

Carlotta nods. Ray stands, his chair flying over.

RAY (cont'd)

This family dinner - your family, my family-

He signals 'final separation' with his hands.

CARLOTTA

U'ay, a la Madonna!

GUIDO

I WON'T HAVE THAT IN MY HOUSE.

Estelle picks up the silver tray, still half filled with the main course, and overturns it on the tablecloth.

CARLOTTA

Estelle, you pig.

ESTELLE

No! A pig would deserve this.

Estelle scoops food up and heaves it on Carlotta's dress.

CARLOTTA

AHHHHHHH!

Estelle laughs in a curious way. Lisa is blown away.

GUIDO

Leave this house.

RAY

You and Carrie leave Anton's family, my family, alone.

CARLOTTA

Get out.

ESTELLE
 (to herself)
 Then again, maybe a pig would-

She reaches for the red wine. Guido grabs the bottle from her hand. The children rush in.

RAY
 Let's go.

He escorts Estelle to the door. Lisa grabs their coats. As the dinner guests exit, Guidolino scoops some food and wipes out Lucia. He bolts for the back door.

LUCIA
 Mommmmmmm!

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Snow falls. Estelle, Ray, and Lisa walk past neighbor's warmly lit interiors. Their breath hangs in the frozen air between them. Estelle laughs.

LISA
 You have these family dinners
 once a week? ... Next time, I'm
 keeping my coat on.

Estelle's laughter turns manic, consuming. She doubles over.

ESTELLE
 For two years, Ray... Two years
 I've had to take your sister's...
 That food, that wonderful food.

RAY
 It was a good shot - nothing to
 go crazy over.

Estelle's body rocks, tears fall down her face.

RAY (cont'd)
 Estelle. The codicil. You wrote
 down Anton's words, right?

Estelle laughs, tears falling; her hand rises, caresses Ray's face. Lisa is livid.

RAY (cont'd)
 Right, Estelle? Estelle. The
 codicil. It's all Anton's words,
 what he wanted - isn't it?

LISA
 What's going on, Ray?

A car approaches behind them, on the icy road. Its headlights catch them.

ESTELLE

What Anton wanted, what he hoped for. What about me, Ray? What I want?

LISA

Ray! Dammit - people just use you.

RAY

Don't take the Lord's name -

LISA

I didn't say 'God'. And you didn't say anything about starting a new life for yourself here!

ESTELLE (TO RAY)

I want you to believe me. To want me.

LISA

What? Ray - you left to take care of things. Anton's passed on. Things are taken care of!

Estelle drops to the sidewalk, despondent, lost.

RAY

Hold on.

LISA

Now what? Now what, Ray?

RAY

I'm sorry, Estelle.

LISA

NOW WHAT?

RAY

I'm sorry.

Ray kneels beside Estelle. Lisa tries to pull him away. He slips her grasp.

LISA

She wants you to take care of her, Ray. She's cost you your job. And you still don't see. You still play the fool.

RAY

Get up Estelle. C'mon.

Lisa strikes Ray's back. He shoves her away.

LISA
You're buying this play for
sympathy, this act.

RAY
Hold on a second.

LISA
I won't hold on! I won't keep
holding on.

Lisa hastens away.

RAY
Lisa.

Estelle topples into the gutter. A sudden fear: Ray runs into
the street.

RAY (cont'd)
Lisa. Come back. LISA.

The darkness is empty. Lisa is gone.

RAY (cont'd)
LISA!

Ray returns to Estelle, lifts her to her feet, helps her home.

INT. RUCCI HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ray helps Estelle in, sets her down on the bed.

ESTELLE
Ray, my demon dream - sleeping
alone for the rest of my life.

He watches her. Eyes meet; he turns for the door.

ESTELLE (cont'd)
Every word I wrote was Anton's.
Even when he couldn't hold the
pencil, his head was clear.

RAY
I believe you.

ESTELLE
How can someone answer an
accusation like that? How?

RAY
Flying food is good. Good night,
Estelle.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ray sits alone. Hours have passed. He glances out: dawn light begins to edge into the vast darkness. Lisa hasn't returned. He drinks.

INT. RUCCI HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Ray's on the phone, yellow pages open, stonecutting outfits listed on a scratch-pad. Most are crossed out.

RAY

I have to cut the stone. ... I have to do it. ... Ray Rucci of Rucci Stonecutters. ... I'm his son. I can sign any liability waiver you want. ... Bye.

Estelle brings him coffee. He crosses out another name on the short list.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

TIGHT ON: Silvana's framed photograph, her gaze. It's glass reflects Ray as he takes one box of several stacked on the dresser: family records. She catches his eye. He leans close to her, stares at his beautiful mother.

TIGHT ON: Silvana's picture, her son's image reflected on it.

Ray sits in a chair alone.

RAY (VO)

Dear Lord - please guide me to understand why Momma did what she did. Help me learn to forgive her with all my heart. Amen.

Silently, almost magically, in the dark open doorway before him, Lisa appears.

She comes to him. He embraces her. Nothing is said for a time.

LISA

You can cut stone anywhere. Why fight to work at the one place where they don't want you?

RAY

It's where I belong. In L.A. I had a roof over my head but I was homeless. I've found where I belong. I know something else now too. I love you, Lisa.

LISA

Say that again?

RAY
I love you. With all my heart, I
love you.

She smiles, kisses him. They hold each other tight.

RAY (cont'd)
You've got people in L.A. who
need you, who count on you. I
don't know how Chicago can
compete - only that it has it's
share of helpless and homeless.
Wherever you are, you'll make a
difference.

INT. RUCCI HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Estelle, Lisa, and Ray eat breakfast. They are dressed for
Mass.

RAY
First thing tomorrow have all the
locks changed.

ESTELLE
Why?

RAY
Because Carrie and Guido and who
knows who will be poking around
here. I don't want anyone going
into Anton's papers.

LISA
What's in his papers?

RAY
I don't know. But no-one else
needs to know.

LISA
Did Anton and Carlotta share a
safety deposit box?

ESTELLE
Yes. Key's in his dresser.

RAY
Okay - first thing tomorrow, you
and Lisa go to the bank. Change
boxes. First thing.

ESTELLE
"First thing." Where have I heard
that before?

LISA
And a lawyer.

ESTELLE AND RAY

What lawyer?

LISA

Both of you should meet with a lawyer. He'll advise you how the decision should go, and what you might need to do to keep things on track.

RAY

Anything else?

Lisa smiles, shakes her head. Ray helps Lisa clear the breakfast dishes. He kisses her at the sink.

Estelle watches their happiness, the radiance of their embrace. After a time, she smiles.

LISA

What about Anton's things? You should have a sale.

ESTELLE

No. I can't conceive of selling- It's... no.

LISA

It's healthy. Not heirlooms. Just junk - things no-one needs.

RAY

Okay. First thing after Mass - we plan a sale. Anything else?

Lisa slides a small box before Ray. He opens it: his bracelet. She's had it reconstructed, the torn hinge expertly repaired. He puts it on. He kisses her.

RAY (cont'd)

Thanks.

EXT. RUCCI FRONT YARD - MORNING

Ray, Lisa, and Estelle step out.

As Estelle locks the door, Ray checks on the wrapped gravestone that rests beside the house. They head down the sidewalk. Other neighbors are also on their way to church.

Behind them: The Accinellis round the corner, a block back. As they near the Rucci house, Carlotta sends the children ahead:

CARLOTTA

Go on. We'll meet you there.

Lucia and Guidolino go on ahead. Guido and Carlotta detour into the Rucci yard.

CARLOTTA (cont'd)
That's the gravestone he took?

Guido nods.

CARLOTTA (cont'd)
We should call Tony. He'll come
get it right now.

GUIDO
No. Ray's liable for that stone.
We want it right here.

Carlotta draws the canvas away revealing the stone. Her eyes go solemn, wide. Despite herself, she is awed by the beauty of the cutting.

GUIDO (cont'd)
Wrap it up just like it was,
Carlotta.

She covers it up firmly, quickly - draws the strap tight.

INT. GUECI'S BAR - DAY

After Mass, Ray shares a table with Roberto.

ROBERTO
After you left here, Anton say to
me, "My son - he's born with the
eye. You can't teach that. First
thing, I gonna make him a
stonecutter again."

RAY
He said that?

Roberto nods, lifts his drink to toast:

ROBERTO
He said that. To your father.

They drink. Guido enters.

ROBERTO (cont'd)
How's Estelle? She holding up
okay? She eating? How's her
color, her shape?

RAY
(smiles)
I'll tell her you asked.

Roberto notices Guido's approach. Ray does too.

ROBERTO
Today's pool tip. When you take
your shot, consider where you're
(MORE)

ROBERTO (cont'd)
going to leave your ball. Don't
leave your opponent an angle to
beat you with. Capiche?

GUIDO
Hello, Roberto. Ray - we have to
talk.

RAY
So talk.

Roberto leaves them. Guido takes his chair.

GUIDO
My family steps out of Mass into
the nice warm sunshine. We greet
Estelle, Lisa. Lisa informs me I
should expect a call tomorrow
from your lawyer.

RAY
I guess so.

GUIDO
Ray, listen. We've had a
handwriting expert certify that
most of the codicle was not
Anton's handwriting. Estelle
wrote it. Anton's doctor, myself,
Carlotta, even Father Vincenti if
he has to, will go on record
regarding Anton's sedation, his
mental frailty, as well as
Estelle's troubled and confused
state of mind that last night.
Those are all facts, Ray.

Ray shrugs it off.

GUIDO (CONTS) (cont'd)
Lou Martin filed a police report
with regard to the stolen
monument. If you don't leave town
by weeks end, a felony warrant
will be issued for your arrest.
Do you need that, Ray?

RAY
You're the one behind all this,
aren't you?

GUIDO
I'm legal counsel for-

RAY
I think you're the one who's
gonna be running things. I can
find that out.

Guido is silent for a moment.

RAY (cont'd)

You make this Ray Rucci sound like one bad man. You know, Guido, for years I was convinced I was worthless. Really. That anything I said or did didn't amount to a thing. Like even the air I parted walking down the street would've been better off if I didn't exist. People would make these convincing moral cases against me. Anyone on my side was on my side because they wanted something from me. Even the uniform I wore didn't change things because underneath, deep down, there was no-one of value there.

GUIDO

What's changed, Ray?

RAY

You can make things difficult. Doesn't matter. My father hadn't updated his Will for years. A lot of people don't deal with something like that until they have to. If he dictated it, fine. I'm told that's not unusual. His wife belongs in his Will. So does his son.

GUIDO

Ray, if it's about the gravestone, I assure you, Tony's doing a tremendous job. It's almost finished. If you want to oversee its completion, put a finishing touch on it, I'm sure I can arrange that with Martin.

Ray is silent. Guido places a bill on the table, stands.

GUIDO (cont'd)

Let me know. That's the cleaning bill from dinner.

RAY

You trying to take me to the cleaners, Guido?

GUIDO

Make it easy on yourself for once, Ray. Let me know if you want to finish the marker, and leave town by week's end.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - MORNING

One block down the street, Ray stands, side stepping to keep warm. The city wakes to the work day. A bus arrives. Workers pile off. Luke is one of them.

RAY
Mornin', Luke.

LUKE
Mornin', Ray. I'm sorry about work. Things'll sort themselves out.

RAY
You know any cutting yard let me cut Anton's stone?

LUKE
McPherson brothers.

RAY
Tried there.

LUKE
Listen, Ray - I can't stand here in the open talkin' to you.

RAY
Sorry things are that way.

LUKE
(smiles)
Why you digging up your Daddy's old hole?

Eyes meet.

RAY
What hole's that, Luke?

LUKE
Saw some fresh dug dirt by the fence, by your practice stones.

In Luke's grin, Ray discovers his father's alibi.

RAY
You were there?

LUKE
I can't quite recollect - long time ago. I can tell you: it was a fair fight, man to man.

RAY
How can you recollect that if you can't recollect?

Luke grins. Ray smiles.

LUKE

Go see Bo.

RAY

Joshua Bo? The black casting outfit?

Luke nods. Almond eyes smile, watching Ray's reaction.

RAY (cont'd)

I thought he only does statuary.

LUKE

They do monuments too.

RAY

I have to cut it.

LUKE

I hear that.

RAY

But stone, not some wood carving or totem pole.

LUKE

Who you talkin' to, Raymond?

RAY

I was always told they do things differently over there.

LUKE

Over where?

RAY

South of Archer Avenue.

LUKE

Joshua Bo... Speaks a Nigerian cannibal slang but he understands some English. I'll call him first just so's he doesn't put no words on you like 'big pot' or 'tastes like chicken'.

Luke heads toward work, shaking his head, laughing. He turns:

LUKE (cont'd)

So if blacks are buried
alongsides whites - that's how
you tell 'em apart! They's the
ones with the totem poles
stickin' out.

Luke laughs big time. Ray smiles.

EXT. BO MASONRY - DAY

Twisted rusty shapes rise out of snow: junkyard totem poles. Ray walks along the eerie road. The cutting yard appears. A raised wooden workhouse is surrounded by sculpted figures, piles of hewn stone. The back of the lot overlooks a tributary to the Chicago River. A railyard spans the far bank.

JOSHUA BO (56) watches Ray's approach from his porch.

RAY

Mister Bo? Luke might'a called about me. Hope so anyway. I have to cut a gravestone. My name's Ray Rucci.

MICHAEL BO (16) arrives at his father's side. TWO WORKERS glance over from the back. Joshua regards Ray; his hands.

JOSHUA

Whose stone?

RAY

My father's.

JOSHUA

Antonio was a fine stonecutter. The best. Three hundred cash up front. It'll total five-fifty.

It's a lot. Joshua watches him.

JOSHUA (cont'd)

Three hundred for the use of my place. Two-fifty for one of my boys to keep an eye on you.

RAY

I do all the cutting.

JOSHUA

All right. Things work out, we can re-think the two-fifty.

EXT. BO MASONRY - DUSK

Ray cuts his father's stone. He takes great satisfaction in this. The work yard has a wide view of the river, the railyard beyond. It's a great place to cut stone.

Michael puts down his homework, comes over to watch Ray work.

MICHAEL

That'll sure 'nough make your Daddy proud.

RAY

Thank you.

JOSHUA
You have a son to cut your stone
one day?

RAY
Not yet.

Ray reflects on this.

INT. EL - NIGHT

Ray and Lisa ride toward downtown, holding hands, dressed for a night on the town. Lisa wears Ray's necklace. They look out on the city, crisp in sparkling night.

LISA
It is beautiful, Ray.

EXT. CENTRAL AVE. - NIGHT

Ray and Lisa emerge from a restaurant, hot wine heating their mouths and when we kiss our breath blends, swirls.

Central Ave., its lights, clubs, restaurants - a bright stage before them. Laughter carries, music plays.

INT. RUCCI HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lisa sleeps curled against Ray. He lies on his back, eyes open to the night, thinking.

EXT. RUCCI STONECUTTERS - DUSK

A block down the street, Ray watches unseen as employees leave, work day over. Tony emerges. Ray follows him.

AROUND A CORNER: Ray watches Tony enter a bar.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Ray steps up to the bar. He moves using patrons and the bartender to shield him as he scans those present. He spots Tony drinking at a table with two friends.

INT. BAR - LATER

Ray drinks a beer, glances over: Tony heads for the men's room. Ray follows him

INTO THE MEN'S ROOM: Ray enters. Tony uses one of the urinals. A MAN finishes his business in one of the stalls. No-one else is there. Ray uses the urinal beside Tony.

RAY

Tony, who do you think's gonna visit my father's grave most often over the years - you or me?

TONY

Ray, you're a good stonecutter. I know you belong somewhere - but you can't just walk into a business and demand a place.

The Man exits the crapper, washes his hands. Tony does as well.

RAY

Who do you think it matters more to who cuts a man's stone: a skilled stonecutter, or a skilled stonecutter who's also the man's son?

Tony watches him in the mirror, dries his hands. The man exits.

TONY

I'm not afraid of you, Ray.

RAY

I don't want you to be. And I don't want your job. Just listen.

Tony crushes a paper towel, casts it over Ray's shoulder, then steps past bumping Ray's shoulder out of his way.

Ray sweeps Tony's feet, slams his body on the floor, head striking a urinal. As Tony grabs the urinal to rise, Ray's small work knife opens. It flashes as it spears Tony's palm, pins his hand to the wall.

Tony cries out in impaled pain. Ray pins Tony's body with a knee on his chest.

RAY (cont'd)

I cut my father's stone.

TONY

Somebody's gonna come, Ray.

Ray stares him down, unconcerned. Tony tries to pull his hand free but slices it worse.

RAY

I'll cut it somewhere else. That's all I'm asking.

Sweat breaks down Tony's face. Ray is patient.

TONY

Okay. You do it. I was told to do the job. Martin-

RAY
The idea was Guido's, wasn't it?

TONY
I'm sure it was.

The knife folds away. Tony clutches his hand. Ray pulls him up on his feet. Tony has no aggression left.

RAY
Your stone could get damaged.

TONY
I'm sure it could.

Ray walks him to the sink. Two men enter.

TONY (cont'd)
I wanted to cut your father's stone. I feel like, after being his apprentice, working with him for so long - it feels to me as if, I was his son.

The men react to the pool of blood, the trail to the sink.

RAY
My father told me you were a good man, Tony. One day, when all this is sorted out, maybe we could work together.

Tony pulls his hand together. Ray pats him on the back, exits. The men go about their business.

INT. RUCCI HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lights are on: dining room, kitchen, upstairs hall - brightness everywhere except the entry where Ray stands on a ladder, the light fixture dangling by wires in his hand. Lisa looks on from the closet. She has the fusebox open, unscrews a fuse. The upstairs goes dark. Estelle appears at the top of the stairs:

ESTELLE
That was the hall and master bedroom.

LISA
Okay!

She unscrews another fuse: dining room and living room go dark.

LISA (cont'd)
That's the switch, Ray.

RAY
Thank you.

In darkness, he lifts pliers to naked wire to fix the fixture. Only the juice is on: a blueorange zap and sparks fly as he's shocked. Lisa laughs. Ray looks over.

LISA
Oops... Try this.

She unscrews another fuse.

LISA (cont'd)
That's gotta be it.

Ray is shocked again. Lisa and Estelle laugh.

RAY
Hey - this is hilarious.

LISA
Sorry. The entry must be wired to the kitchen - that's all that's left.

RAY
I hope so.

Lisa kills the kitchen power. The house is dark.

A woman arrives outside the front door. A key enters the lock: it won't turn over. Carlotta rings the bell, raps loudly several times.

Ray's pliers touch fixture wire: they're cool.

ESTELLE
Your sister can't get in, Ray.

LISA
She wants in.

Carlotta raps loudly, rings again.

RAY
You're right, Lisa. Can you label those fuses?

CARLOTTA (OS)
HEY. I know someone's home. Let me in.

RAY
Does she deserve in?

CARLOTTA (OS)
Estelle. Ray. The door's broken.

RAY
Nothing wrong with the door, Carlotta.

ON THE PORCH: Carlotta pounds the door. There is a sign posted:

OPEN HOUSE

ESTATE SALE 8AM

She rips it down, holds it in hand with another one she's torn down from up the street.

CARLOTTA

LET ME IN.

She slams the door so hard she jams her wrist. She holds her wrist, silent in pain, kicks the door. She wavers, off balance in anger, in rage.

INSIDE: They listen as Carlotta storms away.

Lisa turns the fuses and the room lights come back on.

RAY

We're ready.

The light comes on bright in Ray's hands. Estelle applauds. Lisa smiles.

INT. ACCINELLI HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Carlotta is beside herself, beside Guido too. She presses an ice-bag around her wrist. Lucia and Guidolino look on.

CARLOTTA

They've changed the locks! They cleared all Momma's jewelry out of the box - now they've changed the locks!

Guidolino nears, reads the ESTATE SALE sign.

CARLOTTA (cont'd)

Ray's going to sell our heirlooms, our family heritage!

GUIDO

How do you know?

CARLOTTA

That's all that's worth selling! To avoid the taxman! Like thieves. ... That's why they wouldn't let me in! - so I couldn't see what they're pricing! Call the police, Guido. They might sneak out the good stuff tonight!

GUIDO
He's not going to lug furniture
out into the snow in the dead of
night - where would he put it?

CARLOTTA
Storage!

Carlotta's manic, beside herself. Guido phones:

GUIDO
(into the phone)
I'd like to report a theft.

Carlotta walks into the next room, pats Lucia on the head.
Guidolino watches, distant. Carlotta tries hard not to cry:

CARLOTTA
They're tearing it all apart.

Lucia moves to the table to read the sign. As she nears, her
father's subdued voice again becomes audible:

GUIDO (CONTS)
(into the phone)
Yes. He should be considered
extremely dangerous. ... Yes - a
criminal history. ... "Career
criminal"? Yes. He killed a man
in Los Angeles just a month ago.
That's on record. ... Yes. He
carries a knife.

EXT. BO MASONRY - NIGHT

Ray works with hammer and chisel. A naked lightbulb sways. A
train rattles past across the river.

Veins bulge in Ray's strong unwavering hands.

Ray lowers his tools, raises an air gun, blasts clean the
finished stone. It is flawless, one of a kind - a testament,
son to father.

RAY
Michael.

Michael steps out. Ray wraps the stone.

RAY (cont'd)
Finished. Can you drive us over
to the cemetery?
(Michael nods)
You can put everything back where
it belongs. Tell your father,
I'll come by tomorrow and square
anything I owe.

INT. RUCCI HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lisa and Estelle arrange furniture and clothing for the sale. The doorbell rings. Lisa opens it:

TWO POLICE OFFICERS are there.

POLICE OFFICER 2
Is a Ray Rucci here?

LISA
No. He's not here.

POLICE OFFICER 2
Does he live here?

ESTELLE
Yes. He does.

They enter to look for Ray.

POLICE OFFICER 2
We have a warrant for his arrest.

EXT. FOREST VIEW CEMETERY - NIGHT

The monument is placed at the head of Anton's plot. Michael and the truck have gone. Ray regards it in moonlight.

A security patrol car nears, stops. A high-powered flashlight targets Ray from the driver's side window. Ray regards his father's stone. The car door opens. A GUARD approaches, flashlight pinned on Ray.

GUARD
Hey. Who goes there?

Ray looks over at him. He raises his hand to shield his eyes from the bright beam. The guard draws his gun.

GUARD (cont'd)
I said, what you doing there?

Ray smiles. The beam trembles across his face.

RAY
Deliverin' my father's monument.
Come here and have a look.

As the Guard arrives, Ray backsteps to give him space. The beam darts to the gravestone, returns to Ray.

GUARD
I.D.

Ray slowly pulls out his wallet, reveals his license. The Guard takes it. His flashlight shifts from Rucci typed on the license to Rucci carved in stone. The guard holsters his pistol.

GUARD (cont'd)
That's one of the nicest
monuments I've ever seen. I had
to draw on you - we're still
having a problem with grave
robbers, vandals and the like.

RAY
What time you off?

GUARD
Eight. Why?

RAY
Mean a lot to me if you could
report this to the front office
have them come here first thing
and set the stone.

GUARD
Will do.

RAY
First thing.

GUARD
I'll see to it.

Both men regard the stone. A time passes.

GUARD (cont'd)
Sure is a fine stone. ... You
about through here?

RAY
Yeah.

GUARD
C'mon then. I'll give you a lift.

They head down the declivity to his patrol car.

GUARD (cont'd)
One night only a week ago, we
caught two witches over on that
rise. Fact that the ground's
frozen doesn't stop 'em. Guess
they gotta have their body parts
for their spells and the like.

EXT. RUCCI HOUSE - DAWN

Ray returns home, enters the front yard. A light is on within.

IN A NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE ACROSS THE STREET: Carlotta watches Ray
through a window.

CARLOTTA'S WINDOW POV: Lisa opens the door and embraces Ray.

IN THE RUCCI LIVING ROOM:

LISA
Ray, the police were here looking
for you.

He takes his jacket off, regards her wide beautiful eyes.

RAY
Doesn't matter - I'm not an
outlaw.

LISA
I don't want anything to happen
to you, Ray. I don't-

His fingers touch her sweet lips.

RAY
Shhh shh shh... Things'll happen -
good things. Having you with me
here - feels like nothing I ever
imagined. We won't lose this.

INT. NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE

CARLOTTA
(into the phone)
He's there now, Guido. Call the
police. ... I'm going over - I'll
make sure he doesn't leave.

She hangs up and grabs her coat.

THROUGH THE WINDOW WE SEE: Roberto and Paulo arrive at the
Rucci's.

INT. RUCCI LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Roberto and Paulo help Ray move furniture. The room is set for
the sale. Estelle and Lisa put food out. Roberto's efforts are
surely grander with Estelle in the room. Someone knocks.

ESTELLE
Come in.

Door's unlocked. Carlotta enters.

ESTELLE (cont'd)
Good morning, Carlotta. Feel like
something to eat?

Carlotta scans the room: familiar things arranged for sale,
conspirators about her. Lisa hands her a glass of wine.

CARLOTTA

You have no right to sell any of this.

RAY

Carrie, we're just putting out old clothes, old furniture, kitchen things no-one needs. Look around - anything you want, just take it.

CARLOTTA

Everything. I want everything.

This puts a damper on things. Carlotta picks up items, eyes price tags in disgust - a caged animal, confused, her mind racing through solutions that collapse before her.

Ray moves up the stairs.

CARLOTTA (cont'd)

Where are you going? Stay down here.

RAY

Come here. I want to show you something.

He disappears. She downs the wine, follows him.

IN THE MASTER BEDROOM: Ray enters, moves around the bed. Carlotta arrives.

RAY (cont'd)

Sit down.

CARLOTTA

I don't want to sit down.

The process of sorting through things has left objects previously unseen in view. Anton's framed family photo (one taken by Mrs. Zapatino) is on the dresser. Ray regards his sister, fondly reminisces:

RAY

Remember those nights when the whole family slept in this bed? Room hasn't changed much, has it?

CARLOTTA

Everything's changed, Ray. Everything.

RAY

Our lawyer showed us how and why the court should rule our way.

Carlotta shakes her head, looking down.

RAY (CONTS) (cont'd)
 This house is Estelle's. Anton's
 savings account is yours - it's a
 nice one too. And you can take
 anything you want. Anything. ...
 I want you to have half the
 business. We own it fifty-fifty.
 Forget this Guido, Martin, Abotto
 scheme - everyone works for us.

Carlotta takes the family portrait in hand, regards it.

RAY (CONTS) (cont'd)
 We can still do the dinners.
 Everyone'll be happy.

His voice chokes on those words, their apparent impossibility.
 She puts the family portrait down.

CARLOTTA
 Happy... Ray, if that's how it
 all sorts out, I'll kill you. So
 help me, I'll kill you.

RAY
 You can't forgive me, can you?

Her face is stone. She looks him right in the eye:

CARLOTTA
 I can't, Ray.

IN THE LIVING ROOM:

ROBERTO
 Estelle, this breakfast is
 wonderful. For food like this,
 I'll move your furniture every
 morning.

Paulo's heard this song before. A knock on the door.

ESTELLE
 Our first customers!

LISA
 Come in!

TWO POLICE OFFICERS enter.

POLICE OFFICER 3
 Arrest warrant for Ray Rucci.

Lisa runs for the stairs.

POLICE OFFICER 3 (cont'd)
 HOLD IT.

Police cut her off. They start up the stairs, guns drawn.

IN THE MASTER BEDROOM: Carlotta looks out the window.

CARLOTTA'S POV: She sees the police car parked outside. A second unit pulls up. Guido hastens in through the gate.

IN THE ROOM: Carlotta turns to face her brother. He hears a police radio in the house, understands. Ray extends his hand to her, opens his palm:

RAY
Recognize this?

Benito's ring. He hands it to her. She gasps, shudders.

CARLOTTA
So it was you. You killed Benito!
Oh no...

RAY
No. I didn't kill him, Carrie.

They HEAR police nearing: heavy feet on the stairs, in the hall. Ray closes and locks the bedroom door.

TIGHT ON: The photograph of Silvana. Carlotta's reflection is superimposed on the glass. Her image just fits over her mother's. This time, a horrifying imposition: Carlotta shakey-jagged, viciously trembling, threatening to break out of her mother's outline, an outline absolute, vigilant, still. This, as Ray continues:

RAY (cont'd)
I left home because I knew a secret about Momma. She hated it that I knew.

Ray again offers her Benito's ring, and its implication. Carlotta quivers staring at the ring. She backs away.

RAY (CONTS) (cont'd)
Poppa knew I knew - but he wouldn't do anything about it, just hid in his work. That's why I stopped working for him.

CARLOTTA
Anton killed...?

Ray nods. A shudder runs through Carlotta.

LISA (OS)
RAY! The police are here - come on out.

RAY
I never knew that either.

IN THE HALL: Two officers flank the bedroom door. Another restrains Lisa at the stairs. Guido arrives behind her.

GUIDO
He's got my wife in there!

POLICE OFFICER 3
(into walkie-talkie)
Suspect is upstairs front side.
Cover the windows. One woman is
with him - possible hostage.

IN THE MASTER BEDROOM: Carlotta breaks down. Silvana looks on.

RAY
What it was, Carrie - excuse me,
what it was, Carlotta, was-

She breaks free from Silvana's reflection. Her tears fall:

CARLOTTA
DON'T SAY IT! I don't want to
hear it! I know! ... I knew. I
always knew.

She rises through her own pain, looks at her brother deeply,
and, in a savage lucid instant, Carlotta realizes how Ray has
shared her suffering, and why he did everything he did, and why
he had to go away.

POLICE OFFICER 3 (OS)
Police. Open up in there. Open
up.

Carlotta looks at Ray; eyes meet.

POLICE OFFICER 3 (OS) (cont'd)
Open up. NOW.

RAY
I love you, Carrie.

Carlotta lunges into Ray's arms. The police smash in.

LISA (OS)
CAREFUL RAY!

POLICE OFFICER 3 (OS)
FREEZE.

Ray holds Carlotta tight. She cries deeply into his chest. He
lifts his hands into the air as Carlotta clings to him.

FULL FRAME: Silvana's face as the dark uniformed officers sweep
like phantoms across the glass. Lisa rushes in as does Guido.

GUIDO
He's armed!

RAY
(whispers)
Whatever they decide about the
Will, I'll look at you - one
(MORE)

RAY (cont'd)
 look. If you won't have me as
 your brother, it's all yours.
 Lisa and I'll just go away.

POLICE OFFICER 3
 Ray Rucci - you're under arrest.

Ray's hands are taken down one by one behind him. One wrist is cuffed. Carlotta clings to him, cries, looks up into his eyes.

POLICE OFFICER 3 (cont'd)
 Lady, please let him go.

CARLOTTA
 I love you too, Ray.

Just before the handcuffs are about to close on Ray's second hand, he slips his hands free (Ryote Hazushi) and embraces Carlotta.

CARLOTTA (cont'd)
 Easy. He's my brother.

GUIDO
 Officers, he carries a knife.

CARLOTTA
 Guido - shove it.

GUIDO
 We'll discuss this later,
 Carlotta. In a less stressful
 situation.

CARLOTTA
 Oh, so that's the party line?
 Anton was sedated so he didn't
 know what he was saying. Now I'm
 stressed? I don't think so.

FULL FRAME: Mrs. Zapatino's Rucci family portrait. Ray and Carlotta's embrace is reflected on the image.

THE PHOTOGRAPH COMES ALIVE:

EXT. RUCCI FRONT YARD - DAY THE PAST

Mrs. Zapatino takes the photo, peeps over the camera:

MRS. ZAPATINO
 All right. That's good one.

Anton advances for his camera. Young Carlotta's still busting up, looks at her brother. Silvana smiles.

As Mrs. Zapatino lifts the camera for Anton, it slips from her hand. Anton goes bug-eyed, begins a doomed lunge. Young Carlotta, Silvana, and Young Ray watch. But this time the

strap's over Mrs. Zapatino's wrist and she deftly yanks the camera up, swings it gently into Anton's stonecutter's hands.

MRS. ZAPATINO (cont'd)
 What? I can't learn something?
 You have no faith? What? What?

Anton manages a smile.

WE DISSOLVE INTO:

EXT. FOREST VIEW CEMETERY - DAY THE PRESENT

Ray leads Estelle and Lisa to his father's grave. They arrive.

ESTELLE
 Oh, Ray...

Estelle's tears fall. Lisa kisses Ray.

RAY
 Know what I was thinking? This space here is open. Gonna buy it. We can all rest right here, and two hundred years from now, this stone'll be just like this.

ESTELLE
 What about Carlotta?

RAY
 I'd like her here but it's her call. I still have no idea where someone like Guido comes from.

ESTELLE
 Maybe you should ask him sometime at dinner?

Smiles. Lisa sweeps Ray into a huge embrace, kisses him lavishly all over, beaming:

LISA
 I will!

RAY
 Will what?

LISA
 Yes I'll marry you, Ray Rucci.

ESTELLE
 Caught you!

RAY
 First thing?

LISA
First thing.

Lisa kisses Ray. Estelle laughs joyfully. The three figures on the white hillside beside one marble stone.

FREEZE FRAME

THE END