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#2324

HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

"THE DAY THE MUSIC DIED"

by

Tom Blomquist

A STEPHEN J. CANNELL PRODUCTION

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#2324

HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

Rev. 2/25/86

"THE DAY THE MUSIC DIED"

PRODUCTION PLEASE NOTE: The name JOE WEST which is used as an alias for Nick Damion throughout the script is now changed to JOE CROSS. -

HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

"The Day The Music Died"

NOTE

Please note, this is the first full-run script in White. However, a few advance copies have been distributed to some people in production and they have boarded the script; therefore, you will find added scenes and A pages. Please don't let this confuse you and consider this script as the first one in White.

#2324

HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

"THE DAY THE MUSIC DIED"

CAST

MILTON C. HARDCASTLE
MARK McCORMICK

FRANK HARPER

NICK DAMION
KATE BELL
JOEY KELLO
SIDNEY HAYERS
WARREN RUTLEDGE
JEANNINE ALEXANDER
CASHIER
DEAN
MC

HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK"THE DAY THE MUSIC DIED"SETSEXTERIORS

NEVADA HIGHWAY
COYOTE
SMALL TOWN GAS STATION
SMALL TOWN RADIO STATION
GULLS WAY
 /PATIO AREA
CENTURY CITY OFFICE BUILDING
BIG TOWN RADIO STATION
STREET
THE OUTSKIRTS MOTEL
POLICE STATION
PICKUP TRUCK
BEACH
MUSIC MUSEUM
PARK

INTERIORS

LAS VEGAS CASINO
GULLS WAY
 /KITCHEN
 /DEN
 /GATEHOUSE
COYOTE
RADIO STATION
RECORDING STUDIO
OFFICE (CENTURY CITY)
COFFEE SHOP
MOTEL
 /ROOM
 /OFFICE
POLICE STATION
 /JAIL
 /HARPER'S OFFICE
 /HALLWAY
LIBRARY ROOM
KELLO'S OFFICE
CORVETTE/BEACH PARKING LOT
PICKUP

*

HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

"THE DAY THE MUSIC DIED"

ACT ONE

FADE IN

A1 CLOSE ON A WOMAN'S HAND

We WIDEN TO REVEAL we're...

1 INT. LAS VEGAS CASINO - STOCK

as she cranks the handle of a one-arm bandit, then squeals with the delight known only by a slots junkie as the BELLS start RINGING...colored lights start flashing...and a jackpot of coins pours out, CLINKING into the metal pan. People gather around. And over this we HEAR:

HARDCASTLE'S VOICE

(filtered)

What d'ya mean, you're in Las Vegas?

The CAMERA MOVES off the woman, past a row of other hopeful gamblers staking out their slots, and into the main casino.

McCORMICK'S VOICE

That's not what I said...What I said was, I'm leaving Las Vegas, okay? I got stuck here with car trouble. You know how that is...

HARDCASTLE'S VOICE

(filtered)

The only trouble you had was pointing the car in the wrong direction after you left that raceway in Palm Springs...McCormick, I hear coins hitting the pans.

The CAMERA continues to move over to a row of telephones and settles on McCormick. He's holding a big cigar in one hand and an overpriced drink in the other.

McCORMICK

Well, I had to find a telephone, didn't I? Y'know, you sure don't give a guy much credit for having the consideration to call home and let you know he's okay.

CONTINUED

1

CONTINUED

1

A sexy WAITRESS saunters past in a skimpy uniform, smiles at McCormick. And as he throws her his best "man on the town" look --

HARDCASTLE'S VOICE

Okay, what's her name?

INTERCUT

2

INT. HARDCASTLE'S DEN - NIGHT

2

And Hardcastle, about to rehearse with his jazz band, the Jazz Masters. He holds a slide trombone. Sitting at the drums we SEE GEORGE, a guy about sixty, who wears dark sunglasses. An impatient MAX is holding a huge tuba. Another friend of Hardcastle's named WILLIAMS is on the clarinet, MARSHALL is softly strumming a banjo, and LES is on coronet. Empty beer cans and bags of chips lie around.

McCORMICK

What's whose name?

HARDCASTLE

The girl you must've met right after I talked to you this morning...right after you told me you were leavin' Palm Springs and headin' back to L.A.

There's silence. Then Max blows a disappointed riff out of the tuba. It's clear he's also pissed at McCormick.

McCORMICK

(off the riff)

...Brenda. Her name's Brenda... Judge, the guy she was with ditched her...she was going to take the bus home... C'mon, you've been on those buses, you know how uncomfortable they are...besides, they make all those stops...it takes two days to get where you're going...

HARDCASTLE

...and y'told her Vegas wasn't outta your way...

McCORMICK

What's a coupla hundred miles when you're already on the road.

HARDCASTLE

McCormick, you made a commitment. You promised to be back here in time to set up the equipment so we could record our jam session.

CONTINUED

2

CONTINUED

2

And maybe we HEAR a few notes from the band indicating their disapproval.

McCORMICK

Look, I told you I'm on my way home.
Are you sure you really want to
listen to yourselves?

HARDCASTLE

We gotta be ready to play at the
museum opening in a week. To play
our best, we need to listen to our
music...All the best musicians do
that...make demo tapes.

McCORMICK

Judge, trust me, I'm doin' you a
favor.

And Hardcastle puts the phone down on the desk, smiles at the
guys, raises his trombone. And we:

CUT TO

3

INT. LAS VEGAS CASINO - STOCK - ON McCORMICK

3

as he reacts irritated to the band breaking into a crescendo
of "When the Saints Go Marching In", drawing the phone away
from his ear. Several PASSERSBY look at him. He pumps up a
smile.

McCORMICK

Wrong number.

And as he hangs up the phone, we:

CUT TO

4

EXT. NEVADA HIGHWAY - ON THE COYOTE - NIGHT

4

McCormick blasts past camera at full throttle. OVER this we
HEAR Don McLean's "American Pie" playing on the radio. TITLES
BEGIN.

5

INT. COYOTE - TITLES CONTINUE

5

McCormick is really into the song...singing along...not
missing a beat.

McCORMICK

"Bye, bye, Miss American Pie...drove
my Chevy to the levy, but the levy
(MORE)

CONTINUED

5

CONTINUED

McCORMICK (Cont'd)
 was dry...Then good ol' boys were
 drinking whiskey n'rye, singin'
 this'll be the day that I die,
 this'll be the day that I die...

Suddenly, the song fades into a mess of other radio stations...
 strange songs...fading conversations...snatches of music
 drifting with static.

McCORMICK

Aw...c'mon!

McCormick smacks the radio. The song magically returns.

McCORMICK

(smug)

And the shop teacher said I didn't
 learn anything that year.

6

A SERIES OF SHOTS - TITLES SEQUENCE

as McCormick continues down the highway, singing along with
 the radio, having a terrific time. And as the TITLES CONCLUDE,
 the radio station fades again.

7

CLOSE ON - McCORMICK

frustrated and fumbling with the radio dial. A distant
 VOICE...blasting out of McCormick's past...cuts through the
 static. (NOTE: the disc jockey, Nick Damion, has a
 raw-edged delivery).

DAMION ON RADIO

...Don McLean. The classic "American
 Pie"...so why isn't this guy on
 the charts today, huh? Where are
 the Buddy Holly's...The Presley's...
 the Dylan's? All gone babies, you
 know why? Because you can't put
 that music in elevators.

McCormick reacts with a huge smile. The station again dissolves
 to static.

McCORMICK

I don't believe it...Nick Damion.
 (dialing it in)
 C'mon, Nick. I know that was you.
 Where are you?

CONTINUED

7

CONTINUED

DAMION ON RADIO

(fading back in)

...at the worst excuse for a radio station in this whole damn country.

And we HEAR:

JINGLE ON RADIO

This is KKSb...Lost Springs, Arizona.
101.8 FM.

The station turns to static. McCormick grabs his map off the seat next to him.

McCORMICK

Lost Springs?

8

INSERT - THE MAP

showing that Lost Springs is a tiny dot just across the Nevada border. And suddenly the VOICE returns booming and angry.

DAMION ON RADIO

Hey! Can any of you zeroes hear me out there?

9

RESUME - McCORMICK

grinning at what he hears.

McCORMICK

That's Nick alright.

DAMION ON RADIO

Rock and roll, man. That's what we're doin' here. You don't like rock and roll, then flip yourself off my station, babe. Choke on country western for all I care.

A raunchy rock guitar riff explodes forth from the radio. McCormick starts figuring.

McCORMICK

Let's see, I won't get home 'til five anyway...say a half-hour each way...Hardcastle'll be asleep...I got time to burn.

And as another rock and roll classic drifts out across the airwaves--

CONTINUED

9

CONTINUED

DAMION ON RADIO

(over song)

Where the hell are all the people
that write songs like this. Those
songs were about everything...
Everything they weren't about and
everything they were.

A beat as McCormick makes the decision.

McCORMICK

I gotta see this guy.

10

ANGLE - THE GEAR SHIFT

McCormick slams it down.

11

EXT. THE COYOTE

burning rubber. Sliding into a turn on the highway, blasting
over CAMERA. And as screaming rock 'n roll guitars assault
us in the air as the Coyote cuts across the desert wasteland,
we:

DISSOLVE TO

12

EXT. SMALL TOWN GAS STATION - NIGHT

And the song continues to play on the radio. It's an ancient
two-pump operation where nobody ever stops. A MAN with a pair
of Sony Walkman headphones on bops on the fender of an old
'56 Chevy or Plymouth beneath a neon sign that simply says
"GAS". McCormick wheels up, gets out of the car, walks over
to him. McCormick "shouts" a few words at him we don't hear.
We SEE the man point down the road, then angle his hand off
to the right. McCormick nods, walks back to the car, revs up
and peels out. And as the man returns to bopping--

CUT TO

13

INT./EXT/ COYOTE - NIGHT

as it bumps along a lonely dirt road. The radio increases in
volume. McCormick turns it down. Then he sees it.

14

EXT. RADIO STATION - McCORMICK'S MOVING POV - NIGHT

A tiny pill box of a building in the middle of nowhere. A
spidery black antenna climbs up to the stars. Only a
weathered old sign identifies it as KKSB. There's a beat-up
old Pontiac parked outside.

15 INT. COYOTE - ON McCORMICK

reacting to the sight and thinking out loud.

McCORMICK

What's Nick Damion doin' at a dump
like this?

16 EXT. RADIO STATION - NIGHT

And we FOLLOW McCormick as he starts over to the door, opens
it and walks in.

DAMION'S VOICE

You think this is fun work? Listen
carefully, cretins. We call this
music...and it is...you may be
hearin' it for the first time...
Losers, you may be hearin' it for
the last time...so listen..I'm
gonna tell you about it...

17 INT. RADIO STATION

An underlit corridor. And as we TRACK McCormick, we can still
HEAR Damion. Damion laughs. We HEAR him fumbling through some
cassettes.

DAMION'S VOICE

Before you were born, babies...we
had the Beatles...we had the Stones...
we had Bobby Dylan and we had Fats
Domino...we had music, babies...
music with poetry...music of the
tribe...music with passion and tunes
that moved in and out of your mind
and your soul and music that changed
the world, babies!

And as Damion's VOICE continues OVER PICTURE, McCormick arrives
at a studio window, looks in and sees:

18 INT. STUDIO - ON DAMION

still fumbling for a tape. He's even more worn out than this
station is...out of shape, too long between shaves and haircuts,
chain-smoking. Damion's probably in his mid-fifties, but
years of hard living and countless vices make it impossible
to tell for certain. And he pulls the mike toward him.

CONTINUED

18

CONTINUED

DAMION

But of course, you don't care, do you? Nobody cares about "Jimi Hendrix" or "The Moody Blues" or "The Doors" anymore.

Damion looks over, sees McCormick and nearly falls over waving at him.

DAMION

Hey, what do y'know...A visitor to the Joe Cross show. You got a request, pal? You look like a man of taste...not like most of the hayseeds in this armpit.

(beat)

No, I won't get outta the business.

(laughs)

So, what'll it be? Steppenwolf? Credence Clearwater? Led Zepplin? The Band? Oh no, don't tell me ... you're another Dead-head.

And as McCormick just continues to stare at this pathetic display, Damion swats at some of the albums and tapes on the console, then collapses into a chair...miraculously cueing some eighties imitation of rock and roll on the way down. The booth falls silent.

19

ANGLE - McCORMICK

as he reacts. Quickly enters the booth, rushes over to Damion.

McCORMICK

Are you alright?

Damion pushes McCormick away.

DAMION

Just part of the on-air persona, kid. What do you want?

McCORMICK

I'm looking for Nick Damion.

DAMION

And I'm looking for redemption...I need a cigarette. You got a cigarette?

McCORMICK

No...Are you sure you're alright? Can I get you anything?

CONTINUED

*Start here
for favor*

DAMION

You can get the hell out...I got a show to do here.

Damion gets up, crosses over to a coffee pot. And the record stops spinning. And Damion looks over at McCormick.

DAMION

Hit the red switch.

McCormick follows Damion's eyes over to a red switch, keys it. Then:

McCORMICK

Look, my name is Mark McCormick, Mister Damion. I was leaving Vegas and I heard...

DAMION

I don't know anybody named Damion, pal. The name's Joe Cross.

Damion crosses back to McCormick.

McCORMICK

"Can any of you zeroes out there hear me?"...That's what you said on the radio. That's what Nick Damion used to say back in New York, in the mid-sixties. Nick Damion... the midnight prince of rock and roll.

DAMION

He sounds like a helluva guy.

McCORMICK

He was there when I needed him... He was a legend. He was the best. Taught me everything I know about rock and roll.

DAMION

(takes a sip of coffee)
Well, if this dude every drops by... I'll tell him you're a fan...have him send ya' an autograph.

And as Damion turns his back on McCormick, a beat.

McCORMICK

I guess I made a mistake.

DAMION

Don't think it wasn't a real thrill.

CONTINUED

19

CONTINUED - 2

1

McCormick looks over at Damion. We CLOSE IN on Damion's face -- full of memories.

HARDCASTLE'S VOICE

If you're lookin' for sympathy from me, McCormick, you're not gonna get it.

CUT TO

20

INT. HARDCASTLE'S KITCHEN - DAY

2

Hardcastle is eating breakfast. McCormick, who's clearly just arrived, is digging through the refrigerator.

McCORMICK

You must've had an idol growing up. Somebody you looked up to...believed in...who made a real difference in your life.

HARDCASTLE

Sure I did. But he wasn't any "Midnight Prince" of whatever...he was the "Sultan of Swat" himself.

McCORMICK

Who?

HARDCASTLE

George Herman "Babe" Ruth, that's who.

McCORMICK

Alright...well, didn't you ever dream of someday meeting him, shaking his hand?

HARDCASTLE

I sent him fan letters, kiddo, I didn't drive half-way across the western United States 'cause I thought I heard his voice on the radio.

McCORMICK

Okay, okay...maybe it was a dumb thing to do...but it's personal with me...Maybe I'll tell you about it sometime...

Hardcastle gets up and takes his dishes over to the sink.

CONTINUED

HARDCASTLE

Yeah, well, whatever...Now the organizing committee for the music museum is due here in an hour...I told 'em they could use the house for their meeting.

MCCORMICK

Still trying to angle another couple of songs outta them, huh, Judge?

HARDCASTLE

(defensive)

The Jazz Masters just happen to be the best Dixieland band this side of the Mississippi...the committee's lucky we had an opening in our schedule next week.

MCCORMICK

(under his breath)

The Jazz Masters are lucky to have a schedule.

Hardcastle throws him a look.

HARDCASTLE

Are ya' gonna help me set up the chairs in the den or what?

And they start to exit.

MCCORMICK

I'm tellin' you, that guy was Nick Damion...What could make a legend like that lie about his name..?

HARDCASTLE

Well, if I were you, I wouldn't lose any sleep wonderin'...you're never gonna know the answer.

And as they exit, we:

CUT TO

21A INT. DEN - DAY

217

We OPEN in mid-meeting. Hardcastle and McCormick are standing in the b.g. The members of the museum's organizing committee are present. Among them we see JOEY KELLO, co-owner of Kello Records. Early fifties and a Bob Guccione look-a-like with

CONTINUED

21

CONTINUED

21

taste to match. Sitting nearby is SIDNEY HAYERS, a record store owner and walking encyclopedia of rock and roll. KATE BELL, a Colleen Dewhurst type who works at the museum and has a crush on Hardcastle, is addressing the group.

KATE

...then we have the induction of Blind Lemon Jefferson into the museum's Hall of Fame...and I think it would be very appropriate to follow that with a second number by Milt Hardcastle and the Jazz Masters. We all know how extensive Milt's knowledge is of the roots of jazz. I don't have to remind you that the purpose behind the museum is both to honor the pioneers of the golden age of music and to involve those of us who have a love of that music.

She smiles at Hardcastle. McCormick watches as Hardcastle flashes a return smile. Kate takes her seat and Kello rises.

KELLO

Thank you, Kate... Now to bring us up to speed on the rock category...Sidney.

And Sidney steps in front of the group.

SIDNEY

As you know, Danny Phillips will be our first inductee into the Hall of Fame in the rock category... We were trying to make arrangements with Paul McCartney and Neil Sedaka to present the award...however for scheduling reasons their names have been withdrawn... So the first order of business is to find a new presenter.

*

22

ANGLE - HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

22

as McCormick reacts, excited.

McCORMICK

Nick Damion!

And Hardcastle looks at McCormick.

CONTINUED

HARDCASTLE

McCormick...

Hardcastle pumps up a smile.

MCCORMICK

Nick Damion would be the perfect presenter.

HARDCASTLE

(to the group)

You'll have to excuse him.

SIDNEY

No, Mark's right on the money... My very first thought was Nick Damion. Y'know, Nick really pushed Danny's records early-on in his career... the same thing Murray the K did for the Beatles.

MCCORMICK

That's right...I remember once Nick locked himself in the studio... played Danny Phillips' first single.. "Tears in My Eyes"...all night.

SIDNEY

... and the song climbed to number one on the Billboard Chart the very next week. Danny went on to record four albums...all of them classics...

KELLO

Hey, guys... love the idea but Damion dropped outta sight fifteen years ago.

MCCORMICK

You're never gonna believe this... it's gonna sound weird...call it fate...I think I saw Nick Damion last night.

SIDNEY

(real excited)

Where?!

MCCORMICK

Little desert station out on the Nevada-Arizona border.

SIDNEY

Whoa... y'know what it could mean to the museum in terms of publicity if Nick Damion surfaces at the opening?

22

CONTINUED - 2

KATE

Multi-media coverage...print,
radio, TV...A spot on Entertainment
Tonight.

SIDNEY

Not to mention the donations. A
coup like that could put The Pioneers
of Music Hall of Fame Museum on the
map.

KELLO

Are 'ya sure it was him?

McCORMICK

Not a hundred percent sure...But
Hardcastle'd be happy to take a
ride out to Lost Springs, Arizona
to find out.

HARDCASTLE

McCormick, I got band practice.

All the eyes except Kello's focus on Hardcastle.

23

EXT. CENTURY CITY OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

To establish. And as the camera pushes in on a window, we:

CUT TO

24

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Kello and his partner, WARREN RUTLEDGE, are in mid-argument
Rutledge is mid-forties, handsome. The office has high-tech
decor. There are gold and platinum records on the walls.
Autographed photographs of Kello and Rutledge with top
musicians and entertainers.

KELLO

Nick Damion is a piece'a history we
wanna make sure stays buried.

RUTLEDGE

Joey, trust me, Nick's buttoned up
all these years, he's not gonna
fink us out to the cops.

KELLO

You don't know Hardcastle. He can
be very persuasive...Hell, he talked
the committee into lettin' that two-
bit jazz band a'his headline at the

(MORE)

CONTINUED

24

CONTINUED

24

KELLO (Cont'd)

dedication... we might have Elizabeth
Cotton, Tony Bennett, Billy Joel...
(with disdain)
...and the Jazz Masters.

RUTLEDGE

What's the worst Hardcastle can do?
Ask Nick to be at the dedication?
Nick'll turn him down. Nick can't
afford the spotlight.

KELLO

Let me tell you, it's hard to
stay outta the spotlight once you
been in it. We better up our
insurance.

And as they exchange a look...

CUT TO

25

EXT. RADIO STATION - NIGHT

25

It looks even more run-down and isolated in the early evening
light. The pickup and several other cars are parked outside.

JEANNINE'S VOICE

I'm sorry...but Joe Cross's taken a
couple of days off.

26

INT. RADIO STATION

26

Hardcastle and McCormick are with JEANNINE ALEXANDER, the
station manager. She's in her forties, quiet, attractive.

McCORMICK

He was here last night.

JEANNINE

And his vacation started today.
Maybe I could help you. I'm
Joe's boss. Jeannine Alexander.

HARDCASTLE

(shaking hands)

Nice to meet you...Milt Hardcastle.

McCORMICK

(shaking hands)

Mark McCormick...Listen, I stopped
by last night because I was a big
fan of Nick Damion's back in New
York and when I heard him on your
station...

CONTINUED

26

CONTINUED

26

JEANNINE

Nick Damion?...You must be kidding...
 Look, I 've never even been to New York
 but I've heard of Nick Damion...and
 believe me, he's not broadcasting out
 of KKSBB.

HARDCASTLE

McCormick thinks he's goin' by the
 name of Joe Cross.

JEANNINE

I hired Joe myself...about two years
 ago...he'd just been booted off a
 station up in Wyoming. I felt
 sorry for the guy. I think at one
 time he musta been pretty good...
 but he's no Nick Damion.

Jeannine looks over at a clock.

JEANNINE

Look, I was just about to take a
 coffee break. You wanna join me?

And we:

CUT TO

27

INT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

27

A typical roadside watering hole punctuated by locals.
 Hardcastle and McCormick are seated with Jeannine at one of
 the tables.

JEANNINE

I think Danny Phillips is a
 wonderful choice for the Hall of
 Fame. A lot of people still love
 his music. I can't think of anyone
 who hasn't heard of him.

McCORMICK

Except the Judge here.

Hardcastle and McCormick exchange a look.

HARDCASTLE

And I suppose you've heard of Bunk
 Johnson...W.C. Handy...Kid Ory...
 Bix Beiderbecke...

CONTINUED

27

CONTINUED

27

McCORMICK

Give me a little credit. Kirk Douglas played Bix Beiderbecke in the movie.

Hardcastle looks at McCormick in disgust.

JEANNINE

They said Danny was going to be the next Elvis.

McCORMICK

I remember the day Danny Phillips died...just like I remember the day Kennedy died...It was a Saturday... and I took my '62 Chevy Convertible to a car wash...and there was this guy and he had the radio on.

(beat)

The news came over the radio.

HARDCASTLE

(bored)

Yeah, well, we better hit the road.

McCORMICK

Yeah, I guess so.

The three of them get up, McCormick grabbing the check and leaving a tip.

McCORMICK

I'll get the check.

McCormick casually steps over to the cashier with Hardcastle and Jeannine just behind him.

28

ANGLE - TO INCLUDE CASHIER

28

McCormick smiles. Puts down the check. And as the CASHIER, a middle-aged woman with her hair in a bun, rings up the sale --

McCORMICK

Y'know Joe Cross, the D.J. Maybe you can tell me where he's staying? *

CASHIER

Everybody knows Joe...don't listen to him though. Don't care for the music he plays. But if you want

(MORE)

CONTINUED

28

CONTINUED

28

CASHIER (cont'd)
him, last I heard he was livin'
at the only motel in town. Out
on Route 2... unless they've
kicked him outta there, too.

McCORMICK

Thanks.

He gets his change and turns around and steps over to
Hardcastle and Jeannine. He glances at his watch.

McCORMICK

Y'know, Judge, it's gettin' late.
We're not gonna get home 'til
midnight. Look, why don't we
spend the night at the motel, get
some sleep.

HARDCASTLE

(smiles; having
overheard)

Maybe run into Joe Cross. *

McCORMICK

We came here to see him.

JEANNINE

You don't wanna stay at that motel.
I hate to say it, but the place
gives the term 'roughing it' new
meaning. Why don't you stay over
at my place? I have an extra
bedroom.

(smiles)

I hope you don't think I'm being
forward, but this is a small town
and we like to open our doors to
visitors.

McCORMICK

We wouldn't wanna put you out
and besides, the Judge here loves
to rough it. He's a real mountain
man.

Hardcastle shoots McCormick a look.

CONTINUED

28 CONTINUED - 2

2

JEANNINE

(not wanting to
push it; smiles)Well, don't say I didn't warn you.
Listen, if there's anyway I can
help you, please let me know.

And off her look we...

CUT TO

29 OMITTED

2

30 EXT. THE OUTSKIRTS MOTEL - NIGHT

3

One of those pre-fab, one-story, end-of-the-road motels. A neon sign in front advertises cable TV, kitchenettes and free coffee in every room. We SEE the Pickup parked in front of one of the rooms.

31 ANGLE - N.D. SEDAN

3:

parked across the road. Jeannine leans into the window. There are two hard-faced, muscular cowboy types, JAN and DEAN, in the front seat.

JEANNINE

(worried)

I didn't know what to do. He's really strung out this time. I'm really worried... Whatever you do, don't hurt him.

*

DEAN

We know how to handle it, Jeannine.

Jeannine starts for her car which is parked behind. Dean throws the car in gear, drives across the road and into the motel parking lot.

CUT TO

32 INT. MOTEL ROOM

32

McCormick checks out the promised conveniences...the

CONTINUED

32

CONTINUED

32

kitchenette, free coffee, closet. He looks over at Hardcastle who's bouncing on the bed, checking out the springs. He kicks off his shoes, turns on the TV, lays down on the bed, sits up again, can't get comfortable. He feels the mattress.

HARDCASTLE

This was a mistake.

Hardcastle starts punching the pillow to fluff it up.

HARDCASTLE

(bitching)

This pillow's flatter than a pancake.

MCCORMICK

Don't think about it.

McCormick starts for the door.

HARDCASTLE

Where're ya' going?

MCCORMICK

I wanna see if Joe Cross's in his room. *

HARDCASTLE

Yeah, well, you do that. And while you're at it, get me a new pillow.

McCormick exits. And we...

CUT TO

33

INT. MOTEL OFFICE - NIGHT

33

as McCormick enters. It's deserted. He quickly checks a room file.

MCCORMICK

Room 101.

CUT TO

34

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

34

There are empty bottles, butt-filled ashtrays, dirty laundry all around. We PICK UP Damion who looks a total wreck as

CONTINUED

34

CONTINUED

34

he's supported by Jan. And as Dean spots a vial of white powder and crosses over to it. *

DEAN *

Well, well, well... Whatta we
got here, Joe?

He opens the vial and takes a taste with a finger. He grabs Damion's other arm and they start to half-carry him towards the door.

DAMION

I never saw it before... Anybody
could have left it, I'm not much
of a housekeeper.

35

EXT. OUTSKIRTS MOTEL

35

as Jan and Dean carry Damion out of his room.

36

ANGLE - McCORMICK

as he heads toward Damion's room, sees the two guys taking Damion toward a parked car.

McCORMICK

Hey!...

McCormick runs over.

McCORMICK

Whattaya' think you're doin'?

DEAN

Stay out of it. It's none of your business.

And as Jan and Dean look at McCormick, Damion pulls free and shoves Jan back against the car. As Dean reaches over and roughly grabs Damion, McCormick spins him around by the shoulder and throws a punch.

CUT TO

37

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

as Hardcastle reacts to the commotion outside, crosses over to the window and looks out.

38

HIS POV - McCORMICK

in mid-scuffle. Hardcastle races out of the room.

CUT TO

39

EXT. OUTSKIRTS MOTEL - NIGHT

Jan and Dean have wrestled McCormick to the ground. Hardcastle runs up.

HARDCASTLE

(to McCormick)

What's going on?

McCORMICK

I don't know, Judge...I think these guys were trying to kidnap Nick Damion.

Hardcastle looks over at Damion.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

HARDCASTLE

(reacts).

That's Nick Damion?

And Dean reaches into a pocket and pulls out a pair of handcuffs, slaps them on McCormick's wrist.

DEAN

(to HC)

I don't know who the hell Nick Damion is, but your pal here is under arrest.

Play a beat, then:

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN

40

EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Not much of a facility...straight out of "Petrocelli."

McCORMICK'S VOICE

For a small town, you got some
pretty big cops.

41

INT. JAIL - ON A PAIR OF ADJOINING CELLS

as McCormick stands by the bars separating his cell from
Damion's and looks at him.

McCORMICK

Did you see the size'a the guy I
hit? I musta' been crazy. Lucky
for me he was in a good mood.

Damion ignores him.

McCORMICK

(smiles)

You wouldn't happen to have a spare
hacksaw on you, would ya'? I bet
together we could cut our way outta
here in time to catch the midnight
buffet at the Tropicana.

Damion stretches out on the bunk, still ignoring McCormick.

McCORMICK

You're not making this easy on me.
I'd like to help you.

DAMION

Why, you know a friendly Judge?

McCORMICK

It's a matter of opinion.

DAMION

You got a great sense of humor,
pal, put a lid on it. I'd like to
count some sheep.

McCORMICK

Hey, do you think I like being in
a place like this? I got better
things to do. But when you got a
debt to pay--pay it.

CONTINUED

DAMION

I don't owe you any money. Now can I get some sleep?

MCCORMICK

When I was a kid you used to keep me up at night. I'd sneak a radio under my pillow...tune you in at midnight.

DAMION

You got me mixed up with somebody else.

MCCORMICK

I don't think so. I've been waiting since I was fourteen to thank Nick Damion for what he did for me. And whether you wanna' admit to being Nick Damion or not, I want you to know you saved my life.

Damion sits up and swings his legs over the bunk and looks at McCormick. There's a beat of silence.

DAMION

I'm glad I could do something for you. Wish I could do something for myself.

MCCORMICK

Mr. Damion, why don't you let me cancel my I.O.U., okay?

DAMION

I don't know what you think you owe me, but whatever it is, you owe it to Nick Damion. He was the kinda guy you owe things to. He was the kinda guy who could stand up and say I am somebody... When I can stand up, all I can say is...I used to be Nick Damion... I'd sure as hell like to be him again.

MCCORMICK

All I'm askin' is...let me help.

DAMION

What you're asking me to do is turn the clock back fifteen years. You can't imagine the risks I'd be taking. It'd take a miracle to

(MORE)

CONTINUED

41 CONTINUED

DAMION (Cont'd)
turn my life around. And a miracle
is something you can't pull outta
your pocket.

MCCORMICK
(softly)
You never know where you're gonna
find a miracle.

DISSOLVE TO

42 OMITTED

42A INT. JAIL CELL - EARLY MORNING - ON DEAN AND HARDCASTLE
as Dean swings the door open and steps into the cell.

DEAN
All right, McCormick...you're free
to go. The Judge straightened
everything out.

CUT TO

43 INT. POLICE STATION - ON HARDCASTLE, McCORMICK AND DEAN - DAY 4
walking down a hallway.

DEAN

(to McCormick)

Sorry about the mix-up...No hard feelings. But you don't want to get involved with this guy. I was tellin' the Judge, Cross's been been the local pain in the butt since he came here two years ago. Always in trouble. Doesn't surprise me he changed his name. *

HARDCASTLE

(re: McCormick)

He's a little hot-headed sometimes... Don't worry, I'll take care of him.

SMASH CUT TO

44 EXT. POLICE STATION - MORNING 44

Hardcastle and McCormick stand out in front and in the b.g. several cop cars and the pickup.

HARDCASTLE

Are you outta your mind?

MCCORMICK

Judge, I know the guy wants to turn his life around. He's scared of something, old ghosts, who knows what? -- But if we can just give him a chance to get his act together, it might be just what he needs right now.

HARDCASTLE

McCormick, the guy's a user. What he needs is a year or two in a drug rehab program, not a trip to L.A.

CONTINUED

McCORMICK

What Nick Damion needs is his self-respect. He needs to present that award at the dedication.

HARDCASTLE

That's a twelve year-old fan of the late, great Nick Damion talkin'.

McCORMICK

No, a fourteen year-old fan...Look, Judge, I never told you about this... never told anybody...but y'know how my old man split on me and my mom when I was five? Well, it did some crazy things to my mind. Really crazy things...I was confused. Couldn't make friends. Got into a lot of trouble...talk about a childhood.

(pointedly)

By the time I got to be fourteen it got so bad all I could think about was how much I wanted to die.

Hardcastle reacts. His eyes lock with McCormick's.

McCORMICK

You know what I mean?

(then)

One night I just had to talk to somebody, so I called Nick Damion at the radio station...He talked to me for two and a half hours, Judge. For two and a half hours he was the only friend I had.

(beat; indicates jail)

The man in there sure looked like he could use a friend right now.

HARDCASTLE

I think you're outta your league here, kiddo.

McCORMICK

(excited)

But you're not. All you have to do is pull a few strings. I know you can do it -- get him released into your custody.

CUT TO

45

EXT. PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

45

Damion sits in between Hardcastle and McCormick and fiddles with the radio...Top 40 stations fade in and out. Hardcastle pushes his hand away and tunes into a pop station.

HARDCASTLE

(to Damion)

I had to call in a lot of favors to get you released and as long as you're in my truck, you'll listen to the music I like.

DAMION

I gotta tell you, I don't like your music and I've never been a big fan of judges... This is a mistake.

(beat)

Has it ever occurred to either of you two missionaries that maybe I don't want to reform...Maybe I don't want to kick the drugs...Maybe I don't want to be Nick Damion anymore...Maybe I like bein' Joe Cross... To hell with it. Turn this thing around, I'm going back.

HARDCASTLE

McCormick, I told you this was a bad idea.

He starts to slow down to turn around.

MCCORMICK

(to Hardcastle)

How do you think I felt when you put me in this truck and told me I was in your custody? Look how great things turned out.

(to Damion)

Trust me...the only mistake here is...

(motion to radio)

...this music we're forced to listen to.

And off McCormick's look we...

CUT TO

46 EXT. CENTURY CITY OFFICE BUILDING 46

To re-establish Kello records.

KELLO'S VOICE

So much for ol' Nick turnin'
Hardcastle down. *

47 OMITTED 47

47A INT. KELLO'S OFFICE - DAY 47A

Rutledge looks over at Kello as he hangs up the phone looking
pissed.

KELLO

Hardcastle used his juice to get
him outta jail this morning so he
could be a presenter at the
dedication... They're on their way
back to L.A.

RUTLEDGE

I don't get it. What's Nick
thinking?... He knows the risks
if he surfaces.

KELLO

Who knows what that mental case
thinks...survival's never been his
strong suit.

CONTINUED

47 CONTINUED

RUTLEDGE

Let me talk to him.

KELLO

There's been too much talk. We shoulda' pulled the plug on him years ago.

RUTLEDGE

Joey, he'll listen to me. I'll get him out of town.

(pleading)

I'm asking you as a friend.

A beat as Kello considers. And as he gets up and starts for the door.

KELLO

Talk to him. But Nick knows we fixed the brakes on Danny Phillips' car. He opens his mouth, we're both gonna live to regret it.

Play the moment, then:

CUT TO

48 CLOSE ON - DAMION

as he inspects several bottles of booze inside a liquor cabinet.

DAMION

What time's happy hour?

Pull back to reveal--

49 INT. GATEHOUSE - ON DAMION

standing next to the cabinet. McCormick steers Damion away, past Hardcastle toward the sofa.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

McCORMICK

The bar's closed.

DAMION

Then this isn't gonna be much of a vacation.

HARDCASTLE

You're not here on a vacation. And in case you get any ideas, I had McCormick clean out the medicine cabinet.

McCORMICK

Judge...

HARDCASTLE

I don't like drugs and I don't like anyone that uses them so you can thank McCormick for talkin' me into this. If you're willin' to help yourself, fine. If not, you're gonna be on the next bus back to Arizona...And another thing, this music museum is a piece'a history. It's very important to me. You say music is important to you. If it is and you're considerin' being a presenter, you'll do it with dignity.

DAMION

(to McCormick;
re: Hardcastle)

Is this guy always like this?

McCORMICK

You caught him on one of his better days.

DAMION

(to Hardcastle)

Every prisoner is entitled to one phone call...I wanna call Jeannine, tell her I'm okay...unless you had the kid lock up the phone, too.

HARDCASTLE

Nice lady. She your girlfriend?

CONTINUED

49

CONTINUED - 2

49

DAMION

Yeah, we're kinda involved. Now
can I make that call?

HARDCASTLE

I'll put it on your bill.

DAMION

While you're at it, add a few
cents for privacy.

McCormick starts to lead Hardcastle out. Hardcastle is
reluctant to let Damion out of his sight and McCormick has
to practically shove him out the door.

McCORMICK

C'mon, Judge...I'll teach you how
to set up the recording equipment...
Who knows? Today, a museum...
Tomorrow, Star Search.

And they exit. We HOLD a beat on Damion, then:

50

ANGLE - DAMION

50

as we follow him over to the phone, picks up the receiver,
punches in a number. A beat.

DAMION

Jeannie, it's Nick.

INTERCUT

51

INT. RADIO STATION - ON JEANNINE

51

standing inside the D.J.'s booth, on the other end of the line.

JEANNINE

Nick, I've been so worried. How
could you just run out on me like
that? I thought we loved each other.

DAMION

It's not what you think.

JEANNINE

Now don't get mad...
Nick, I'm the one who arranged
for you to get busted. You were
getting out of control. I did it
for your own good. But I went
down to the jail first thing this
morning with the bail money.
Why would you let a stranger bail
you out? I thought we were working
on getting your life together.

CONTINUED

51

CONTINUED

DAMION

Jeannine, that's what I'm tryin' to do -- take the first step.

JEANNINE

Nick, you know how dangerous it is for you to be in L.A. You know what'll happen to you if they find you? We agreed Nick Damion would stay buried.

DAMION

Maybe Joey Kello should be the one who's worried I stay buried. Maybe I'm the one that can burn him.

JEANNINE

What do you mean?

DAMION

(nervous; speaking
hastily)

I've been carrying this around for fifteen years... nobody knows about this...nobody. Danny taped the last meeting he had with Joey Kello. He was scared. He knew about all the payola. He wanted out of his contract. He figured if Kello said no, he could use the tape to blackmail Kello into releasing him...But before Danny could say anything, Kello threatened to kill him if he walked....It's all on the tape...Two days later, Danny buys it in a car crash.

JEANINE

What happened to the tape?

DAMION

That threat flipped Danny right out. He believed every word Kello said...I never saw anybody that scared...He asked me to hold onto the tape, told me to go to the police if anything happened to him.

(bitter)

The poor jerk thought he could trust a friend.

JEANNINE

Nick, you just can't keep that tape hidden. Where is it?

CONTINUED

51

CONTINUED - 2

51

DAMION

I took it with me.

(beat)

Just stay with me, baby. I
can beat all this. I just need
a coupla days in L.A.

JEANNINE

I want to be with you, Nick.
I'm coming down.

And as the CAMERA MOVES PAST her towards the D.J. --

52

CLOSE ON - A HAND

52

as the D.J. drops the needle on a record spinning on a
turntable.

53

CLOSE ON - A DANNY PHILLIPS RECORD

53

as McCormick keys the stereo and the record drops down, starts
spinning. And the CAMERA WIDENS TO INCLUDE --

54

INT. HARDCASTLE'S DEN - NIGHT

54

There's a party in full swing. Sidney, Kate, the Jazz
Masters are present. Hardcastle walks over to McCormick
who's standing by the door, waiting.

CONTINUED

54

CONTINUED

5

HARDCASTLE

Look, kiddo, he knows you're havin' this little get-together for him. If he hasn't shown up by now, he's not comin'.

McCORMICK

Judge, I just feel so helpless... the guy's in trouble and I don't know what to do.

HARDCASTLE

You're doin' all ya' can... If Nick Damion wants to crawl in a hole, it's not gonna help to climb in there with him.

And as Hardcastle pats McCormick on the shoulder.

55

ANGLE - DAMION

55

as he comes through the front door and enters.

DAMION

(responding to the music)

Can any of you zeroes out there here me?

McCORMICK

Ladies and gentlemen, the midnight prince of rock n'roll.

Play the reactions around the room. Sidney and Kate hustle over. Sidney takes Damion's hand and starts pumping it.

SIDNEY

Sidney Hayers...I gotta tell ya', Nick, next to McCormick here, I'm one of your most dedicated zeroes. I mean, we're talkin...

And as Sidney outlines a big imaginery circle in the air and jabs it through the center.

SIDNEY

Zero!!

Kate extends her hand to Damion and we notice that he's beginning to warm.

CONTINUED

55

CONTINUED

KATE

It's just such a pleasure. We're all thrilled that you accepted our invitation to be a presenter at the dedication.

Damion moves past them into the room.

DAMION

(half in jest)

I don't know what Hardcastle here told you, but I didn't accept any invitation.

Sidney follows him like a puppy dog.

SIDNEY

(still real excited)

Yeah, but Nick, you gotta. Your radio show made Danny Phillips' career...Remember you kept saying Danny Phillips had a million dollars worth of talent and you were right, boy, you were right...I can't believe you were so right!

HARDCASTLE

(to McCormick)

What is it? Contagious? Willya look at this guy...he's worse than you.

McCORMICK

I'm tellin' you, Judge, Nick Damion was big league.

HARDCASTLE

Yeah, but he's not Babe Ruth.

56

ANGLE - DAMION

as he picks up one of Hardcastle's awards or figurines, using it as a microphone. Makes a rock n' roll turn and is on--

CONTINUED

56 CONTINUED

DAMION

One, two, three o'clock, four
o'clock, rock!

Everyone but Hardcastle joins in.

EVERYONE

(in chorus)

Five, six, seven o'clock, eight
o'clock, rock!

57 ANGLE - HARDCASTLE AND KATE

as Kate looks at Hardcastle who's completely baffled.

KATE

Nine, ten, eleven o'clock,
twelve o'clock rock!...

58 ANGLE - DAMION

DAMION

We're gonna rock around the clock
tonight!

SMASH CUT TO

59 CLOSE ON - A CLOCK

on the mantle. And then we PULL AWAY to reveal.

60 INT. HARDCASTLE'S DEN - LATER

Hardcastle is looking at the clock, exhausted, picking up
glasses, emptying ashtrays, putting them on a tray.

HARDCASTLE

It's late. I'm turnin' in.

Hardcastle exits. We see McCormick cleaning up and Damion
sprawled out on the sofa, looking comfortable and contented.

McCORMICK

(singing to himself)

It's late...we gotta get on
home... It's late, we've been
gone too long.

(MORE)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

McCORMICK (Cont'd)
(drifting out)
Can't phone...da, da, da...

And as McCormick moves around the room...

DAMION

Listen, McCormick, I wanna ask you somethin'. Hardcastle told me about when you were a kid and you called me and I helped you out. I'd like to know what I said to you.

McCORMICK

Don't you remember?

DAMION

It's a while ago, kid. How 'bout giving me the Reader's Digest version?

McCORMICK

(a beat)

Well, at first we just talked about stuff...y'know, music I liked, girls, sports, the usual.

(beat)

...and then you told me about going to a hospital with a bunch of other D.J.'s. To a ward where there were a lot of kids my age. All terminal.

DAMION

(starting to remember)

Right.

McCORMICK

And you told me what it was like talking to them. Kids with cancer who knew they were gonna die. And how much each of them wanted to live and what a jerk I was for wanting to throw it all away.

McCormick stops just short of his emotions taking over.

McCORMICK

You told me to think about that. And I did.

A long silence.

CONTINUED

DAMION

How close were you to the edge,
kid?

MCCORMICK

Close.

DAMION

I've been there myself...every
day for the last fifteen years.
I got paid a lotta money to
push Danny Phillips' records on
the air. Guys like your friend,
Sidney, think I made his career
...I'll tell you a secret...I
didn't make Danny Phillips'
career...I killed him.

And off McCormick's reaction, we:

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

SB

ACT THREE

FADE IN

61
thru
62A

OMITTED

61
th
62

62B

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY - ON PICKUP TRUCK

62

As it pulls up and parks. Hardcastle and McCormick get out and walk towards the station.

HARDCASTLE

Okay, so he said he took payola. There was a lotta that going on in the fifties, McCormick.

MCCORMICK

Yeah, but we're talkin' about the sixties here, Judge.

HARDCASTLE

Alright, if he was takin' it during the sixties, he was the exception not the rule.

MCCORMICK

It ruined his life.

HARDCASTLE

It might've ruined his career but there's gotta be a lot more than taking money under the table to ruin his life...like whatever he meant about killing Danny Phillips.

And off his look we...

CUT TO

63

INT. HARPER'S OFFICE - DAY - ON HARPER

63

As he skims a report he's holding.

HARPER

Maybe Damion has some information I don't, but according to the New York state police, Danny Phillips' death was an accident -- spun outta control on an icy road on the Taconic Parkway. The car went over an embankment.

*

CONTINUED

63

CONTINUED

6

Harper hands Hardcastle the report. McCormick looks relieved.

MCCORMICK

Judge, I told you he died in an accident.

HARDCASTLE

Okay, then explain why Damion told you he killed the guy.

MCCORMICK

I don't know.

HARPER

Maybe he's crazy. But Milt, if you're looking for dirt on this one, you're wasting your time.

HARDCASTLE

(flipping through report)

Yeah, well...maybe.

Hardcastle puts down the report on the desk.

HARDCASTLE

What about the names of those record companies that could have been tied in with Damion on the payola?

Harper rummages around on his desk.

HARPER

I got the list here somewhere... While I was at it, I also ran a check on your house guest. You got a real charmer there. Damion, aka Joe Cross...Bobby Welch...Dick Bond...has been in and out of jails in every tank town from here to New Mexico.

He finds the sheet of paper he's looking for and hands it to Hardcastle.

HARPER

You ask me, the guy's a bum.

MCCORMICK

All you know about him is what some computer tells you. You didn't grow up listening to rock and roll music. Nick Damion wasn't part of your life.

64

ANGLE - HARDCASTLE

64

as he looks up from the list.

HARDCASTLE

(to McCormick)

Frank didn't mean anythin' by it.
Some of us like our music the
old fashioned way -- with music
in it.

(re: report)

Kello Records is listed here as
having the most air play on
Damion's program. Which
tells me they were throwin'
around the money.

MCCORMICK

Kello Records was Danny
Phillips' label.

Hardcastle pauses as he looks at the report and thinks.

MCCORMICK

What?

HARDCASTLE

Kello Records...Joey Kello.

MCCORMICK

(reacts)

The Joey Kello on the museum's
organizing committee?

Hardcastle nods.

HARPER

You know him?

HARDCASTLE

He was at my house the other day.

(to McCormick)

C'mon, we got a stop to make.

He and McCormick start for the door.

HARPER

(calling)

You need me, you know where to
find me. Me and Puccini.

And as Hardcastle and McCormick exit the office, we:

CUT TO

65

INT. PICKUP - DAY - ON HARDCASTLE AND MCCORMICK
as they get in and Hardcastle throws it in gear.

MCCORMICK

How about this for a theory?
Kello was paying Nick to play
Danny's records. From what I
heard about Danny Phillips, he was
pretty straight. Maybe he didn't
like the idea...threatened to go
to the police. Kello took him
out and Nick feels responsible.

HARDCASTLE

Number one, there's no reason yet
to think he was murdered. Number
two, there was a lotta air in
what Damion told us. He didn't
give us all the pieces.

McCormick throws Hardcastle a look.

MCCORMICK

I know what you're like when
you're adding up all the pieces.
I'm telling you, Judge, Nick
Damion might be a lotta things
but he's not a murderer.

And off McCormick's look we...

CUT TO

66

EXT. BEACH - DAY - ON DAMION

66

As he stands by the water's edge, staring out to sea.

RUTLEDGE (V.O.)

You always liked the water, even
when we were kids, Nick.

67

ANGLE - RUTLEDGE

67

standing there. Damion turns and looks at him.

RUTLEDGE

What's it been? Fifteen years?

DAMION

You look good. You gotta gimme
the name of your tailor.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

RUTLEDGE

(smiles)

Fifteen years and you're making
tailor jokes. Aren't you even
curious how I found you?

DAMION

Hey, I can't remember the last
time I been curious.

He lights up another cigarette.

DAMION

Y'know me... Go with the flow...
sing with the beat.

He eyes a pair of sexy young things in bikinis as they stroll by

RUTLEDGE

I never wanted Danny to get killed.
I never wanted to take you out like
Kello did.

Damion turns away from eyeing the girls and looks at
Rutledge.

DAMION

If you're looking for absolution,
find yourself a priest. I got my
own demons...I took your money...
I let you and Kello waste Danny...
and worst of all, I kept my mouth
shut all these years because I love
you...See you around, pal.

He turns and walks back to the water's edge and stares out
to sea.

ANGLE - RUTLEDGE

as he walks over to Damion and spins him around.

RUTLEDGE

You dumb coke-head. Don't you
get it? If it wasn't for me you'd
be lyin' in six feet'a dirt.

(off Damion's look)

Who do you think's been cleaning
up every one'a your messes all
these years? Making sure there's
always some fifty watt joke station
out there willing to hire you?

CONTINUED

DAMION

A heavy dose of brotherly love.
Sure, why not? Great for putting
a shine on the ole conscience.

Rutledge grabs Damion by his jacket front.

RUTLEDGE

Didn't you hear what I said?
I feel as lousy about what hap-
pened to Danny Phillips as you do.
I liked the kid, too.

DAMION

(full of emotional pain)

Sure, but not enough to stop you
from letting Kello take Danny out.
The kid was just a
commodity, worth more dead than
alive. Sure, why not? He was
going to leave you anyway. So why
not waste him? You still had those
three unreleased albums of his.
The last music of a dead rock idol.
They'd be worth millions.

RUTLEDGE

I didn't want Danny to die. I
tried to talk Joey out of it.

DAMION

(softly)

But you didn't. Hey, you weren't
there when he needed you...but
don't feel bad -- I was and I
didn't do anything.

He pulls Rutledge's hands off his jacket. He walks a few feet
away and squats down and picks up a handful of sand letting
it fall between his fingers as he remembers Danny. Rutledge
steps around and looks at him.

DAMION

I couldn't believe the talent
in that kid. He was special...
and we wasted that.

The last of the sand runs out between his fingers.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED:- 2

RUTLEDGE

It's over. It's been over for a long time. Right now you gotta get out of town, Nick. You're making Kello nervous. I don't know how much longer I can carry you.

He pulls a thick envelope out of his pocket and holds it out to Damion.

RUTLEDGE

There's enough money in there to take you anywhere you want. Just be on the next place outta here.

And off his look we...

CUT TO

69

EXT. MUSIC MUSEUM - DAY - ON HARDCASTLE'S PICKUP

6

As it pulls up and parks. Opening day banners are hung across the front of the museum and signs announce the upcoming festivities. Hardcastle and McCormick walk past a couple of workmen and walk into the museum.

70

INT. LIBRARY ROOM - DAY - ON KATE

7

Filing some folders away. She lights up as she sees Hardcastle and McCormick walk in.

KATE

I wantcha to know, Milt, if you came to ask me to dinner -- I like my Mexican food hot and my margaritas cold.

HARDCASTLE

(smiles)

Well, uh, I just came here with McCormick. He kinda wanted to look at somethin' in your files.

Kate looks at McCormick and sighs.

KATE

(looks at Hardcastle; her tone changing in vivacity)

All right, Hardcastle, whatta you want to see?

HARDCASTLE

Anything you got on Kello Records.

KATE

I didn't know you were into rock.

HARDCASTLE

(forced smile)

Would you get McCormick the files?

They exchange smiles and Katie walks off. The smile disappears off Hardcastle's face as he looks at McCormick.

CONTINUED

70

CONTINUED

McCORMICK

I think you make a cute couple,
Judge.

Hardcastle throws him a look and we...

71

ANGLE - KATE

as she walks up to Hardcastle and looking at him,
hands McCormick the folders.

KATE

Have fun.

She walks back over to her desk.

CUT TO

72

HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

sitting at a table sorting through the clippings and photos
in the folders.

HARDCASTLE

(putting down one
clipping, reaches
for another)

I wish I knew what we were looking
for.

73

ANGLE - McCORMICK

staring at a newspaper photo.

McCORMICK

I think I found it.

He shows Hardcastle the photo.

74

INSERT - NEWSPAPER PHOTO

74

showing Kello with his arm around Jeannine Alexander.

75

ON HARDCASTLE

75

as he looks at the photo.

McCORMICK

What's a lady who said she's never been to New York doin' at Madison Square Garden on Joey Kello's arm?

HARDCASTLE

Maybe she likes him.

McCORMICK

Maybe she likes him enough to keep an eye on Nick. If it were me and I killed Danny Phillips and Nick knew about it...I'd want to keep an eye on the guy -- make sure he didn't talk to the wrong people --

(occurs to him)

Maybe even keep him in line with drugs -- someone like Jeannine could be very helpful.

HARDCASTLE

If you're right, kiddo, someone has to tell Nick.

Hardcastle looks over at Kate at her desk and holds up the photo.

HARDCASTLE

Ya'mind if we take this with us?

KATE

(smiling)

Anything for...McCormick.

McCormick takes the photo from Hardcastle.

McCORMICK

I'll tell Nick, Judge, but not now.

And off their looks, we:

CUT TO

76

CLOSE ON - FINGER

on desk intercom button.

KELLO'S VOICE

Hold all my calls.

We WIDEN to reveal we're in...

77

INT. KELLO'S OFFICE - DAY

Jeannine and Kello.

JEANNINE

I babysit that pitiful wreck for two years and some yo-yo driving through the desert playing with his radio recognizes Nick Damion's voice. It's worse than a bad joke.

KELLO

I should never have let Rutledge talk me out of wasting Nick. Now he's staying with a judge and is gonna surface again as a presenter at the opening of the museum...and who knows what after that.

78

ANGLE - JEANNINE

as she makes herself comfortable in an armchair, crosses her legs.

CONTINUED

78

CONTINUED

JEANNINE

Look, I have Nick where I want him.
Let me take care of him...my way.

KELLO

He's much too visible now. We'll
have to wait for the right time.

JEANNINE

Joey, I'm telling you, Nick thinks
he's born-again. He wants to change
his life. And the first thing
he's gonna do on the road to
salvation is burn you with that
tape he has. You should be more
careful when you're threatening to
kill someone. Next time make
sure they don't have a microphone
on them.

KELLO

You're sure he has it?

JEANNINE

(nods)

He has it with him. So I wouldn't
wait to take care of him if I
were you.

KELLO

I still say it's too risky. At
least let's hold off until he
leaves Hardcastle's place.

JEANNINE

Let me handle it.

And as she goes to the desk and picks up her purse --

JEANNINE

Nick must be tearing at the walls
right now.

CONTINUED

78

CONTINUED - 2.

She opens her purse and takes out a small plastic envelope filled with white powder.

JEANNINE

Why don't I help him out? I'll have Nick meet me at some quiet spot. He's not going to leave that tape lying around Hardcastle's house. He'll have it on him. He'll just be a statistic on a police report. A junkie O.D.ing on bad junk.

And as Jeannine slowly walks over to Kello and kisses him, the CAMERA moves in on the envelope, and we...

CUT TO

79

OMITTED

80

EXT. GULL'S WAY - DAY - STOCK

to establish. Over this we hear:

McCORMICK'S VOICE

I checked. He's not in the gate house.

81

INT. HARDCASTLE'S DEN - DAY - ON McCORMICK

As he walks in the room and looks at Hardcastle.

McCORMICK

Maybe he went for a walk on the beach.

HARDCASTLE

The Vette's missing from the garage, kiddo. It looks like your friend Nick decided to hit the road. I gotta call it in.

He reaches for the phone.

McCORMICK

Wait, Judge. Maybe he misses Jeannine. Maybe he just went out for a drive to clear his head. He could be back any minute.

HARDCASTLE

I don't think you believe that.

He punches a number.

HARDCASTLE

Let me speak to Lieutenant Harper.
(beat)
Frank, Milt. Damion is gone. He took the Vette.

INTERCUT - INT. HARPER'S OFFICE - DAY - ON HARPER

standing behind his desk.

HARPER

I'll put out an APB. I'll call
you as soon as something comes in.

Hardcastle hangs up.

MCCORMICK

I thought I reached him.

HARDCASTLE

Guys like Damion count on guys
like you, McCormick.

He looks at his watch.

HARDCASTLE

The dedication is gonna
start in a coupla hours. We
gotta call Sidney and find
someone to replace Damion.

MCCORMICK

Call me a jerk but Damion's
not gonna let me down. The
guy's gonna show up. Let's
worry about Kello.

HARDCASTLE

Why should we worry about
Kello? We know he'll be at the
ceremony.

And as Hardcastle reaches for the phone we...

EXT. PARK - DAY - ON DAMION

standing by a bench. He watches a car pull into the park's
lot and hurries over to it. Jeannine gets out and kisses
him.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

83

JEANNINE

I missed you, Nick.
(looks at him)
Are you all right?

It's obvious Damion is on edge, nervous, jumpy.

DAMION

Yeah, yeah fine.

JEANNINE

We have to get out of here. Get
the tape to the police.

DAMION

Yeah, but first I have to do this.
I can't bring Danny back, but I
can be there for him at the
dedication this afternoon.

JEANNINE

Do you have to do this?

NICK

I'm doing it for us.

JEANNINE

I understand all that Nick. But
if you love me you won't go.
There'll be reporters, cameras...
Kello'll know where you are...
once he finds you, he'll find the
tape. It's the only evidence you
have against him.

Damion gets even more on edge...maybe shivers.

DAMION

I promised McCormick.

Damion leans against the car for support.

JEANNINE

What'sa matter? Ya' hurtin'?

DAMION

Hardcastle took away all my toys.
Maybe you're right.

(MORE)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

DAMION (cont'd)
(he pulls out
cassette)

You hold it. It'll be safer with
you.

Jeannine opens her purse and drops the cassette inside. She
hesitates, then pulls out the packet of drugs.

CONTINUED

83

CONTINUED - 2

JEANNINE

I don't want to give you this, Nick,
but maybe it'll help you get through
the next few hours until we can get
out of here.

Damion takes the packet and pockets it. Jeannine hugs him.

JEANNINE

I'm so scared.

DAMION

Everything's gonna be okay.

He hands her a slip of paper.

DAMION

That's the address of the museum.
I'll meet you there. We'll take
off right after the ceremony.

84 OMITTED

85 INT. CORVETTE - DAY - ON DAMION

As he slides in behind the wheel. He starts it up, looks
at Jeannine who's there by his car. They exchange looks, then
he backs out and screeches off.

CUT TO

86 EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY - STOCK

to re-establish.

87 INT. KELLO'S OFFICE - DAY - ON RUTLEDGE

as he walks in and closes the door behind him. He looks at
Kello sitting behind his desk.

RUTLEDGE

I spoke to Nick. I gave him some
money. We don't have anything to
worry about.

KELLO

You're right...we don't.

His hand comes up holding an automatic.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

KELLO

After today, all our problems are
gonna go away.

And off his look, we...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN

88

EXT. MUSEUM - DAY

to establish. The Jazz Masters are there, along with numerous DIGNITARIES from the world of rock, jazz and pop. We can see Jeannine standing among them. Maybe WAITERS with trays of champagne circulate through the throng. REPORTERS and MINICAM CREWS are talking to and filming several of the guests. Above the dais, photographs of the inductees into the museum, Danny Phillips' among them, are on display.

89

ANGLE - HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

as they stand among the dignitaries.

HARDCASTLE

I'm sorry, kiddo, it doesn't look like Damion's gonna show.

McCORMICK

He'll be here, Judge. I know it.

Just then Kate walks over holding two glasses of champagne. She smiles at Hardcastle and hands him a glass.

KATE

A little of the bubbly, Milt. I'm so anxious to hear you play.

Hardcastle spots a limo pulling up and Joey Kello getting out. *

HARDCASTLE

(handing Kate his glass)

Excuse me.

Kate watches them walk off and sighs.

90

ANGLE - HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

as they walk over to Kello. Kello shoots them a smile.

KELLO

Looks like this is going to be quite an occasion, Judge.

CONTINUED

90

CONTINUED

90

HARDCASTLE

Y'know, it's funny. Fifteen years ago you paid off Nick Damion to play a lotta your records. Now we find him working at a nothin' radio station managed by a friend of yours. You wanna tell us how that happened? *what happened?*

18.25

21.4

31.05

KELLO

I don't know what you're talking about.

McCORMICK

~~We're talking about why Nick Damion thinks Danny Phillips' death wasn't an accident. Why you've been using Jeannine Alexander to keep him under wraps.~~

34.10

42.10

Kello throws a look at McCormick then looks at Hardcastle.

*
*

KELLO

You've been blowin' on your trombone too long, Hardcastle.

91

ANGLE - JEANNINE

91

out of sight of Hardcastle and McCormick as she watches them talking to Kello.

92

ON HARDCASTLE

92

as he looks at Kello.

HARDCASTLE

~~Jeannine was the one who called the cops on Damion to keep him outta circulation when we showed up at the motel, wasn't she?~~

52

18.00

54

KELLO

I don't know what you and your friend here are trying to pull, Hardcastle...

*

CONTINUED

92

CONTINUED

92

HARDCASTLE

I hate to say it, but he's right,
McCormick.

Kate, wearing an official button pinned to her dress,
approaches Hardcastle.

*
*

KATE

Five minutes to show time, Milt.
Better grab your trombone.

*

As Hardcastle walks off, we...

93

ANGLE - JEANNINE

93

out of sight of Hardcastle and McCormick as she steps up to
Kello as he grabs a glass of champagne off a passing tray.

JEANNINE

What did they want?

KELLO

They're just trying to rattle
my cage. Did you get it?

JEANNINE

(pats purse)

Don't worry, I have it and Nick's
ancient history.

21
25.15

SMASH CUT TO

94

CLOSE ON - THE ENVELOPE OF WHITE POWDER

94

as it's being ripped open. We WIDEN TO REVEAL we're:

95

INT. CORVETTE - DAY - ON DAMION

95

Parked in a Malibu beach parking lot. Off the car radio we
HEAR "Black Magic Woman" by Santana. He really looks a mess
now, tremors, hands shaking, bloodshot eyes, etc. As the
song ends we hear:

NEWSCASTER'S VOICE

At the top of the hour police today
reported finding the body of record
executive Warren Rutledge floating
in Santa Monica Bay. Rutledge, age
forty-five, was shot once through
the chest. Police speculate...

96

ANGLE - DAMION

96

as what he's heard sinks in. He turns off the radio, stares at the packet of drugs for a long beat. Then drops it on the seat. He fumbles with the key in the ignition, starts up the engine and slams down on the gas.

97

EXT. STREET - DAY - ON CORVETTE

97

as it tears down the street. Over this we hear the sound of...

KATE'S VOICE

(into mike)

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the opening of the 'Pioneers of Music Hall of Fame Museum'.

CUT TO

98

EXT. MUSEUM - DAY - ON KATE

98*

standing in front of the Jazz Masters on the dais.

KATE

To get the festivities rolling -- Milt Hardcastle and the Jazz Masters.

And as the Jazz Masters break into a hot and heavy rendition of "Muskrat Ramble"...

99

ANGLE - HARPER

99

as he steps over to McCormick. He motions to Hardcastle and the Jazz Masters.

HARPER

Those guys aren't half-bad. A little rough on the high notes but, hey...who's complaining? (looks at McCormick)

I thought you'd be interested. We found Joey Kello's partner swimming in the bay about an hour ago. And get this, he's Nick Damion's brother.

McCORMICK

(reacts)

That explains a lot... We have to find Nick. If I'm right,

(MORE)

CONTINUED

McCORMICK (Cont'd)
Nick's the last one left who's
a threat to Kello.

He looks up at the dais where we can see Kello sitting among
the members of the organizing committee.

HARPER
Nothing's come in on him yet.
You ask me, the guy's probably
outta state by now.

as it screeches up and Damion jumps out. He pushes his way
through the crowd in front of the dais.

101 ANGLE - McCORMICK 101

as he reacts to seeing Damion. He starts pushing his way towards him through the crowd.

MCCORMICK

Nick!

102 ANGLE - HARDCASTLE 102

as he spots Damion and stops blowing on his trombone.

103 ANGLE - JEANNINE 103

in the crowd reacting to the sight of Damion. She looks up at Kello who nervously watches Damion push past a museum official and climb up on the dais. The crowd reacts to his presence and the Jazz Masters' playing tapers off.

104 ON DAMION 104

as he grabs the microphone and pulls it off its stand.

DAMION

This thing working? Can any of you zeroes out there hear me?

Someone starts clapping and it builds as the audience realizes it's Nick Damion.

DAMION

This is the Midnight Prince of rock and roll. ..Whatever happened, to rock and roll, anyway? Where are the giants? Lennon, Holly, the others? Remember when everyone get freaked out 'cause John, Paul, George and Ringo had hair in their eyes? 50110

Damion looks straight at McCormick and McCormick smiles.

105 ANGLE - HARDCASTLE, McCORMICK AND HARPER 105

as they stand watching Damion.

HARPER

This guy's gonna short-circuit any minute.

MCCORMICK

No way.

106

ON DAMION

106

clutching the mike.

DAMION

You remember? You remember the magic...? When rock and roll started out as music that had a message? When rock and roll meant something before a guy like Joey Kello corrupted it?

10 10 message? When rock and roll meant 23.15
30.25

107

ANGLE - KELLO

107

as he reacts.

108

RESUME - DAMION

108

as he stares at Kello, he points to the picture of Danny Phillips.

DAMION

And you remember Danny Phillips? A skinny little kid from West Virginia. Sure you do... He had the touch, ~~children.~~ He could fly...and there was fire in his music and ~~fire in his wings...~~ But ~~even during that time there was a way to find payola children...~~ and I took it, because I was little and greedy... But, ~~Danny, could fly and he said no....~~

get a lunch

109

ANGLE - HARDCASTLE, MCCORMICK AND HARPER

109

as they look up at Damion.

110

RESUME - DAMION

110

as he continues.

Dan DAMION

~~And he tried to break free and fly away, so they shot that beautiful bird outta the sky, and they tore these fire wings and brought him down! They killed him, losers... Joey Kello killed him!~~

51.12

Damion points straight at Joey Kello, who freezes. There is complete silence. Damion yanks Kello to his feet and starts shaking him.

110

CONTINUED

DAMION

You think I'd let you kill my
brother, too!

Kello shoves Damion away and his hand flashes under his jacket, pulling out a gun. There are screams as Kello shoves some of the others on the dais aside and leaps off the back of it.

111

ANGLE - HARDCASTLE, McCORMICK AND HARPER

as they make their way through the crowd and start running after Kello.

112

OMIT

113

ANGLE - KELLO

as he runs into the parking area. He turns and FIRES at Hardcastle, McCormick and Harper.

114

ANGLE - HARDCASTLE, McCORMICK AND HARPER

ducking as a car windshield near them shatters. Harper returns the fire.

115

ANGLE - McCORMICK AND HARDCASTLE

as they make their way around some cars.

116

ANGLE - KELLO

taking a last shot at Harper then turning and starting to run.

117 ANGLE - McCORMICK

11

as he dives into frame and tackles Kello. He knocks the gun aside, then takes him out with a hard right. Kello sags.

118 ANGLE - HARPER

11

as he walks over holstering his gun. Hardcastle pulls Kello to his feet.

HARDCASTLE

He's all yours.

HARPER

(cuffing Kello)

You have the right to remain silent.
If you give up that right...

Hardcastle and McCormick walk off.

119 ANGLE - HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

11

as they step over to Damion just as Jeannine hurries over.

JEANNINE

(hugs him)

Nick, are you all right?

DAMION

I am now.

Hardcastle and McCormick exchange a look.

JEANNINE

Thank you for all you've done for
Nick.

McCORMICK

If I were you, I'd hold off on the
thanks.

He takes the photo out from under his jacket and hands it to
Nick.

McCORMICK

I'm sorry.

Damion looks at the photo of Jeannine and Kello, then looks at
Jeannine. Jeannine glances at photo, looks at Nick. Play the
exchange of looks between Damion and Jeannine.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Hardcastle starts to take Jeannine by the arm.

DAMION

Wait. Check her bag. She
has an interesting tape in there.

Hardcastle pulls Jeannine's purse out of her hand and opens it. He pulls out the tape. Jeannine and Damion exchange a look, then Hardcastle walks her off. McCormick puts a hand on Damion's shoulder and off McCormick's look we...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT FOUR

TAG

FADE IN

120 EXT. RADIO STATION - DAY - STOCK 120

to establish. Over this we hear "American Pie."

CUT TO:

121 CLOSE ON - A TURNTABLE 121

a record spinning. We WIDEN TO REVEAL we're:

122 INT. RADIO STATION - DAY 122

A lot more upscale than the station in Lost Springs. Damion sits there behind his mike in a well-padded chair and looks at Hardcastle and McCormick.

McCORMICK

How does it feel?

Damion leans back in his chair and tests it.

DAMION

If I'm here for more than a coupla' weeks, I'm gonna ask 'em to give me a new chair...with my monogram.

HARDCASTLE

That's a nicer chair than I have in my den.

Damion smiles at Hardcastle.

DAMION

Showbiz, Judge. You ain't the midnight prince of rock 'n' roll.

McCORMICK

~~Yeah, well, Nick, the Judge's connections are limited. Because you agreed to enroll in a drug rehab program, he was able to get you off with probation, for with-
holding evidence--but at least for the next two months you're gonna have to be satisfied being the mid-morning prince of rock 'n' roll... giving traffic updates every fifteen minutes.~~

The record ends. Damion hits a switch and leans into the microphone.

CONTINUED

122

CONTINUED

122

DAMION

That little number went out to my friend Joey Kello, who's rentin' a room in the county calaboose... Hope the food's good, Joey.

Damion looks over at Hardcastle and McCormick.

McCORMICK

(taps Hardcastle)

C'mon, Judge.

HARDCASTLE

(to Damion)

Don't forget dinner tonight.

Damion nods as Hardcastle and McCormick back out of the glass booth, then pause.

123

ANGLE - DAMION

123

as he talks into mike.

DAMION

It's eight-thirty and the traffic is bumper-to-bumper...and I got a special request from a special guy, Mark McCormick.

40:05

124

ANGLE - TO INCLUDE HARDCASTLE AND McCORMICK

124

outside the glass partition, as they react.

DAMION

A number performed by a bunch of guys who love music as much as I do...the boppin', stompin', swingin'...Jazz Masters!

56:25

He hits the reel-to-reel. We SEE the tape start to turn and we HEAR "South Rampart Street Parade" start up, and we:

*

CUT TO:

125

HELICOPTER SHOT - STOCK

125

of the city. Traffic streaming along the freeway below. And over this we HEAR the Jazz Masters and:

CONTINUED

#2324

61.

125

CONTINUED

125

DAMION'S VOICE

This is the mid-morning prince
of rock 'n' roll askin'...
Can any of you zeros out there
hear me?

FADE OUT

THE END