BROKE

“Feed The Beast”
Episode 1

Written by
Clyde Phillips

First Network Draft
November 10, 2015

LIONSGATE
2700 Colorado Ave.
Santa Monica, CA 90404

Copyright © 2015 Lions Gate Television Inc. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. No portion of this script may be performed, published, sold or distributed by any means, or quoted or published in any medium, including any website, without prior written consent. Disposal of this script copy does not alter any of the restrictions set forth above.
FIRE. As primal as time itself. WIDEN... DION PAPPAS (a sexy beast) over a stove. Expertly caroming shrimp around a skillet. A cauldron of fettuccine boils.

WIDEN FURTHER. GUARDS watch Dion cook... in an orange jumpsuit. We’re -

1 INT. PRISON - CAFETERIA

Dion dishes out meals to a table full of Guards. In unison, they toast him and dig in. Dion takes a slight bow.

A CORRECTIONAL OFFICER approaches.

C.O.
Yo Chef! Your lawyer’s here.

Off Dion’s curious look, we BLOOM TO WHITE.

RESOLVE TO STEAM billowing from a towering and beautiful brass and copper Belle Epoque espresso machine. A bizarre, prodigious monster. We’re -

2 INT. TOMMY’S PLACE – KITCHEN

TJ (10, mixed race) steps in to make the perfect cappuccino. What magical world is this? WIDEN. Not so magical. FOLLOW TJ through an unkempt and unfinished industrial kitchen. Exposed framing. Dishes piled high. Cooking ware in boxes.

TJ goes up rickety stairs, stepping over a loose plank. Then down a hall to -

3 INT. TOMMY’S PLACE - BEDROOM

TJ in the doorway. The bed an avalanche of blankets. TOMMY SHANNON (dreamer’s eyes shrouded in melancholy) emerges. A hangover is not out of the question. TJ hands him the coffee.

TOMMY
Thanks, buddy.

TJ looks to the clock. So does Tommy. They’re late.

TOMMY
Shit.

He jumps out of bed. Rushes out with TJ. HOLD. He scurries back in for his coffee. Downs it in one delicious gulp.

MUSIC UP: ‘PLEASE PLEASE ME’ by The Beatles.
INT. TOMMY’S VOLVO WAGON – DRIVING

Tommy and TJ. Tommy sings his heart out to The Beatles. When the song comes to the call-and-response ‘C’mon, C’mon...’, Tommy belts out the first two. Turns to his son.

TOMMY
Take it, TJ!

Nothing. Tommy grins.

TOMMY
Worth a shot.

EXT. TJ’S SCHOOL

The Volvo pulls up. A goodbye hug. As TJ walks away, Tommy’s smile fades to a tinge of worry and sadness. The Beatles MORPH TO AMERICAN ROOTS BLUES.

EXT. BRONX FOREST

A terrified ASIAN THUG, restrained by two GOONS, faces a looming figure. REVERSE TO REVEAL PATRICK WOIJCHIK, AKA THE TOOTH FAIRY (brutality personified).

TOOTH FAIRY
You know why they call me the Tooth Fairy, right?

The Thug nods frantically, his lips firmly locked. The Tooth Fairy raises his trademark oversized stainless steel pliers. Touches them to the Thug’s mouth. He sing-songs...

TOOTH FAIRY
You did a bad thing.

INT. PRISON – PROPERTY WINDOW

Dion and his lawyer, MARISA BRUNO (late 30s, a dark-haired beauty).

DION
I still had 9 months. You’re amazing.


GUARD
With all due respect, I wish you’d gotten life. Gonna miss ya, Chef.
MARISA

Go change.
(nods to a door)
I’ll explain your parole terms.

INT. HUNTS POINT MARKETPLACE

QUICK POPS: The oddly savage world of where our food comes from.

Slab after slab of beef being halved by whining bandsaws.

Chickens reduced to parts.

Fish gutted.

A whole pig eviscerated. Another.

FIND TOMMY. Moving through.

INT. PRISON - PRIVATE ROOM

Dion dumps his bag. Pops the bottom off his Bic lighter. Cocaine. He bumps. Ah, freedom. He unzips his jumpsuit just as Marisa enters. Oops... or not: she locks the door and unbuttons her blouse.

INT. HUNTS POINT MARKETPLACE

Workers greet Tommy. He smiles wanly. Disengaged.

EXT. BRONX FOREST

The Tooth Fairy and the Thug.

TOOTH FAIRY

Just because my father’s in prison doesn’t mean you can step on our turf.

THUG

I meant no disrespect to Ziggy.

The Tooth Fairy wags his pliers.

TOOTH FAIRY

Just smile. Makes it so much easier.

For both of us.

INT. PRISON - PRIVATE ROOM

Dion and Marisa enjoy a celebratory fuck on the table. Marisa rhythmically recites -
... no association with known felons.
No weapons. Random drug testing.

Dion pauses. Then resumes thrusting.

13 EXT. BRONX FOREST

The Tooth Fairy and the Thug. Ominous pliers. The Thug is almost in tears.

THUG
Please! My boss, he want a sit-down with you. I am only the messenger.

TOOTH FAIRY
And now you’re the message.

He violently RIPS a tooth from the Thug’s mouth. The Thug goes down. A bloody, writhing, screaming mess. The Tooth Fairy pockets the tooth and strolls to his Black Mercedes Sprinter Van. Tinted windows.

14 INT. PRISON - PRIVATE ROOM

Dion and Marisa are about to finish... together. As she’s climaxing -

MARISA
And... of course... you can’t... vote! Oh God!

MOMENTS LATER. As they dress -

MARISA
You gonna stay out of trouble?

DION
Trouble...?

He flashes that bad-boy grin of his.

DION
... me?

He’s halfway out the door when Marisa realizes that was a ‘see-ya’ fuck. Pissed -

MARISA
By the way, I didn’t get you out early!

But Dion’s already gone.
INT. HUNTS POINT MARKETPLACE

Brilliant colors. Flowers. Fruit. Spices. A FLORIST passes a bouquet to Tommy.

   FLORIST
   Pink peonies. You know how hard it is to get them this time a year?

   TOMMY
   Thanks, Jack. They’re my wife’s favorite.

He walks off. Bouquet in hand. MUSIC OUT. GO TO BLACK.

RESOLVE to a Prison Gate sliding open. There’s Dion. We’re –

EXT. PRISON/INT. TOOTH FAIRY’S VAN


Dion pauses. Feels the sun on his face. Then spots the Tooth Fairy’s Van down the street. Fuck. He starts to make a move. The Van closes in fast. Just then, a Garbage Truck passes in front of Dion and... Poof. Dion’s gone.

   GOON #1
   Where’d he go?

   TOOTH FAIRY
   The garbage truck, genius.

The Van scrambles in front of the Garbage Truck. Forcing it to stop. The Goons jump out. Race to the truck.

   DRIVER
   What the hell are you doing?

The Goons ignore him. Look in the cab. Check the undercarriage. The roof. No Dion.

   GOON #1
   Empty your truck onto the street.

   DRIVER
   Screw you.

THE VAN. A window lowers. The Tooth Fairy.

   TOOTH FAIRY
   I would appreciate some civility... and some cooperation.
DRIVER
I’m so sorry, Mr. Woijchik. I didn’t realize it was you. How’s your father?

TOOTH FAIRY
Getting by. Now, if you’d please...

He motions to the body of the huge truck.

MOMENTS LATER. The massive truck, its hopper tilted back, creeps forward and dumps a tremendous load of trash onto the street. The Goons stomp through it. Still no Dion. The Tooth Fairy reacts. He raises his window as the Goons get in the Van and race away.

LOW ANGLE DOLLY along the trash. The Van crosses through. CAMERA FINDS a storm drain. Two coal-black eyes peer out. Well-played, Dion, well-played. BLOOM TO WHITE.

RESOLVE to a wine glass, sunlight glinting off it. Beat. Then a vivid red is poured. We’re –

INT. WINE SHOP

Tommy, a wine rep, has poured a Merlot for the OWNER and himself. Tommy holds his glass up to the sunlight. Examining and appreciating. Then he ‘noses’ the glass. Takes a large swig. Swirls it in his mouth. Swallows.

TOMMY
(by rote)
Earthy. Oaky. Full-bodied... noble.


TOMMY
So, can I put you down for the usual 10 cases?

OWNER
Uh, let’s go with 4 this time.
(off Tommy’s look)
How’s your boy doin’?

TOMMY
TJ? Never better.
INT. TJ’S SCHOOL - CORRIDOR

TJ’s walking. He’s suddenly shoulder-checked into the lockers by ANDRE (11, black). TJ stumbles. Catches himself. Rubs his elbow as he glares at his tormentors.

ANDRE
Got something to say?

TJ looks like he’s got a lot he wants to say right now. But... nothing. Andre and the others move on. SLOW PULLBACK as TJ, upset and alone, takes out his cell, dials. Puts it up to his ear.

INT. UNCLE STAVROS’S BODEGA

STAVROS PAPPAS (50s, grizzled) painstakingly rigs a Lotto machine. Dion enters.

UNCLE STAVROS
Ah, the prodigal nephew...
(hugs Dion)
... smells like a sewer.

He grabs a corner of his desk. Dion takes the other and, together, they slide it to the side. Then Stavros pries up a tile to expose a floor safe. He opens it, comes up with an envelope. Hands it to Dion.

UNCLE STAVROS
Passport, ticket to Paris, spending money. Flight’s at noon tomorrow.

Dion opens the passport.

DION
Maury Finkelstein?

UNCLE STAVROS
Could you have given me any less notice? You’re welcome.

A young ASIAN WOMAN in a kimono and high heels pops her head in through the back door.

KIMONO
Uncle. Reminding you I need tomorrow night off. My daughter’s talent show.

UNCLE STAVROS
Consider me reminded, lovely.

Kimono tosses a smile at Dion.
KIMONO
Hi Dion. Bye Dion.

She leaves. Dion turns to Stavros.

DION
Can I crash here tonight?

UNCLE STAVROS
All my rooms - and all my girls - are booked. Telling ya, The Bronx is the next damn Gold Rush. Which is why these Lotto machines are working overtime.

As he turns to indicate the machines he’s ‘fixing’, Stavros takes in a bank of security monitors.

UNCLE STAVROS
Oh shit.

Dion follows his gaze to see the Tooth Fairy’s Van pull up outside. Oh shit indeed.

INT. UNCLE STARVROS’S BROTHEL – STAIRCASE/HALLWAY

Dion blasts up the stairs. Bursts through a door. Tears down the hallway. A few HOOKERS open their doors to the commotion. Kimono, a Haitian, and a Russian greet Dion with flirty smiles. He pauses to kiss the Haitian. Bolts into another stairwell.

INT. STAVROS’S BODEGA

The Tooth Fairy and his Goons enter. Stavros is all smiles.

UNCLE STAVROS
Ah, Patrick. Not your usual time. Besides Shayna’s out. Shark week.

(off Tooth Fairy’s look)
She’s menstruating.

TOOTH FAIRY
How nice for her. I’m looking for your nephew.

UNCLE STAVROS
Dion? He doesn’t get out for months.

The Tooth Fairy pauses. Studies Stavros. Then turns to his Goons.

TOOTH FAIRY
Find him.
The Goons obey like hounds. Scrambling upstairs.

UNCLE STAVROS
There’s a couple of cops up there.
Maybe a judge. Not good for business.
Yours or mine.

The Tooth Fairy raises his pliers.

TOOTH FAIRY
What happens to people who lie to me?

UNCLE STAVROS
Screw you, Patrick. I pay your dogs
every month for protection.

He looks at the monitors. The Goons are upstairs yanking
open doors.

UNCLE STAVROS
You call that protection?

The Tooth Fairy moves closer. Menace and evil. He presses
the pliers into Stavros’s lips.

TOOTH FAIRY
You know, wisdom teeth are vestigial.
I firmly believe in discarding
anything that is useless.

Stavros stands, unbowed. These two hate each other. The
moment’s broken when the Goons rush back in.

GOON #1
He’s not here.

TOOTH FAIRY
You ask the girls?

GOON #2
They said he’s in jail.

The Tooth Fairy takes a step back. Then SWINGS his massive
pliers. Destroying the Lotto machine Stavros was rigging.

STAVROS’S eyes narrow. There’s a major collision brewing.
The Tooth Fairy and his Goons leave.

EXT. STAVROS’S BROTHEL – ROOFTOP

Dion slams through the access door. Skitters to the roof
dge. Looks down to see the Mercedes Van pulling away. Phew.
Tommy pours wine from the tasting bottle into his travel mug. Sips. A KNOCK on the window. Meet ANNA LOGAN (early 20s, ponytail pretty) the school psychologist. Tommy gets out.

**ANNA**
Mr. Shannon. You missed last week’s appointment.

**TOMMY**
Sorry. Work’s been brutal. I’ll call to set something up.

Anna checks her watch.

**ANNA**
We’ve got 15 minutes till school lets out.

She heads toward the school. ON TOMMY. So not into this.

**INT. TJ’S SCHOOL - ANNA’S OFFICE**

Decorated like it belongs to someone who’s been out of college for about ten minutes. Which is true. FIND Tommy and Anna. Couch and club chair.

**TOMMY**
... and my health insurance covered 10 sessions with a shrink. And 10 sessions with a speech therapist. Now it’s maxed out and it’s all on me.

**ANNA**
I totally get it. But we still need to see some progress here.

**TOMMY**
No shit. It’s just a lot to juggle with his mom not around.

**ANNA**
I can only imagine.

**TOMMY**
Yeah. You can only imagine.

He pauses. Drifts on a thought.

**ANNA**
What are you thinking?
TOMMY
Permission to speak freely?
   (off her nod)
I was thinking: if you had 20 years
more experience, what a difference
that would make for TJ. I know you
gotta learn somehow, log your hours.
But it’d be so much better for my son
if his counselor wasn’t from the
generation that thinks of Nirvana as
classic rock.

ANNA
You’re totally deflecting. I am who I
am. You are who you are. So let’s talk
about what’s real. TJ failing. TJ
getting into fights. TJ not talking. I
get it. You have a lot on your plate
as the only parent and -

TOMMY
So I’m the only single parent with a
kid having trouble in school?

ANNA
No. You’re the only single parent
whose son watched his own mother get
killed in a hit-and-run. And hasn’t
said a single word since. And whose
father...

The bell RINGS. Tommy rises.

ANNA
... has a drinking problem. I smell
alcohol on your breath.

TOMMY
Wine. I’m a wine salesman and -

ANNA
Mr. Shannon, you give me shit about
being just out of grad school. Maybe
that’s why I recognize a case-study in
self-destructive behavior when I see
one. And you, sir, are textbook.

TOMMY
Thank you for the free - albeit banal -
analysis. I’m going to take my son
home.

Anna sidles in front of him. Blocking the door.
ANNA
Actually you’re not.

TOMMY
Uh, boundaries?

ANNA
Speaking freely? This continues to go downhill, I am required by law to notify Child Services.

TOMMY
And that means what exactly?

ANNA
You could lose TJ.

Whoa. This lands hard on Tommy. Now Anna opens the door.

ANNA
There’s coffee in the Faculty Lounge. Go enjoy a cup or six before you drive your son home. Oh, and Nirvana? My father’s favorite band.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDINGS - MONTAGE

Dion presses a buzzer.

VOICE
S’up?

DION
Collette around?

VOICE
She would be if she hadn’t married that asshole. And broken her lease.

ANOTHER DOOR. Another buzzer.

MALE VOICE
Hello?

DION
Susannah?

MALE VOICE
Dude, do I sound like a Susannah?

ANOTHER DOOR. This one will be specific. We’ll see it later. It opens and there’s Marisa. Mixed feelings.
MARISA
In trouble so soon?

Dion turns on every watt of his charm voltage.

DION
I miss you already. Can I come in?

He leans in for a kiss. She puts a hand on his chest. Stopping him.

MARISA
You're a great lay, but I think we should keep this attorney-client business strictly professional.

She shuts the door on him.


EXT. SKY

Blue. Then a swarm of swallows swiftly swoops and swirls.

INT. TOMMY’S VOLVO WAGON

TJ, his head against the window, watches the birds in their uncanny flight. Tommy, still reacting to his meeting with Anna, looks over to him.

TOMMY
I’m not going to let anyone take you away.

TJ turns to him, a little confused. Tommy scruffs his hair reassuringly. TJ goes back to watching the vortex of birds darting in perfect synchronicity.

EXT. TOMMY’S PLACE

Tommy pulls into the lot of a warehouse. If you didn’t look closely, you’d think it’s an abandoned building. But it’s his home.

There’s Dion. Tommy’s surprised. Brightens. The two exchange a knowing smile of long-time friends. Tommy and TJ get out.

TOMMY
Good behavior?

DION
My money’s on good cooking.
TOMMY
Holy shit.

They collide in a robust hug.

TOMMY
You gonna crash here?

ON DION, nodding. Ha, as simple as that.

DION
Just one night. Going to Paris tomorrow.

Tommy takes that in. Then -

TOMMY
TJ, you remember Dion.

DION
Wassup T-Dawg?

He draws the boy into an embrace. But is caught off-guard when TJ just stands there. Saying nothing. Dion glances to Tommy. WTF?

INT. TOMMY’S PLACE

Dion follows Tommy and TJ inside.

DION
Y’see they turned the methadone clinic into a yoga studio?

TOMMY
Got an organic market coming in, too.

DION
Like I been tellin’ ya. The Bronx is the new Brooklyn. It’s coming up, man.

He looks around at Tommy’s dust-covered, wire-exposed industrial loft space shit-hole.

DION
Well, parts of it.

TOMMY
Maid called in sick.

DION
How do you live like this? I had better digs back in prison.
TOMMY
Sure they’d make room for you again.

Dion sees TJ go upstairs.

DION
TJ all right? He seems a little...

TOMMY
Quiet?

DION
Dented.

TOMMY
Dented I’ll take. It’s broken I’m worried about. It hasn’t been easy for him. Thanks for coming to the funeral, by the way.

DION
Queens County Jail was all out of hall passes that day.

Dion eyes the top-of-the-line restaurant-quality stove - which looks like it’s never been used - then sticks his head in the fridge.

DION
You’re killing me. You have a 20 thousand dollar stove and your fridge is as empty as -

TOMMY
- your wallet? Your bank account? Your soul?

DION
All stocked up on wine, though. How are you and the bottle getting along these days?

TOMMY
We love each other. How are you and the blow?

DION
I’m a reformed man.

TOMMY
Yuh, right. ‘Cause it’s so hard to get drugs in prison.
DION
Thanks again for visiting me. Not once but TWICE in an entire year.

TOMMY
Oh, I’m sorry. Was I not there for you? Funny. The way I remember it, the one time I actually needed you - y’know, when my wife died - you got coked up and burned down the restaurant. So not only did I lose my wife, I lost my best friend and my job, too. So, no - thank you.

This brought up real anger for Tommy. It’s not lost on Dion.

DION
I’m sorry about Rie. It sucks I couldn’t be at the funeral.

Tommy’s still heated. Dion hugs him.

DION
I’m really sorry, Bro. I miss her, too.

Tommy’s sadness wells up as Dion embraces him. A painful and surprisingly vulnerable moment between these two guys - broken by TJ coming back downstairs.

DION
Hey, T-Dawg. Who’s hungry?

TIMECUT. Steam rising, water boiling, Dion chopping and dicing. Tommy, helping TJ with homework, motions for him to watch Dion work his magic. TJ is pulled in as Dion uses a wine bottle for a rolling pin.

Dion grabs one of Tommy’s knives from the rack. Dull as hell. After shooting Tommy a look, Dion takes an old coffee mug, places it upside-down on the cutting board and expertly sharpens the knife against the coarse ceramic grain.

DION CARVES the pressed sheet of dough into delicate strings of pasta.

DION
So, you’re a wine-babe?

TOMMY
It’s temporary.
DION
Good. ‘Cause you’re the best damn sommelier in New York.

HIS KNIFE A BLUR, Dion slices through ten tomatoes in three seconds and, with a flick of his wrist, launces them into a sauce pan, tilting the pan so the flames lick at his wrists. TJ is enthralled.

TIMECUT. Dion plates his creation, and puts the finishing touches on a lush, cascading hill of al dente perfecto. Tommy uncorks a bottle, pours a couple of glasses of wine.

As TJ picks up his fork, Dion stops him.

DION
Hold on, champ.

He nods to Tommy.

TOMMY
What?

DION
Go on.

TOMMY
C’mon, man.

DION
Food’s getting cold.

Tommy sighs.

TOMMY
Tonight, we have, uh, our special, house-made tagliatelle with vine-ripened roma tomatoes and parmesan in a shallot and garlic reduction. Pairs perfectly with this 2007 Villa Antinori.

(presents bottle)
An old-world Tempranillo blend with a touch of Grenache for a structured body.

(sniffs)
Stemmy and opulent. Look for notes of chili, tobacco and strawberry. Voluptuous tannins. All right, can we eat already?

DION
(grins)
And he’s back!
A hint of a smile from TJ. They grab their forks.

MATCH CUT TO -

A FORK stabbing a greasy plate of fatty ham, fried eggs and runny beans. We are -

INT. DINER

DET. GUY GIORDANO (50s, volatile) eats alone. Marisa slides into the booth across from him.

MARISA
Detective.

GIORDANO
Counselor. You hungry?

MARISA
Actually in a hurry. Friend of a friend’s got a friend with the FBI. Word is I.A.’s got you in their cross-hairs.

GIORDANO
Over Ziggy Woiichik? That was a righteous bust.

MARISA
‘Cept for the skull fracture on the ride to booking. ‘Cause of that the jury goes all liberal on that fine citizen; and a guaranteed life in prison on RICO charges becomes two years easy time.

GIORDANO
Better’n nothin’.

MARISA
Not to the Feds. So this is what I’m hearing: they’ve been building a case on the Tooth Fairy for years and they want you entirely off his ass.

GIORDANO
You telling me what to do?

MARISA
I’m telling you what not to do.

GIORDANO
Sure you don’t want a job?

MARISA
I got a job.

GIORDANO
I mean one that puts bad guys behind bars instead of getting them out.

He slips a wad of cash in her purse.

GIORDANO
Get yourself a nice blouse. Judges notice these things.

Marisa shoots him a look. Puts the money back on the table. Slides out of there and goes.

FLAME. STEAM. ROCK MUSIC. Raucous voices. Controlled chaos. We’re –

INT. STEFANO’S RESTAURANT – FLASHBACK

THIS FLASHBACK WILL BE A SINGLE SHOT.

FIND DION in the kitchen of this upscale restaurant. Barking orders. Pushing. Joking. Electric. PAN TO RIE at her station. Working speedily, gracefully. A balletic genius of efficient movement. Her mise en place an oasis. Pink peonies next to her spices. A matching pink iPhone within reach. CAMERA RISES. OVERHEAD SHOT of an exquisite plate of lobster ravioli placed on a tray. FOLLOW as the waiter double-times it out of the cacophony of the kitchen into the tranquility of the Dining Area. PASSING a gregarious and charming TOMMY describing wines with meticulous and original detail. ARRIVE at a table as the plate is presented with subtle flourish to one of Stefano’s owners... the TOOTH FAIRY.

INT. TOMMY’S PLACE – BACK TO PRESENT

Dion and Tommy are deep into their second bottle of wine.

DION
I’ll kill myself if I ever have to cook Italian again.

TOMMY
Safe bet you’ll be doing nouvelle in Paris.

DION
(with meaning)
I still want to do Greek.
Tommy sits back, averts his gaze.

    TOMMY
    Can we not go there again?

Dion bursts up from the table, grabs an empty plate, sets it in front of Tommy.

    DION
    What do you see?
    TOMMY
    Uh... plate.
    DION
    No. You see grape leaves. Stuffed with marinated octopus...

As Dion describes the dish, the food appears on the plate - piece by piece - rapidly forming a modern, unique, visually stunning, mouth-watering piece of art.

    DION
    ... on a bed of crayfish risotto. Drizzled with a wild herb and Retsina reduction. Lavender petals dotting the edges. Classic Mediterranean. But with a specific, dare I say, very personal Hellenic influence -
    TOMMY
    Dude, I helped you come up with the whole menu. You don’t have to walk me through it.

He pushes the empty plate aside.

    DION
    In prison, everyone thinks about escaping. All I thought about was Thirio.

    TOMMY
    Who do you think you’re talking to? Look at this place. All I see are Rie’s half-finished designs.
    (re: the espresso machine)
    The Belle Epoque got here from Italy a week before she died. I look at that corner, I see the walk-in fridge. I look at that wall, I see pine beams.
    DION
    Cypress.
TOMMY
What?

DION
Cypress beams. It’s a Mediterranean restaurant. There’s no pine in the Mediterranean.

TOMMY
Pretty sure it was pine.

DION
Nope.

TOMMY
Yep.

DION
Where’s the ‘Bible’?

TOMMY
Forget it.

Dion’s already scouring the shelf of cook books. He pulls out a laminated three-ring-binder. Sets it on the table. Opens it to the first page: a PHOTO of Dion, Tommy and Rie. A reflective beat.

DION
Long time ago.

TOMMY
Lifetime ago.

Dion nods. Turns the pages. He and Tommy pore over the sketches of their restaurant. The ‘THIRIO’ sign on the front of this very building. The work stations. Industrial design renderings of the sliding door between Kitchen and Dining Room. Color swatches for the banquettes. The cypress beams – Dion shoots Tommy a look.

TOMMY
Eat me.


DION
Come to Paris with me.

TOMMY
What?
DION

We can do Thirio there.

Tommy laughs it off.

DION

I’m serious.

TOMMY

I can’t uproot TJ like that.

DION

He needs a fresh start almost as much as you do.

TOMMY

He’s been through enough change.

DION

C’mon, Rie always wanted him to see the world. You’re gonna have his world be The Bronx?

TOMMY

Now you’re telling me what Rie wanted for him?

DION

Look, all I’m saying... ask yourself: what are you staying for?

This lands. Dion presses.

DION

Could you imagine Paris? The women alone. The wine. Me and you doing our restaurant? Let’s do it, T...

Tommy is intrigued for a moment. Then stiffens his resolve -

TOMMY

I’d never do a restaurant without Rie.

He walks away. Dion looks after his friend. Closes the book.

INT. AIDAN’S OFFICE - THE NEXT MORNING

CLOSE ON AIDAN (60s, the turf wars of NYC were fought on his face). He devours steak, eggs and coffee.

AIDAN

First the Chinks move in. Then the Mighty Irish push them out. Until the Wops and Jews take over...
AS HE TALKS we see RAPID FIRE TIME-LAPSE of a row of storefronts in The Bronx. With each passing ethnicity Aidan mentions, QUICK TIME DISSOLVES of SCAFFOLDING going up. SCAFFOLDING coming down. Up again... down again.

AIDAN (V.O.)
Then whoops. Here come the blacks. Now the Spics...

We watch the neighborhood complexion and signage change.

AIDAN
And bam! Now it’s the Vietnamese or Cambodians. Whatever the hell they are. So basically... it’s Chink to Chink. Circle a life.

He spits out a piece of gristle. Slurps coffee.

AIDAN
A neighborhood’s an organism. A living thing. Always changing. Always needing something. A good businessman finds out what that need is and fills it.

He leans forward. Conspiratorial.

AIDAN
But the real money? Fillin’ that need even when it don’t need fillin’.

He finishes his coffee. Picks his teeth. Done.

REVEAL Aidan’s been talking to JENSEN (40s, a giant of a woman). She picks him up from behind his desk. Sets him in a wheelchair and pushes him from his office. Past a sign: ‘SHANNON & SON - SCAFFOLDING’. The ‘& SON’ has been white-washed. The words faintly bleeding through.

INT. TOMMY’S PLACE - BATHROOM

Dion snorts a line of cocaine. Beat. He pours a little more out of his Bic. ON the white powder we MATCH CUT TO -

ALKA SELTZER tablets dissolving into white powder. WIDEN TO REVEAL Tommy stirs it in a glass of water. So hung-over. We are -

INT. TOMMY’S PLACE - KITCHEN

Dion comes downstairs to find Tommy and TJ heading out.
TOMMY
I’m taking Teej to school. You can hang until your flight. Just don’t burn the place down.

They hug.

DION
Take care of yourself.

TOMMY
You too.

Dion smiles at TJ.

DION
Ya wanna keep it down, bud?

TJ almost reacts. Dion musses his hair. Tommy and TJ go.

Left alone, Dion makes himself an espresso with Rie’s beautiful machine. As he grabs sugar from the cabinet, Dion spots, behind spice jars, Rie’s pink iPhone (we recognize it from the flashback). He picks it up. Turns it on. The screen comes to life - a photo of Rie, Tommy and TJ. Feeling like he’s trespassing, Dion puts the phone back.

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - GRIEF GROUP

Tommy at the coffee set-up. PILAR (late 30s, a quirky optimist) approaches. She looks a little lost.

PILAR
Is this the grief group?

TOMMY
Yeah. I’m Tommy Shannon. Welcome.

PILAR
Thanks. It’s a little overwhelming the first time.

TOMMY
I remember.

PILAR
I’m Pilar Herrara. My husband, Oscar, was a heart surgeon. Died in my arms... of a heart attack. Can’t make this stuff up. You?

TOMMY
My wife Rie. Car accident.
PILAR
Sorry.

TOMMY
Me too you.

PILAR
So, what do you do?

TOMMY
One day at a time, I guess.

PILAR
I meant for a living.

TOMMY
Oh. I’m a sommelier. But I’m between restaurants. So I rep wines.

PILAR
No way! I’m in the restaurant business too! My sister has a place - La Pupuseria Loca - in Harlem. We’re looking for wines all the time. We should exchange numbers.

TOMMY
... o-kay...

He takes out his cell. Pilar grabs it and punches in her number. Calls her own phone. Answers it while holding Tommy’s phone. Shows Tommy her screen.

PILAR
Hola?
(then)
Just kidding.

She hands him his phone. He speaks into it.

TOMMY
Really nice to meet you.

She laughs. Tommy smiles. Pilar goes. Tommy regards this bubbly burst of energy in the otherwise dreary setting.

LATER. Tommy’s mid-share. Maybe 10 people. CHRISTIAN, the group leader. MOSE (20s, black) a war vet. GLORIA, crying.

TOMMY
My son’s still having a rough go. Still not talking. And yesterday my best friend showed up from... out of nowhere.

(MORE)
He’s the guy who introduced me to Rie. It was like the old days. We were drinking, laughing. And the whole time, I kept looking at the door thinking Rie was gonna walk in any second. Only she didn’t. She never will...

He falters. Christian steps in.

CHRISTIAN
What would you have said to her if she had come in the door?

TOMMY
... so much.

CHRISTIAN
Okay, go with me on this. Let’s try a little role-play. Tell your wife what you’re going through. And Gloria. You be Tommy’s wife.

Gloria dissolves into tears. A fluttering hand waves him off.

CHRISTIAN
Okay. Pilar, right? How ‘bout you?
(off her nod)
Tommy, tell Pilar what you feel.

Tommy stares deep into Pilar’s eyes. Wells with tears.

TOMMY
I... I love you. All day long. I miss you all day long. We were supposed to do this together. Raise our son. Start our restaurant. You’re my phantom limb... I need you.

Pilar just fucking melts.

CLOSE ON TOMMY’S FACE.

TOMMY
But y’know, TJ’s doing better. My job’s going great.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL we’re -

EXT. CEMETERY

Tommy at a modest grave. ‘Rie’ etched in stone.
TOMMY
I have a couple of offers to somm.
Just figuring out which restaurant is
the best fit. Oh, and I saw Dion. He’s
kind of a mess. Going through a rough
transition. I’m trying to help him,
but you know how stubborn that guy is.

He’s rocked by a sudden wave of emotion.

TOOMMY
I’ll see you tomorrow, honey.

He lays the pink peonies on his wife’s grave. And goes.

EXT./INT. TOMMY’S PLACE

Dion zips his bag. Takes one last look at the kitchen. The
stove. The espresso machine. The dream. Then he opens the
door and... there’s the Mercedes Van less than a foot away.
The side door of the Van slides open. The Tooth Fairy
beckons with a sing-song...

TOOTH FAIRY
Diiionn...

INT. TOOTH FAIRY’S VAN

Dion sits across from the Tooth Fairy in this plush mobile
glass partition. The Tooth Fairy reaches inside Dion’s
jacket and takes out the passport. Plane ticket. Cash.

TOOTH FAIRY
Ah, travel. So good for the soul.

He sets fire to the ticket. Drops it into a trash can. Then
he opens the passport.

TOOTH FAIRY
Maury Finkelstein?

DION
Short notice.

The Tooth Fairy nods. Pockets the cash. Puts his pliers on
the table.

TOOTH FAIRY
Not only do you burn down our
restaurant. You get caught. An
employee of ours committing arson. So,
no insurance.

(MORE)
TOOTH FAIRY (cont’d)
My father may be in prison, but that doesn’t change the fact you owe us 600 grand.

DION
I’ll pay it back.

TOOTH FAIRY
From Paris.

DION
I’m going...

He looks to the trash can. The ashes of his plane ticket.

DION
... was going... on a sourcing trip. My new restaurant needs top-of-the-line equipment.

The Goons turn. Really? The Tooth Fairy lets a smile betray his lips. Is this the master liar, lying masterfully?

TOOTH FAIRY
Dion, Dion, Dion...

Dion holds firm. Total conviction. He tilts his chin toward Tommy’s place.

DION
Come. I’ll show you.

INT. TJ’S SCHOOL – CLASSROOM

TJ at the back. In his own world. He vigorously draws in his book. Adding flourishes and texture to a sketch of birds scattering upward from trees. It’s actually haunting. A hand on his shoulder. TJ startles. Looks up. The TEACHER, compassionate –

TEACHER
TJ. You don’t have to talk. But you do have to listen. Okay?


INT. TOMMY’S PLACE – KITCHEN

As the two Goons look on, Dion gives the Tooth Fairy the tour of Dion and Tommy’s imaginary restaurant.
DION
This is our Blue Star free-standing
range; the Belle Epoque brass and
copper espresso machine we had
specially shipped from Italy. The walk-
in fridges are on their way - they’ll
go over there. The prep and cooking
stations will be set up here, here and
here. We’re looking into cypress beams
for the ceiling. We can be up and
running within two months. And you
know me and kitchens.

TOOTH FAIRY
When you’re not burning them down?

DION
That never gets old.
The Tooth Fairy shoots him a look. Dion regroups.

DION
You were the one who made me executive
chef at Stefano’s. And the profit we
were making there - I’ll double that.
I can pay you back. And you’ll be
eating braised lamb with wild mushroom
ragout while this place becomes a
laundromat for your money.

GOON #1
Why the hell would anyone open a fancy
restaurant here?

GOON #2
In The Bronx.

Dion ignores them. Turns to the Tooth Fairy -

DION
Opening night I’m already the best
chef in this borough. People will
come.

The Tooth Fairy grins, relishing this game. Like a cat
batting a mouse -

TOOTH FAIRY
Dion, Dion, Dion...

Dion braces for it...

TOOTH FAIRY
... Okay.
The Goons are stunned. Dion is, too. The Tooth Fairy picks up a framed photo of Tommy and TJ, and as he looks at it -

**TOOTH FAIRY**
You try to split town again, these two will die. So will your favorite and only Uncle. Oh, and that lady lawyer friend of yours.

(a chilling smile)
But you, Dion, I’ll let you live so you can always remember what you caused.

Dion looks at him with steely resolve.

**DION**
I’m not going anywhere.

**TOOTH FAIRY**
Good. ‘Cause I’ll be collecting on your debt every week. And the vig. Hope this restaurant’s a success. Would be a shame if I went through all the effort to get you out of prison early just to kill everyone who means something to you.

He starts to go. Then turns back.

**TOOTH FAIRY**
One more thing...

He brandishes his trademark stainless steel pliers. The Goons grab Dion. He struggles in vain.

**DION**
No, no! I’m going to pay you back!

**TOOTH FAIRY**
Just smile. It will make it so much easier. For both of us.

**DION**
Patrick. Please. Not my teeth! Please!

The Goons try to pry Dion’s lips open, when -

**TOOTH FAIRY**
Wait. Maybe we try something different.

Again, the Goons are stunned.
TOOTH FAIRY
Say... a little finger?

The Goons wrestle Dion’s hand down to the table. Separate his fingers. The Tooth Fairy raises his heavy pliers and HAMMERS them down with shocking force, CRUSHING Dion’s pinky. Dion screams. Grabs his damaged hand. Falls to his knees.

TOOTH FAIRY
See you soon... Dion.

He and the Goons leave.

INT. TJ’S SCHOOL - LOCKER ROOM

TJ changes. Closes his locker. There’s Andre and his crew. Andre takes an apple from a large plastic bag filled with a dozen other apples.

ANDRE
This whole not talking thing? Weird.
But I’m liking it.

He bites the apple. Juice spraying.

ANDRE
‘Cause I can do this.

He viciously SWINGS the bag of apples into TJ’s mid-section. TJ partially blocks the blow with his arms. He almost cries out. But... nothing.

ANDRE
And you won’t narc me out.

He SWINGS the bag into TJ again. TJ crumbles to the floor.

As Andre and his friends go, BEGIN PULLBACK. TJ pulls himself up. Tears in his eyes. He takes out his cell and dials. Listens. We HEAR a faint and indistinct Woman’s Voice. TJ calms.

INT. HUNTS POINT MARKETPLACE

Dion, nursing his shattered finger, strides through. He’s greeted by old CRONIES.

CRONIE #1
Uh-oh. Dion’s here.

CRONIE #2
We paid up on fire insurance?
But Dion’s on a mission. No time to fuck around. He comes to a towering BRUTE. Tats and piercings.

DION
I need you to do me a solid.

INT. LAW OFFICE


MARISA
What are you doing?

GIORDANO
My job.

MARISA
I could have you arrested for this.

GIORDANO
But you won’t. Will you, pumpkin?

He brushes past her and goes.

INT. HUNTS POINT MARKETPLACE

The Brute slips out of a back room with a small package. The size and heft of a gun. He deftly hands it off to Dion who quickly shoves it into a bag and goes.

INT. TOMMY’S PLACE - KITCHEN

Tommy drinks wine and scrolls through PHOTOS of Rie on his laptop. Alone. Despairing. Dion bursts in, bag in hand.

TOMMY
Shouldn’t you be halfway to Paris by now?

As if to answer, Dion reaches into the bag, pulls out his Hunts Point mystery package and SLAMS it down on the counter. Tears it open. We think it’s going to be a gun, but it’s a... chunk of lamb.

TOMMY
What are you doing?

Dion ignores him, starts pulling other food items out of the bag. Tommy notices Dion’s heavily bandaged pinky.

TOMMY
What happened to your finger?
DION
Cab door.

TOMMY
That’s why you didn’t go to Paris?
You’re that much of a pussy?

DION
No. This is why.

Dion turns on a radio. Blasts a rocking Black Keys tune. He kicks on all 12 burners of the massive cast-iron range. CAMERA DOLLIES FAST to catch each blue flame pop to life like flood lights at a premiere.

QUICK CUTS: an awe-inspiring spectacle of FOOD PORN.

DION is a master chef possessed. He breaks out a cleaver, paring knife, scalpel, tweezers, pipet. A fucking blowtorch. When we saw Dion cook that pasta earlier, it was like Hendrix noodling on a dorm-room acoustic guitar. What we’re watching now is Hendrix playing a ‘67 Strat through a fuzz box, wah-wah pedal and wall of Marshall amps. Voodoo Child.

OVER THE CUTS, Tommy - annoyed that Dion won’t give him a straight answer - just drinks and watches... and ribs him.

As Dion fries whole anchovies to a crisp -

TOMMY
Playing with a blowtorch. Doesn’t that violate the terms of your parole?

When TJ joins them and watches Dion expertly crack the lamb’s ribs with his massive cleaver, Tommy asides to TJ -

TOMMY
This is why you shouldn’t do drugs.

And as Dion uses tweezers to place individual beads of caviar around the rim of the plate, and a pipet to drizzle the wine reduction like a Jackson Pollack -

TOMMY
Have fun, man. TJ and I are gonna head to White Castle.

And finally, as Dion finishes, blanching asparagus spears vivid green, then finely slicing dozens of paper-thin coin-like discs, WE’RE BACK IN REAL TIME. Tommy’s exasperated -

TOMMY
Seriously, what is going on?
DION
Stop asking questions and find me the right wine pairing for this.

TOMMY
Not until you tell me what’s going on.

DION
Fine. I’ll get a 2002 rosé.

TOMMY
Don’t. You. Dare!

He picks out a gorgeous red and pours two glasses.

Dion sets down his masterpiece: Anchovy and Rosemary Roasted Lamb with asparagus discs and fennel tapenade. It’s Dion’s ‘Guernica’: violent, provocative, beautiful.

DION
Go ahead.

TOMMY
Hold on, let me get some A-1 sauce.

DION
I’m telling you, Bro. You are unnecessarily – and somewhat cruelly – delaying gratification.

TOMMY
Thank you.

He finally takes a bite. Tries to maintain a poker face.

DION
Talk to me, Shannon.

Tommy just nods – still nonchalant.

DION
Words would be nice.

TOMMY
What do you want me to say? It’s... astonishing. And sublime. Maybe even perfect.

DION
It’s never perfect.

TOMMY
Dude, can you just take the compliment?
DION
Right, right. You were saying?

TOMMY
It’s amazing. If not perfect. As close as it gets.

DION
Now you’re talking.

TOMMY
You’re incredible, man. You go to prison and you get even better.

And now Dion pounces.

DION
This...

He indicates the Roasted Lamb.

DION
This... will be the signature dish of Thirio. I didn’t go to Paris because our dream was to open a restaurant right here. We are so doing this!

Tommy stares at Dion for a long beat. Turns to his son.

TOMMY
Got any homework?

TJ nods.

TOMMY
Now’s a good time.

TJ hesitates. Tommy hands him Dion’s dish. TJ goes. Tommy turns to Dion. Fed-up.

TOMMY
I already told you. I won’t do a restaurant without Rie.

DION
T, if you could see yourself right now, living in this place. I’ve been in prison the last year, and you’re the one who’s messed up. You’re stuck, man. Bad.

TOMMY
DION
I’m just being straight with you. ’Cause no one else will. You drink too much. You work a demeaning shit-job. It’s been over a year since Rie died, and you’re still wallowing.

TOMMY
Right. ‘Get over it, Tommy. Shake it off, Tommy. Move on.’

DION
I’m not saying –

TOMMY
Dion, shut up. For once. Just stop. You don’t know what you’re talking about. You don’t know what it’s like to be in love. To be married. To raise a kid with the woman you love. And you don’t know what it’s like to lose her.

Dion absorbs that. Tommy’s not done –

TOMMY
I had to clean out her closet. Clean out her bathroom. Throw her goddamn mouth guard in the trash. So don’t tell me to move on. Don’t tell me how to grieve. And don’t tell me to do a restaurant without her.

Dion nods. Then grabs Tommy by the shirt collar, pulls him in close.

DION
We’re not doing it without her. We’re doing it with her.

He pulls the ‘Bible’ off the shelf, opens it to her sketches.

DION
She created the designs. She made you the Somm you are. She made me the Chef I am. It’s. All. Her. She will live through this restaurant.

Tommy gets emotional. Dion thinks he’s convinced him. But as Tommy wells with tears, it becomes clear he’s pushed too hard –

TOMMY
No. She won’t.
He goes, leaving Dion defeated.

INT. TOMMY’S PLACE - TJ’S BEDROOM - LATER

Tommy tucks TJ in for the night. Studies his boy.

TOMMY
I love you more than anything in the world. You know that, right?

TJ nods.

TOMMY
Sweet dreams, okay. I’ll see you in the morning.

He kisses his son on the forehead. Turns off the light. Then they hear a PRIMAL HOWL and the piercing sound of metal scraping across concrete. They react.

TOMMY
Stay in bed.

He hustles out of there.

INT. TOMMY’S PLACE - KITCHEN

Through a haze of steam hissing in every direction, Tommy finds Dion straining to rip Rie’s gigantic copper Espresso Machine out of the wall - like Chief in ‘Cuckoo’s Nest’.

TOMMY
What the hell are you doing?

DION
If you’re not gonna do her restaurant, you don’t deserve this!

Tommy grabs the other side of the machine. An odd wrestling match between two best friends with the very symbol of Rie between them. Finally Tommy muscles it out of Dion’s grasp.

Frustrated and enraged, Dion grabs a stack of plates and hurls them one-by-one against the wall.

TOMMY
Oh, throwing plates! You must be Greek!

Dion continues.

TOMMY
Would you STOP?
Tommy moves to grab him, when Dion whirs and pins him against the wall.

DION
You want this just as bad as me.
You’re just too much of a drunk to realize it!

TOMMY
Ah, the cokehead speaks!

INT. TOMMY’S PLACE - TJ’S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

TJ sits up in bed, listening to his dad and Dion fight. Tense, he grabs his cell phone.

INT. TOMMY’S PLACE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Tommy yells at Dion -

TOMMY
This is so you! I let you crash here, and within 24 hours, you’re destroying my place and -

DION
Destroying your place? This shit-hole?

TOMMY
Why are you even here? Just go! And take your ego with you, you selfish, narcissistic -

DION
Sorry to interrupt your downward spiral, you self-pitying, self-loathing shell of your former... shell!

A CELL PHONE RINGS, startling both of them. Tommy recognizes the ring tone. Stunned, he rushes to the cupboard. Opens it. Grabs Rie’s pink iPhone and stares at the screen: ‘TJ Calling’. A picture of his smiling and healthy son on the caller ID. Tommy’s just shattered. Dion approaches. Takes it in. Tommy shows him the screen.

TOMMY
He’s calling to hear Rie’s voice on the outgoing message.

Dion takes a measured beat.

DION
He’s not doing so good, T.
TOMMY
No shit.

DION
Then why are you making him live like this? The way it is, this place is like the tomb of Rie’s dream that can never come true. Either burn it down – or build it.

TOMMY
Dion, you have to stop.

DION
No I don’t! When we were working the restaurant, when we were coming up with plans for Thirio, you were so amped, so… alive.

TOMMY
Yeah, well, I also had a wife –

DION
This isn’t about you, you self-absorbed prick! Wake up – this is about your son! If we do this restaurant, and you get that fire in your belly back, you have a purpose again. You know how quickly TJ will turn around?

This lands. Tommy’s at a loss. Dion goes in for the kill.

DION
He lost his mom. He doesn’t need to lose his dad, too.

TOMMY
Jesus. You never quit.

DION
And you quit too easy. All I’m talking about is trying. For TJ.

That sinks in. Tommy mulls it over for a long beat. Finally –

TOMMY
Where do we get the money?

Dion gives him a knowing look.

TOMMY
No way.
DION
It’s the only way.

Tommy paces. Trying to come to grips.

TOMMY
I haven’t talked to him in ten years.

Dion stares him down. Off Tommy – fuck.

EXT. TOMMY’S PLACE – NIGHT

Dion, flushed with excitement, watches Tommy’s Volvo leave the lot. Then he turns to look at the building.

ON THE BRICK WALL. The word ‘THIRIO’ appears. Hip, chunky letters on a broad metal shelf. Just like in Rie’s Bible.

GIORDANO
You burn down a restaurant owned by Ziggy Wojchik and his psycho son. And you not only live, you get out of prison early. You’re really in tight with those scumbags.

DION
You don’t know what you’re talking about.

Giordano knees him in the balls. Dion doubles over. Giordano pulls a baggie of cocaine from his own pocket and ‘mimes’ taking it from Dion’s.

GIORDANO
Ooh. What’s this?
(off Dion’s sneer)
You don’t want to spend a hundred years in prison, get me some intel on the Tooth Fairy.

CLASSICAL MUSIC UP.

INT. TOOTH FAIRY’S HOUSE

DOLLY along an elegant stove to FIND the Tooth Fairy standing over a steaming pot. He sips brandy. Waits.

EXT. TOMMY’S PLACE

Dion and Giordano. Dion gasps through the pain as his balls drop back down from his stomach.
DION
Why do you care so much about him? You already put his father away.

GIORDANO
And the Tooth Fairy steps right in. Nothing changes. And I get a net gain of zero.

DION
So sorry to hear that. Wish I could help. But -

Giordano shuts him up by grabbing his broken finger.

GIORDANO
Let me be perfectly clear.

SNAP! He RE-BREAKS Dion’s finger. Dion falls to one knee. In total agony.

DION
What the hell is wrong with you?

Giordano removes a fake front tooth, revealing an ugly gap.

GIORDANO
I. Am. Ahab.

Dion stares in utter disbelief.

GIORDANO
And the Tooth Fairy? That fat piece of shit is my white whale.

Giordano leans in and hisses -

GIORDANO
You’re going to deliver him to me... Chef.

54 INT. TOOTH FAIRY’S HOUSE - KITCHEN

The Tooth Fairy dips a straining spoon into the pot and comes up with... a tooth. Blanched. Content, he dries it on his apron and drops it into a glass jar. Joining dozens of other teeth.

55 EXT. AIDAN’S HOUSE - NIGHT

The nicest house in Queens. A BMW pulls up. Jensen gets out, walks around and opens the passenger door. She reaches in and lifts Aidan in her arms.
Then hip-closes the door and carries Aidan up the stairs... like a child. There’s a wheelchair on the porch. Jensen sets Aidan down.

RACK TO: Tommy in his Volvo. Watching as his father is wheeled inside. He leans his head back and blows a sigh. Looks to the house as the downstairs lights come on.

INT. TOMMY’S PLACE - TJ’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

TJ looking in the mirror. His badly bruised torso and arms. QUICK POP to -

EXT. TREES - DAY

Birds erupt from a copse of trees. SOUND UP: A Woman’s Scream. Tires screeching. BACK TO:

INT. TOMMY’S PLACE - TJ’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

TJ grabs his sketchbook. Opens it to the ‘bird’ page and starts drawing furiously.

EXT. TOMMY’S PLACE

Dion, cradling his mangled finger, turns as Tommy drives up.

DION
How’d it go with your dad?

TOMMY
He... wasn’t home.

Dion looks up to the side of the building. The ‘THRIO’ sign fades out. Tommy stands next to his friend. Looking at the blank wall.

TOMMY
Sure we can do this?

DION
We have to.

A beat.

TOMMY
Shit.

DION
No shit, shit.


Dion’s voice... almost a whisper:

DION
Living the dream.