

PUNISHER: MARTYRDOM

Written by

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Based on the Marvel Comics Character

Created by

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Inspired by

"Born" and "Punisher: The Slavers"

By

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DEDICATION:
TO THOSE WHO SERVE AND THE THINGS THEY CARRY

EXT. GNUCCI MANSION - NIGHT

The mansion stands atop a hill. JERSEY COP cars pack the driveway. Snow falls.

SUPER: 1985

A Cadillac stops at the front door. MARTIN SOAP, 35, African American, steps out in an Army field jacket over pajamas.

J. COP 1 approaches with cups of coffee.

J. COP 1
Detective Soap?

SOAP
In the flesh.

J. Cop 1 hands him a cup.

J. COP 1
Sorry you had to come down this
late.

SOAP
It happens. What's the situation?

They walk to the door.

J. COP
We looked around the main house.
The windows are smashed and the
guest house at the back is empty
with blood all over.

SOAP
Anyone go inside?

J. COP 1
You kiddin'? The Scourge called
you. We're back-up.

SOAP
You call him The Scourge?

J. COP 1
Fits, don't it? He's a scourge of
the underworld. Makes us look like
amateurs. What do you call 'im?

SOAP
The Punisher.

Soap and J. Cop 1 stop at the steps. On the door handles sit two flares. Soap puts down his coffee, pockets one flare, and takes the other.

J. Cop 1 readies to draw. Soap activates the flare and opens the door.

INT. MANSION FOYER - NIGHT

A row of chairs stand before a Christmas tree. CHILDREN and MAIDS sit bound and wrapped in blankets. Soap drops the flare and checks the pulse of CHILD.

SOAP
Radio for medical.

J. COP 1
You got it.

J. Cop 1 calls to his people. A few come in.

J. COP 2
Survivors?

J. COP 3
That's new.

Soap moves far right and sees a body on the floor behind the row. He walks round and activates the last flare. J. Cops look over and vomit. Soap rubs his eyes.

SOAP
Tell the EMTs to bring extra bags.
We're gonna be here all morning.

MAMA GNUCCI, 60, hangs by her wrists at the top bannister, her cheeks slashed, and jaw pulled down. Piled across the stairs and floor lay BODYGUARDS under her feet.

CUT TO BLACK

A deep, old voice speaks.

FRANK (V.O.)
They never tell you about the kid
that lost his legs to frostbite...
the Lieutenant that hung to death
in his parachute... or the two
friends flattened by a Panzer...

INT. HUEY - DAY

SUPER: 1968

The Huey flies over South Vietnam packed with MARINES in green uniforms.

FRANK CASTLE, 17, big for his age, holds an M16 and clenches a small Bible. He sits beside DOOR GUNNER with an M60.

FRANK (V.O.)

All they ever tell you is the good.

He looks at the Bible. A rubber band holds a Captain America trading card. He smiles.

FRANK (V.O.)

Only the good.

Frank puts the Bible in his flak jacket.

A round tears his helm strap. More pierce the floor and spark on the ceiling. Frank almost falls out before Gunner pulls him back.

Alarms go off. PILOTS struggle to keep flying.

PILOT 1

I'm putting her down!

PILOT 2

Mayday, Mayday, we are taking fire.
I say again, we are taking fire.
Bowling out of formation, over.

PAPA EAGLE (V.O.)

Copy, Yankee 4. Get to the LZ on
foot, o --

The chin-bubble at Pilots' feet bursts and the Huey dives. Corpses pour out. Frank hits the back wall. He grabs Gunner and pulls him in.

EXT. VIETNAM JUNGLE - DAY

The Huey falls through the canopy and stops short of the ground between two trees.

INT. HUEY - DAY

A few bodies remain. Frank lays on his back on the floor, Gunner on top. He nudges him awake.

FRANK
Hey? Hey, you okay, man?

Gunner winces.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Can you move?

Gunner tries to sit up.

GUNNER
I think my leg's broke --

Gunner's chest explodes. Frank reaches for the M60 and squeezes. He pauses and receives silence. Frank pushes Gunner off and looks for his dog-tags in a kneel.

INSERT - GUNNER'S DOG-TAG

It reads:

MACK, J.

BACK TO SCENE

Frank takes Mack's helm and sees a hole in his jacket. He takes out the Bible, the bullet caught in the pages and card intact. Frank pats him on the chest and takes a tag.

Static growls from the cockpit.

PAPA EAGLE (V.O.)
Yankee 4, Yankee 4, anyone alive,
over. Does anyone copy, over?

Frank steps in and grabs the bloody mic.

FRANK
This is Private Castle. Yankee 4's
down. I say again, we are down.

PAPA EAGLE (V.O.)
You the only one?

FRANK
Yes, sir, over.

PAPA EAGLE (V.O.)
Well, get y'r ass over here! We
need everyone we got!

FRANK
Yes, sir! I'm Oscar Mike!

Frank returns and takes Mack's M60 and ammo.

EXT. VIETNAM JUNGLE - DAY

Frank hops out and walks. Beside a tree saturated by bullets lays VC. Frank looks at the shredded meat, VC's eyes open.

They share a gaze.

FRANK (V.O.)
Only the good.

SONG: "Bad Vibrations" by The Black Angels

Frank starts in a run.

EXT. VIETNAM HILLTOP - DAY

Marines stand in trenches defending the hilltop, Frank behind the M60.

He sees a huddle of VC come up the far left. Frank charges to the flank, steps over the line, and sprays them. The ground gives way and he slides down on his back.

He kills more on the way and falls into the opposite trench. VC charge from both sides. Frank's weapon clicks empty and he draws his knife.

EXT. VIETNAM HILLTOP - DUSK

Hueys land and unload Marines. They pitch tents and place a sign that reads: CAMP VALLEY FORGE.

Some stand in formation, Frank in front. PAPA EAGLE, a cigar-chomping Major, pins a Silver Star to his jacket. Frank salutes and shakes his hand.

EXT. CAMP VALLEY FORGE - DAY

SUPER: 1969

The ground smolders, bodies everywhere. Hueys land with a crunch.

BILL, 22, steps off with Marines. Ahead stands a figure. Bill approaches and stops, his eyes wide.

Frank stands covered in blood, eyes red, and mouth agape. He holds a broken M16 caked in brain matter.

EXT. MARINE CAMP - DAY

Frank sits on the steps of an aid station. He looks older and smokes, body-bags lined up before him, his stare vacant.

From the side comes LT and AUSSIE in tiger-stripes. Frank salutes. LT introduces Aussie and they shake hands.

EXT. S.A.S.R. BASE - DAY

TRAINEES stand on a field under the Australian sun, Frank among them. They perform hand-to-hand exercises.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Frank sits on the side of a bed. HOOKER sleeps behind him. He holds a glass of whiskey in both hands, staring forward. He squeezes until the glass cracks.

EXT. VIETNAM JUNGLE - DAY

The jungle burns. Hueys fly overhead. Frank sprints with a smaller M60; a Chopped M60 (C-M60), in tiger-stripes and face paint among SOLDIERS in similar uniforms.

INT. INTEROGATION ROOM - ???

A lamp shines at NAKED VC hung by his ankles. CIA AGENT paces around. Frank lights a welding torch at the side.

EXT. POW CAMP - DAY

In a bamboo cage sit POWS. VC GUARD pisses on them before Frank comes up behind. He puts his hand over his mouth, stabs the neck, and pulls across.

EXT. BURNING VILLAGE - NIGHT

All but one hut burns. Frank comes out of the hut and stops.

SOLDIER lays on the ground with no head, his chest open like a mouth with ribs for teeth, an American flag on the sleeve. Frank stares blankly.

SONG ENDS

EXT. JFK PICK-UP LANE - DAY

SUPER: 1970

Frank wears Marine Class Bs with the rank of Sergeant and a duffle bag. He looks up the sidewalk and sees a cab.

GIOVANNI CASTLE, 47, leans against the cab with a newspaper in a 101st Airborne jacket. Frank walks up. The cabby tosses the paper into the car to embrace his son.

INT. TAXI CAB - DAY

Frank sits in the passenger seat. Giovanni drives.

FRANK

How's Ma?

GIOVANNI

Oh, y'know, herself. Might have a heart attack when we get home... Andy's been acting up in school.

FRANK

How so?

GIOVANNI

He whacked one of the Sisters.

FRANK

He killed a nun?

GIOVANNI

No! No. He took the yard stick and swung at her. Wasn't too bad.

Frank shakes his head.

FRANK

He knows to stand up for himself, but he shouldn't hit a woman, ever.

GIOVANNI

Seconds are always a little squirrely. I was third, so your brother is better off. Believe me.

FRANK

I'll talk to him; set him straight.

GIOVANNI

G'head. It'll save me and your mother cash to get him fixed.

EXT. PARENT'S HOUSE - DAY

Frank pulls his bag from the cab. Giovanni speaks through the passenger window.

GIOVANNI

I gotta get back on my shift. See y' tonight.

Frank waves and ascends the stoop. The door opens, KATRINA CASTLE, 42, behind it. She pulls Frank inside.

INT. P.H. FOYER - DAY

Katrina cries in Ukrainian. She pulls Frank down to kiss his face. He laughs.

FRANK

Okay, okay. Can you let me go, please?

She shouts upstairs with an accent.

KATRINA

Andrei! Come see your brother!

ANDREI CASTLE, 12, comes down and embraces Frank.

FRANK

Hey, little-guy.

INT. P.H. KITCHEN - DAY

Katrina scoops spaghetti and meatballs onto Frank's plate. He wolfs it down. Andrei sits opposite.

KATRINA

In Day School, you were punished by reading Torah on one foot. What do Catholics teach beating with rulers, the metric system?

FRANK

It's just how it is, Ma.

Katrina sits.

KATRINA

I don't like how it is! If those filthy poviyi beat him again I will shoot them!

FRANK

Andy just needs to shape up. Right?

Andrie crosses his arms.

ANDREI

I didn't do it. It was Tommy.

FRANK

Doesn't matter. You should've taken your beating like everyone one else.

KATRINA

But you were never beat, Francis. Ever.

Frank wipes his mouth.

FRANK

I know what'll fix him.

He stands.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Come upstairs.

Andrei follows.

INT. FRANK'S ROOM - DAY

Posters of Uncle Sam, Rosie the Riveter, and Captain America line the walls. Frank unloads his bag while Andrei sits on the bed with a sleeved comic book.

ANDREI

Where'd you get this?

FRANK

Dad used it to help me read. Know who that is?

ANDREI

Captain America.

FRANK

And what is he doing on the cover?

ANDREI

Beating up Hitler.

FRANK

Right. And he never once laid a
finger on any woman.

Frank sits beside him.

FRANK (CONT'D)

All he ever stood for was justice
and morality...

FLASHBACK - EXT. ARDENNES FOREST - DAY

Giovanni shivers in a fox hole behind an M1919, the ground
covered in snow with no visibility.

FRANK (V.O.)

It didn't matter what flag you
wore. He treated everyone equally.

Giovanni smacks ice loose in his canteen for a sip.

FRANK (V.O.)

He killed people like Mom and Dad,
but if he hadn't, the world would
be a whole lot different.

Footsteps approach. A hand in red reaches from the side. He
looks up and takes hold.

FRANK (V.O.)

A real hero uses his ability for
good, even at the cost of his soul.

CAPTAIN AMERICA lifts Giovanni out. They move to the rear as
3rd Army marches forward with tanks.

BACK TO SCENE

Frank holds the Bible and card.

FRANK

On my first mission, everyone died
around me. I survived because of
this. Know why?

ANDREI

The Bible's bulletproof?

Frank chuckles.

FRANK

I say I lived to see you again
because I believe in what Cap
stands for. A lot of bad happens in
the world, no matter who you are.
But as long as you stay good and
defend those who can't, you'll live
to keep living. Understand?

Andrei nods.

ANDREI

Does that make you a hero, Frankie?

Frank stares. He turns to the wall and freezes.

KATRINA (O.S.)

Francis! You have visitor!

Frank snaps back and turns to the door.

FRANK

Coming!

He stands.

FRANK (CONT'D)

When you're finished with that
issue, there's more in the closet.

ANDREI

Okay. Thanks.

INT. P.H. FOYER - DAY

Frank walks down and sees Soap beside his mother. He wears a
field jacket with jeans. Frank stops.

FRANK

What's up, Martin?

SOAP

'Ey, Frank! How's it hangin'?

The two meet at the foot of the stairs and embrace.

SOAP (CONT'D)

Oh man, I don't want my Army rags
getting your threads all messy.

FRANK

Don't worry about it, we get more
spares than you guys.

Soap chuckles and turns to Katrina.

SOAP

Ma'am, may I take your decorated child out for a quick bite?

Katrina smiles.

KATRINA

Have him back by five.

INT. HARLEM DINER - DAY

Soap has a burger and Frank a milk shake at a booth.

SOAP

You need to eat something, man.

FRANK

I had meatballs when I got home. Haven't had a shake in a while.

Soap nods.

SOAP

So you gonna get a job?

FRANK

I start at the end of the month.

SOAP

Oh yeah? Where at?

FRANK

Bragg.

Soap puts down his burger.

SOAP

Sending you back so soon?

FRANK

No, they want me training people.

Soap shakes his head.

SOAP

The Army, my Army, hired a leatherneck to train dough-boys?

Frank chuckles.

FRANK
Blame LBJ and Westmoreland.

SOAP
...That why they kept you over
there so long? Learned something to
teach the new kids?

FRANK
Pretty much.

They pause. Frank takes a sip of his shake.

SOAP
Sometimes I wanna go back. The more
I'm here, the more I wanna get back
in the grass, y'know?

Frank nods.

FRANK
The guys in my unit were like that
when they were home...

Soap sighs.

SOAP
I need a job to keep my mind off
something as dumb as that.

FRANK
I could talk to Dad. Plenty of room
for cabbies.

Soap smiles.

SOAP
That'd be great, man! Thank you so
much. I really appreciate it.

FRANK
You got it, brother. Wanna do it
full time?

SOAP
I was thinking I could work up
enough cash for the Police Academy.

Frank snickers.

FRANK
You wanna join the fuzz? Am I
hearing that right?

SOAP

I was a cop over there. Maybe I
wouldn't do too bad --

STUDENTS interrupt.

STUDENT 1

-- Why are you in here?

STUDENT 2

Baby killers!

STUDENT 3

You should be ashamed of
yourselves.

The diner goes quite. Frank stares at them at the bar
opposite the booth. Soap eats his burger.

SOAP

It's just talk, man. I hear it all
the time.

STUDENT 1

How can you wear that uniform?

Frank glances at Soap then Students. He takes his shake and
stands, eyes on the trio. He finishes, puts it down, and
takes up a butter knife

FRANK

I didn't kill babies... but I
killed a lot of kids like you and
me.

Soap looks at him. Frank shows them the knife.

FRANK (CONT'D)

It's nastier without an edge, but
when you have to save yourself, or
your friends, doesn't matter how
bloody you get.

Frank puts the knife back.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I was in a tunnel with no weapon or
light. All I could do was crawl...
Charlie stabbed me three times;
collapsed a lung and broke a rib.

Frank takes out his wallet.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 I couldn't see him, but I got on
 top and shoved his face into the
 dirt. He was shaking as he
 suffocated...

He lays a \$20 on the table and turns to Soap.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 Let's get outta here.

Soap nods.

SOAP
 Cool... cool.

They leave the diner in silence.

FRANK (V.O.)
 This world didn't want us anymore.
 All they wanted were their lies...

Student 2 faints.

FRANK (V.O.)
 ...They wanted to put a white wash
 over what we did. What we became.

EXT. FT. BRAGG OBSTACLE COURSE - DAWN

Frank and other INSTRUCTORS watch CANDIDATES run the course.
 They scream at them.

FRANK (V.O.)
 'Nam cost the whores and
 politicians 60,000 kids and the
 country's sanity.

EXT. FT. BRAGG MUD FIELD - NIGHT

Across a field of barb wire Candidates crawl Instructors
 shoot blanks by their ears. Frank dumps pig guts on them.

FRANK (V.O.)
 They used the best of us to clean
 up their mess. Grease the gears so
 the engine never stalled again.

EXT. FT. BRAGG TRAINING GROUND - DUSK

Candidates train with rubber knives in pairs. Frank watches from the side. He paces, eyes on CANDIDATE 1.

FRANK (V.O.)
Sometimes I wonder why I put up
with it all for so long.

Frank draws his knife and charges. Candidate 1 turns and engages. They have a short melee. Frank puts him on his back before Candidate 1 kicks him in the nose.

Candidate 1 brings him to the ground, takes the knife, and holds it to Frank's throat before Instructors pull him off. Frank stands, bloody faced, and gestures Instructors away.

Candidate 1 hands the knife back.

INSERT - CANDIDATE 1'S NAME TAPE

It reads:

FURY

BACK TO SCENE

EXT. FT. BRAGG GUN RANGE - DAY

Candidates train on the range. Instructors and Frank watch from the stands. He has a bandage on his nose.

INSTRUCTOR 1
I'm stayin' home with my beer.

INSTRUCTOR 2
Okay. What about you, Morton?

MORTON
Yeah sure I'll bite. I been waitin'
to use my eighty pounder.

INSTRUCTOR 3
A eighty pound bow? Damn, Will, you
one expensive son of a bitch.

MORTON
I got high standards.

INSTRUCTOR 2
How 'bout you Castle?

Frank looks over.

FRANK

Hmm?

INSTRUCTOR 2

We're going bow hunting on Saturday. Want in?

FRANK

...Don't we have PT?

MORTON

Sergeant Major gave us the day off.

FRANK

...Can I bring my rifle? Do I have to use a bow?

INSTRUCTOR 2

Now where's the fun in that? Ain't you gone bow hunting?

Frank shakes his head.

INSTRUCTOR 2 (CONT'D)

Wanna try?

FRANK

...I don't have a bow.

Instructor 2 gets up.

INSTRUCTOR 2

No need.

He hands Frank a piece of paper.

INSTRUCTOR 2 (CONT'D)

When we get off, head to "Quincy's Lodge" on Yadkin next to the hobby store, and pick up the stuff on that list.

INSERT - LIST

It reads:

CAMO JACKET, PANTS, ORANGE VEST, WOOL SOCKS

BACK TO SCENE

INT. QUINCY'S LODGE - DAY

Frank stands at a rack of jackets in woodland print.

???
Need some help, mister?

Frank turns to CLERK, 20, very short.

CLERK
Havin' trouble?

FRANK
Uh, yes, ma'am. I was invited on a hunting trip and this is my first... in a recreational sense.

Frank shows her the list.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Here's what I was told to get, but this is all pretty new to me.

Clerk takes it and turns to the rack.

CLERK
I reckon you're a large?

Frank snickers, but corrects himself.

FRANK
Yes- yes, ma'am.

Clerk walks around the rack.

CLERK
You're gonna want a thick jacket for the morning. If you got long-johns you can wear 'em underneath a thin jacket at half the price.

FRANK
Sounds good to me.

Clerk picks out a thin jacket. She carries it on her arm and leads Frank through the store. He starts to smile.

LATER

Clerk stands behind the cash register opposite Frank.

CLERK
Not much hunting where you're from?

FRANK
Not many animals.

CLERK
Oh? Where would that be?

FRANK
The Bronx, New York.

Clerk's eyes go wide.

CLERK
You're from New York City? I always
wanted to see the Statue of
Liberty. Is it beautiful?

FRANK
She sure is.

CLERK
Some friends of mine went up after
high school. I couldn't go 'cause
Daddy needed me to run the store.

FRANK
If you make it up, I wouldn't mind
giving you a tour.

She smiles and tries to hide her blush.

CLERK
What's it like living in a city?

FRANK
I'd tell you, ma'am, but you have
people waiting on you.

Frank gestures the line of customers at his rear.

CLERK
Oh gosh! I'm sorry y'all. Let me
get you on your way, sir.

FRANK
Call me Frank.

Clerk rings up his items. She takes a business card, circles
her name and number, and hands it to Frank with his change.

CLERK
Have a good day, Frank.

Frank smiles and makes his way out.

INSERT - BUSINESS CARD

It reads:

MARIA QUINCY

BACK TO SCENE

Frank looks back and Maria meets his gaze.

INT. SMOKE HOUSE - NIGHT

A jukebox plays COUNTRY. Maria and Frank sit in the back. He wears civilian clothes without a bandage.

FRANK

...Then she stepped across the checkpoint and an Army Chaplain married them right there.

MARIA

Did it cause a fuss with the Reds?

He shakes his head.

FRANK

Nobody wanted to start a war over a marriage. After that, Dad retired and brought Ma to the States.

MARIA

That's a sweet li'l story.

WAITER comes by to refill their drinks.

MARIA (CONT'D)

So, Castle doesn't sound so Italian for an Italian family.

FRANK

It used to be Castiglione.

MARIA

Quite a mouthful.

Frank chuckles.

FRANK

The recruitment officer thought the same and told Dad to make it easier to say.

MARIA

I think it fits.

FRANK

Thank you.

They share a silence as Maria takes a bite of her ribs.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Um, this is gonna sound strange,
but could we switch seats?

MARIA
Hmm? Sure.

They trade and pass their plates. Frank looks embarrassed.

FRANK
Sorry... That was --

Maria shakes her head.

MARIA
-- Oh, no. It's alright.

FRANK
I... I'm not comfortable when I
can't see the exit. I need to watch
in case something happens.

MARIA
I'm sure there's nothing to worry
about. Not much happens round here.

Frank looks uneasy. Maria pauses.

MARIA (CONT'D)
Daddy said the Japanese made him
sleep on a wooden bed. Sometimes,
when I go to wake him, he'll be on
the floor.

They share a silence.

MARIA (CONT'D)
I guess it's different for
everybody.

SONG: "Johnny Guitar" by Peggy Lee

Frank shuts his eyes and shakes his head.

FRANK
I'm sorry. This was a bad idea.

He stands and Maria takes his hand.

MARIA
Will you dance with me?

Maria pulls him to the gathered PATRONS.

She stands too short to hold him properly while Frank holds above her waist. He moves awkwardly and looks around before she holds him tighter.

He stays.

INT. FRANK'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Frank drives Maria on a backwoods road. She looks out the window, and glances at Frank. He smiles. They stop at her house. Frank keeps the car on.

MARIA

I had a really great time.

FRANK

I hope.

She chuckles.

MARIA

I did! Honest... Y'know, if you have anymore weekends, I'd like to spend more time with you, if you wouldn't mind sharing.

FRANK

I wouldn't mind.

MARIA

...Or if you just wanna call, I'm off at 9:00 Monday through Friday. We can talk, even about nothing.

Frank smiles.

FRANK

I think I'd like that.

Maria smiles.

MARIA

Well I aught to let you get back.

She shakes his hand.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Have a good night, Mister Castle.

FRANK

You too, ma'am.

Maria gets out. Frank stays until she's inside. Back on the road his smile remains.

INT. MARIA'S HOUSE - DAY

Frank sits in Class As with Maria's family on Thanksgiving. The two hold hands under the table. At the head sits ROYCE QUINCY, 50, with one arm.

Frank finishes his plate and takes it to the kitchen.

INT. MARIA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Frank washes his plate in the sink and doesn't see Royce stand in the threshold.

ROYCE

How many people have you killed?

Frank pauses then continues.

FRANK

51; my birth year.

Royce comes closer.

ROYCE

When MacArthur broke us out, I begged him to put me in the fight... The war ended too fast for me to get my fill of blood.

Royce stands beside Frank.

ROYCE (CONT'D)

Lisa, Maria's mother, couldn't handle what I brought home. I had to keep it all buried after she left. It's not a thing for a girl's eyes.

Frank shuts off the water and wipes the plate.

FRANK

She... calms me. Everything I am disappears when I'm around her.

He puts it on the drying rack and faces Royce.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Last week I put my 1911 in my mouth. Then Maria called about today and I forgot all about it.

They share the silence before Maria walks in with dishes.

MARIA

Puttin' him to work, Daddy?

Royce turns and smiles before Frank takes the dishes.

ROYCE

Oh he put himself to work. A real hard-charger.

MARIA

Uncle Jesse's about to play the piano. They're asking for your voice.

ROYCE

Lead the way, honey.

The two walk out.

EXT. LAKE SIDE - DAY

SUPER: 1972

Frank and Maria get married. He wears Dress Blues with the rank of Staff Sergeant. On Maria's side of the audience sit WW2 VETS opposite silk suited ITALIANS and UKRAINIANS.

When Frank and Maria kiss, the audience claps.

UKRAINIANS

Mazel tov!

SONG ENDS

EXT. MARIA'S HOUSE BACKYARD - DAY

Frank and Maria sit at a table with MAIDS and BEST MEN including Andrei and Soap in a police uniform.

GUESTS form a line with gifts. OLD MAN stands in front flanked by two GANGSTERS. Old Man hands Maria an envelop. He speaks with a Russia accent.

OLD MAN

For children's education.

MARIA
Thank you so much.

Old Man smiles and walks on. Frank opens the envelop to a stack of \$100s. He leans to Andrei.

FRANK
Who is that guy?

ANDREI
Which one?

FRANK
Zoot suit with the tough guys.

ANDREI
That's Uncle Piotr from Ma's side.

Frank looks at PIOTR, 62, among the Guests.

ANDREI (CONT'D)
He stayed with us when he got out of Russia. I was... 5? He runs a restaurant in Brighton.

Frank shows him the money.

FRANK
He makes this at a restaurant --

SOAP
-- And from most if the dope in Brooklyn.

Frank and Andrei look at him. Soap avoids eye-contact and downs more champagne.

SOAP (CONT'D)
Just letting you know.

FRANK
...He's a friggin' mobster?

ANDREI
I thought you knew?

FRANK
I do now.

He turns to Soap.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Are you cool with some wiseguy out in the open, 'cause I'm not.

ANDREI

Frankie --

SOAP

-- Unless he's hustling behind a bush, I can't do a thing. And it's your wedding. Don't worry about him.

ANDREI

Yeah, and he's a nice guy. He gave me a job and he's good to the family.

Frank stares at Andrei.

FRANK

(Ukrainian)
You work for him?

ANDREI

Yeah --

FRANK

(Ukrainian)
-- You wash his dishes and pull hits on the side?

ANDREI

No, I --

FRANK

(Ukrainian)
-- The fuck are you doing around a low life --

MARIA

-- I didn't know you spoke another language, honey.

Frank forces a smile.

FRANK

Uh, yeah. Ma taught us when we were young.

MARIA

Is it Ukrainian?

ANDREI

Mm-hm.

FRANK

Maybe I could teach our kids.

Maria smiles.

MARIA

Give it some time; we'll get there.

She kisses him. Frank and Andrei go silent.

FRANK (V.O.)

I should've been there to keep you
away from him... You would've
fallen so far.

SONG: "Swingin' Party" by Lorde.

MONTAGE - VARIOUS

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Frank drives Maria in a rental Cadillac with the top down.

EXT. MIAMI BEACH - DUSK

Frank and Maria hold hands as they walk. They wear tacky
floral shirts and have dinner at an outdoor bar.

EXT. HOTEL BALCONY - DAWN

Maria stands in a robe, her hair a mess. Frank comes from
behind. The pair watch the sun crest the horizon before he
pulls her inside.

INT. DELIVERY ROOM - NIGHT

SUPER: 1975

Frank kneels by Maria. DOCTORS extract a boy and girl. They
are cleaned, swaddled and handed to Maria.

MARIA

What do you think?

Frank gestures the girl.

FRANK

Mary?

MARIA

How 'bout Lisa Mary, after my
mother?

FRANK
I like it.

MARIA
And him?

FRANK
...Franklin Royce?

Maria smiles.

MARIA
I love it.

FRANK
I love you.

They kiss.

INT. FT. BRAGG BEDROOM - NIGHT

Frank holds the twins as Maria sleeps. He rocks them to sleep, humming the "Marine Corps Hymn".

INT. FT. BRAGG AUDITORIUM - DAY

SUPER: 1984

Frank, the rank of Master Sergeant, receives a plaque at a retirement ceremony. Maria, LISA, 9, FRANKLIN, 9, sit in the audience.

FRANK (V.O.)
Lisa would be in college...
Franklin, despite what I'd tell
him, would enlist, maybe shoot for
the brass.

Later the family takes a picture together.

EXT. FT. BRAGG HOUSE - DAY

A moving truck sits on the curb. Maria, Lisa, and Franklin carry luggage into Frank's truck, dressed for winter.

FRANK (V.O.)
I should've stayed after Grenada
and died in Kuwait or some Balkan
shit-hole... The three of you would
be safe and sound.

Frank, in a black jacket, gives one more glance to the house.

FRANK (V.O.)
Why wasn't I as strong as you,
baby?

He gets into the truck and drives off.

SONG ENDS

END OF MONTAGE

INT. P.H. FOYER - DAY

Giovanni, Katrina, and Andrei welcome the family. Katrina hugs the twins.

KATRINA
Hello, dity! I'm so happy you're
here!

MARIA
Save some for Papa, y'all.

Andrei gives Frank a hug. He wears a black suit with a white shirt, the top buttons open, and tattoos on his fingers.

ANDREI
Wanna drink?

FRANK
Yeah sure.

INT. P.H. KITCHEN - DAY

Andrei digs through the fridge.

ANDREI
You guys find a place?

FRANK
3 bed, 2 bath in Queens.

ANDREI
Nice. Beer?

FRANK
OJ.

ANDREI
You got it.

Andrei takes out a bottle and hands Frank a carton. He takes it to the counter and gets a glass.

ANDREI (CONT'D)

Y'know, if you have any problems with the HOA, I know some guys.

Frank snickers as he pours the glass.

FRANK

Really? You know some guys?

ANDREI

Well I do!

Frank puts the cap on the juice.

FRANK

You gonna tell 'em to put a horse head in my neighbor's bed? C'mon, Andy.

ANDREI

These days people do anything to get money, like stealing from Vets... A lot has changed.

Frank eyes him and takes a sip.

FRANK

Sure has.

Andrei rolls his eyes

FRANK (CONT'D)

...The world moves too fast for morality. I just don't want you doing the worst kind of shit. And I don't want it around Ma, Dad, or my family... ever.

Andrei nods.

ANDREI

I know how it looks, but it's survival, Frankie. Out there, you gotta do what you can to stay outta the gutter. And I don't do anything bad. I drive Piotr and work at the restaurant. I do it to stay alive, like any ol' schmuck.

Andrei puts down his beer.

ANDREI (CONT'D)

Life ain't a friggin' comic book.
You can't dress up and start
punching guys. They'd throw you in
the nut house. In the real world,
all you can do is work around the
hard stuff. You guys in 'Nam
wouldn't be here if you hadn't.
Ain't an ounce of morality in it.

Andrei makes his way out and turns back.

ANDREI (CONT'D)

I know you don't like him, but
Piotr would like to have dinner
with the family.

Frank stares back.

ANDREI (CONT'D)

He just wants to see the kids. It's
harmless... I'll talk to you about
it later.

Andrei leaves. Frank pours his glass down the sink.

INT. VOLGA LOUNGE FRONT - NIGHT

Mahogany chairs and red tables wreak imperial, with gold
against crimson, black leather, and a floral carpet, full of
dog-faced EUROPEANS in suits and furs.

Frank and the family descend into the basement lounge. Behind
a podium stands HOSTESS. She speaks with a Czech accent.

HOSTESS

Castle?

FRANK

Yes, ma'am.

Hostess picks up four menus.

HOSTESS

Follow me, please.

She turns and stops before IVAN, 38, in the threshold. He
dwarfs Frank, with a blonde flat-top, and black coat over a
blue/white stripe shirt. Ivan takes the menus.

He speaks with a Russian accent.

IVAN
Follow, please.

INT. V.L. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Frank and Maria hold the twins' hands.

MARIA
Everyone's looking at us.

LISA
It's so fancy down here.

FRANKLIN
Do you know these people, Dad?

FRANK
Just one, little-man.

In a booth sits Piotr with Andrei. Andrei helps Piotr as Ivan comes to his side.

PIOTR
Francis! It has been too long.

He walks on his own to Maria and kisses her hand.

PIOTR (CONT'D)
You have not aged a day, dorogoy.

MARIA
Thank you, Uncle.

Piotr looks at the children.

PIOTR
So these are the twins. Do you know
your dyadya?

They hold close to their parents and Piotr laughs.

PIOTR (CONT'D)
Come sit, you must be starving!

Piotr walks into the booth followed by the family. Andrei and Ivan remain outside.

ANDREI
So what do you guys want to drink?

PIOTR
(Russian)
No, no, Andrei. Sit.

ANDREI

Sure thing.

PIOTR

(Russian)

Ivan, take a break. Be back in two hours.

IVAN

(Russian)

Are you sure, Papa?

PIOTR

(Russian)

Find a girl and stay away from vodka.

Ivan inclines his head.

IVAN

(Russian)

Thank you, Papa.

He walks away.

PIOTR

He is good boy. Soldier like you and I, Francis. Fought for Czarist shlyukhi in Afghanistan.

FRANK

No disrespect, Uncle, but could you not talk like that around our kids?

PIOTR

I apologize. I will watch mouth... Do you like table? Shall we move?

MARIA

I think we're fine, right honey?

Frank nods.

LISA

Why do you sound like Gran?

Piotr looks puzzled.

FRANK

She's asking why do you sound like Katrina.

PIOTR

I am from Ukraine, but I lived in Russia.

ANDREI

Uncle Piotr fought in WW2 like Gran and Papa. He came to America when me and your dad were little.

FRANKLIN

Dad says people in Russia are bad.

Piotr bursts out laughing.

PIOTR

Your father is correct. But I, mal'chik, am good, like your Gran. Here in city, we are good people.

FRANK

That's right, little-man. Our family came to America for a better life and we got it by being good. Right, Andy?

Andrei forces a smile.

ANDREI

Yeah... that's right.

WAITRESS comes to take their drink orders.

INT. NEW HOUSE - DAY

Unpacked boxes and furniture sit everywhere in stacks.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Frank and Franklin carry a green box and lay it on the floor.

FRANK

Good work. Let's load up the bookcase.

Franklin opens the box.

FRANKLIN

What's this?

He turns and Franklin holds the C-M60 barrel. Frank walks over and kneels.

FRANK

It's called a light machine gun. It belonged to a guy named Mack. He saved my life.

Frank turns the receiver feed-tray up. He gestures the dog-tag welded over the "Stark Industries" stamp.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I put that there to remind me everyday where I got this weapon.

FRANKLIN

It's pretty heavy for something called light.

Frank chuckles.

FRANK

Carry it around for a while and it doesn't feel so heavy.

FRANKLIN

When did you carry it?

Frank takes the barrel in one hand.

FRANK

Before I met your mother. It kept me alive long enough to marry her and to put it away.

FRANKLIN

Can I shoot it?

Frank puts it in the box.

FRANK

Maybe when you're older and as big as Rambo.

He stands.

FRANKLIN

Could you beat up Rambo, Dad?

FRANK

Wouldn't that be something. Now come help me load the bookcase.

FRANKLIN

Yes, sir.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The family eats breakfast. The twins wear Catholic school uniforms. Franklin pulls at the collar of the sweater vest.

FRANKLIN
I hate this thing.

LISA
It's not so bad.

FRANK
I didn't like it either. Nobody likes their uniform at first.

MARIA
That's right.

FRANK
It'll grow on you.

FRANKLIN
Yes, sir.

Frank wipes his mouth and stands.

FRANK
If you two behave yourselves at school...

He goes to the counter and returns with the sleeved Captain America comic. He hands it to Lisa.

FRANK (CONT'D)
...I'll let you read this.

She passes it to Franklin.

LISA
Aren't comic books for boys?

FRANK
They don't have to be. You guys like Star Wars, right?

Yes!

FRANKLIN

Yes!

LISA

FRANK (CONT'D)
That was made for boys, but you like it. Understand?

LISA
Yes, sir.

FRANK
If you want to watch or read
something --

MARIA
-- As long as me and your Dad see
it first --

FRANK
-- Have at it, sweetheart. That
goes for you too.

FRANKLIN
Yes, sir. Yes, sir. LISA

Frank finishes and goes to the sink.

FRANKLIN
What are you gonna do while we're
at school, Dad?

FRANK
I taking a gunsmithing class.

LISA
Do you get to make guns?

FRANK
Yes, ma'am, and ammo. I did some in
Vietnam.

LISA
What about you, Mom?

MARIA
I was gonna stay here and relax
before it was time to pick y'all
up. It's gonna be fun.

FRANKLIN
Why can't I do nothing? Why do I
have to go to school in these itchy
clothes?

MARIA
It's a part of growing up.

FRANKLIN
Well I wanna grow up faster so I
don't have to go to school.

Frank turns off the sink and comes up behind Maria.

FRANK

Me and your mother had to work hard
so we could relax as adults. Enjoy
being a kid and the time you have.

FRANKLIN

Yes, sir.

MARIA

Yes, sir.

Frank kisses Maria.

CUT TO BLACK

SUPER: 1985

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Frank, Maria, and the twins, walk together. Frank holds a
cooler and blanket. Franklin points to a treeless field.

FRANKLIN

How about there?

LISA

Let's go somewhere close to the
water. I wanna feed the ducks.

MARIA

The ducks aren't going anywhere.

They come by a hotdog stand and find Piotr with Andrei and
Ivan.

ANDREI

'Ey! What's up?

FRANKLIN

Hi, Uncle Andy!

LISA

Hi, Uncle Andy!

PIOTR

Come to enjoy sunshine?

MARIA

Yes, sir, indeed. We need a good
long bask after that winter.

PIOTR

Better than Siberian winter, eh
Ivan?

IVAN

Da, Papa.

LATER

A fog congests the area when Frank wakes up and walks home. The ringing dissipates.

EXT. NEW HOUSE - DAY

Frank ascends the stoop. A newspaper sits on the doormat.

INSERT - NEWSPAPER

The headline reads:

PARK MASSACRE SUSPECT STILL AT LARGE

BACK TO SCENE

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Frank opens a footlocker at the foot of the bed and pulls an old bottle of whiskey. He sits on the floor and opens it. Frank stops and stares at it with vacant eyes.

LATER

Whiskey covers the opposite wall. The TV lays on its side smashed in. Bloody holes dot the walls. The bookcase stands ripped apart. The night stands and lamps lay stomped apart.

Frank sits on the floor, the seams of his suit open. Blood pours from his forehead. He breathes heavy. He calms, shuts his eyes, and puts his M1911 in his mouth.

Seconds go by. Tears roll down his cheeks. He pulls the gun and cries in silence. He wipes his face and stands.

INT. MASTER BATHROOM - DAY

The mirror lies in pieces and the toilet caved in. Frank takes a large shard of mirror and turns on the sink. He wipes his cheeks and pauses.

INSERT: MIRROR SHARD

Reflected in the mirror burns a wall of fire.

BACK TO SCENE

A young Frank flashes in the fire. Frank winces. He stares on before another flash. A scream grows in volume. Frank's hand shakes and bleeds around the shard before...

FLASHBACK - EXT. BURNING VILLAGE - NIGHT

Frank stands in the threshold of the hut. VC WOMAN screams on the floor with Soldier on top. They turn to Frank.

SOLDIER
Come to watch, Castle?

Soldier stands. Woman scurries away.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)
You want some? I was here first, so
you go last.

Soldier chuckles and pulls up his pants.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)
Oh, I see. "Corporal America"
disapproves.

He approaches Frank.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)
These whores send their kids to
blow up our boys. Believe me, she
has it coming. Don't sweat it.

Soldier pats Frank on the shoulder. Frank drops the C-M60, grabs his wrist, and twists his arm. Soldier shouts and comes in for a punch.

Frank ducks, pulls the arm round, and puts Soldier on his knees. Frank pulls a grenade, smashes Soldier's teeth, and shoves it into his mouth. He stands him up.

FRANK
Believe me, you have it coming.

Frank pulls the pin and kicks Soldier into the open. He tries to pull the grenade out. It goes off and...

BACK TO SCENE

The shard breaks. Frank opens his hand. He stares for a moment, then makes a fist. Blood seeps between his fingers.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Ivan and GANGSTER 1 stand beside a recovery room door. Frank comes down the hall, hands and face in bandages. NURSE pesters him until he reaches Ivan.

FRANK

He awake?

Ivan nods but Gangster 1 blocks the door.

GANGSTER 1

I must search --

IVAN

(Russian)

-- He is family. Let him go.

Gangster 1 returns to his post.

INT. RECOVERY ROOM - DAY

Piotr reads a book in bed. He sees Frank and the book falls. His eyes turn red. Frank comes to his side.

PIOTR

It should have been me! No children should die for vor like me.

He grabs Frank's arm.

PIOTR (CONT'D)

I swear to God, I will make those grease ball mother-fuckers pay!

Piotr coughs and lets go. Frank waits for him to stop.

FRANK

You should die. I wanna bury my knife so deep in your head it would take a crowbar to extract. It'll make me feel better.

Frank leans closer.

FRANK (CONT'D)

But as it stands, you seem to know something I don't.

He backs away.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Who killed my family?

PIOTR

The Gnuccis. Sicilians. They've been trying to push us out for years. The killing was hit for me.

FRANK
I want a name.

PIOTR
I don't know name of second
shooter.

Frank reaches left behind his back and grips the hilt of his
knife, strapped horizontally on his belt.

FRANK
Who would?

PIOTR
The police know things, but Gnuccis
keep them quiet.

Frank lets go. He pauses, then nods.

FRANK
Get well, uncle.

He heads for the door.

PIOTR
I know what you want, Francis. I
had same look after Stalin threw my
comrades in prison. I beg you,
leave Gnucci's to me. Now is time
to greave.

Frank doesn't look back.

FRANK
I am grieving.

INT. SOAP'S APT. HALL - NIGHT

Frank knocks on the door. It opens to Soap. A baby cries in
the background.

SOAP
Hey, man. What happened to your
face --

FRANK
-- I need to talk to you.

SOAP
Uh, sure.

Soap steps out.

SOAP (CONT'D)

What's up?

Frank paces before him.

FRANK

...Do the Gnuccis own the cops?

Soap looks down the hall with wide eyes.

SOAP

Frank --

Frank comes closer.

FRANK

-- You know who did it, what he looks like, and you're not doing a goddamn thing about it.

SOAP

Wait a minute --

Frank's eyes go red.

FRANK'S

-- What happened to you? Did you crack after Nam or did they give you enough cash to look the other way? What do you think those boys on that Wall would say --

SOAP

-- You hold on a goddamn second. I feed my family just like any other bastard and those kids got nothing to do with it.

FRANK

They're not so fuckin' weak they'd let a murderer walk the streets!

SOAP

I'm not weak! I got old and the world changed. Everything I was is in that jungle. I left it behind because I wanted to be a normal man in a normal world --

FRANK

-- Children aren't slaughtered in parks in a normal world!

SOAP

Yeah they are Frank! Some of the worst shit I've seen happens right here! The world isn't simple, but you can't see that because you're still in that jungle! Why can't you turn it off?

FRANK

Because they turned it back on!

Soap pauses. Tears stream down Frank's face.

FRANK (CONT'D)

They were a part of us. Maria was cut open to get 'em out... And they were perfect, no matter how hard it got... They were 10 years old.

He wipes his face.

FRANK (CONT'D)

If you won't help me, then fuck you, Martin, and fuck your world.

He starts down the hall.

SOAP

Frank?

He turns.

SOAP (CONT'D)

"Anthony's Pizzeria" on Morris. There's... there's a busboy named Billy. Cooks call him The Beaut.

Frank stares at Soap and walks on.

INT. KITCHEN - DUSK

A bag, balaclava with two eyes, flight gloves, and duck tape sit on the table. Frank cleans his 1911 with no bandages.

He assembles the pistol, screws on a suppressor, and puts it in the bag. He loads the rest, but stops at the balaclava, and stares at its face.

FRANK (V.O.)

Cap wore the flag as a symbol of justice and morality. He had a reason... What's my symbol? What's my reason? I just kill people.

Frank opens a cabinet for a bottle of white paint.

INT. FRANK'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Frank sits opposite the pizzeria. His jacket covers a portion of the window. He scrolls in a notebook descriptions of the WISEGUYS inside.

BILLY, 23, a handsome greaser, exits down the sidewalk to the left. Frank gets out.

EXT. BRONX - NIGHT

Frank tails Billy. Three blocks later he heads into an apartment. Frank crosses just in time to see him climb the stairs.

INT. BRONX APARTMENT - NIGHT

Frank comes to the 4th floor and sees Billy enter a room.

INT. BILLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Billy stares through the peephole on his door with a sawed-off shotgun. The TV plays in the background.

CHINO, revolver in a shoulder holster, sits on the couch. A bag of cocaine and money sit on a coffee table.

CHINO
S'got you on edge?

BILLY
I was followed.

CHINO
Yeah? By who?

BILLY
I don't friggin' know. Some huge
guy. I think he's inside.

CHINO
Well lock the door and keep the
scatter gun close. If all else
fails, you got me, m'kay?

Billy locks the door and walks to the living room, sweat on his forehead. He sits beside Chino.

BILLY
Vicky in bed?

CHINO
Yep. G'head and join her. I'll hold
down the fort.

BILLY
Fuck that. I'm staying up.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Frank digs through a dumpster for a pizza box. Beside it
sleeps BUM with a Red Sox cap. Frank pokes him with his foot.

FRANK
Wake up, old-timer.

Bum awakens and Frank shows him a \$10.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Nice hat.

INT. APT. 4TH FLOOR - NIGHT

Frank stops before the hall and kneels. He puts the box on
the floor, the tape, gloves, pistol, and hat inside.

He puts on the gloves, looks at the Sox cap with disdain, and
puts it on. Frank holds his pistol sideways in his right and
places the box on top.

INT. BILLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Billy paces with the shotgun.

CHINO
Wanna hit?

BILLY
I'll only crash faster. Need to
keep moving.

CHINO
Billy, you got work t'morrow. Leave
the gun and go to bed.

BILLY
Someone's out there. I saw him.

CHINO

I know, but do me a favor and put
the shooter down before --

Billy aims at the door after a loud rap. Then another.

BILLY

Who's 'at?

Frank speaks with a terrible Boston accent.

FRANK (O.S.)

Cha'lie from Ant'ny's. Got a pie
for y'.

Billy approaches the door.

BILLY

Tony don't make deliveries.

FRANK (O.S.)

Just sta'ted t'night; calls it a
trial run. It's on the house.

Billy stands inches away.

BILLY

Where you from, kid?

FRANK (O.S.)

Cha'lestown and I ain't no kid,
friend. Y'want this while it's hot?

Billy looks out.

BILLY

Little late for making pizza...

FRANK (O.S.)

You're telling me, pal. I just work
here.

Billy stares and puts down the gun.

BILLY

Let me get you a tip.

FRANK (O.S.)

Much obliged.

INT. APT. 4TH FLOOR - NIGHT

The locks click and the door opens.

BILLY

Be sure to thank Tony f --

Frank grabs his hair and pulls Billy out. He hits the wall and drops unconscious. The pizza box falls and Frank moves in, pistol forward.

INT. BILLY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Chino throws his hands up. Frank moves closer and speaks in his normal accent.

FRANK

Who else is in the apartment?

Chino remains silent. Frank thumbs the hammer.

CHINO

V- Vicky, Billy's girlfriend inna bedroom. That's it.

FRANK

...You work for the Gnuccis?

CHINO

They pay me to look after 'im. Billy ain't too bright.

FRANK

What's he to them?

Chino cracks a smile.

CHINO

Family. You got a family, big guy?

Frank takes off the cap and puts it on Chino.

FRANK

I did.

He presses the muzzle on the white B and Chino's brains paint the back wall.

Frank moves to leave when he sees the shotgun. He walks to the side kitchen, takes a paper bag, and loads the gun, Chino's revolver, holster, wallet, and the money.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - NIGHT

Water drips echo with a deep hum of the subway in the dark. Billy wakes taped to a chair in his boxers. He shouts for help and winces at the pain of his broken nose.

BILLY

Oh fuck. Oh fuck. Oh fuck --

A flare hisses and reveals Frank. He wears the balaclava, painted with a white skull with long teeth, and latex gloves.

Billy shudders. Frank tosses the flare to the side.

FRANK

What are you to the Gnuccis?

BILLY

W- what?

Frank draws his knife.

FRANK

Are you a cousin? Nephew? Bastard?
Why are you so important you need a
bodyguard?

BILLY

I'm- I'm George Nero's son, Mama's
cousin.

FRANK

Mama?

BILLY

The Godmother; she runs the family.

Frank paces round him.

FRANK

What do you do for the family?

BILLY

Bus tables.

FRANK

And?

BILLY

Small time; deliveries and escorts.

FRANK

Narcotics?

BILLY

All I know is how it tastes. I don't know a thing about the operation. I swear.

FRANK

But you know addresses and people.

Frank stops in front.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I want those addresses and names with descriptions of what they look like. Be thorough and I'll let you go mostly intact.

Billy's panic turns tough.

BILLY

You with the Reds? IRA? Trying to move in on us, you fuzzy foreigner? Well, fuck you! You don't know what you started taking me, pal! You and the rest of the leprechauns are --

Frank sticks his face closer and Billy shudders.

FRANK

-- A lot of people are gonna die. But for me, no matter what I'm about to take, no matter how angry Mama gets, I don't give a damn about wiseguys killing wiseguys.

The flare goes out. Frank lights another.

SONG: "Here's to You" Joan Baez

FRANK (CONT'D)

Just so you know...

Frank tosses it and walks into the dark opposite Billy.

FRANK (CONT'D)

..You'll keep all your fingers and toes...

Frank drags a table forward. A turned-down framed photo, toilet paper, and a tray with a straight razor, box-cutter, scalpel, and syringe sit on top.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 ...And I don't feel like digging
 through your boxers for the family
 jewels.

Frank turns up the photo and faces Billy.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 They call you The Beaut?... I
 wonder what they'll call you when I
 let you out.

Frank turns back and steps to the side. Billy sees the
 picture and his eyes go wide. Tears stream down his face.

The retirement photo stares back with a happy family.

BILLY
 Oh God... Oh my fucking God! I
 didn't mean to! It was supposed to
 be the fat man and his boys!

Frank approaches with the box cutter.

BILLY (CONT'D)
 Mister Castle, I'll tell you
 everything! My father's a City
 Councilman! We cut coke at a
 butchers in Yonkers! We have
 suppliers in Tampa and Miami! Our
 guy's name is Barracuda!

Frank moves behind. Billy struggles to get free.

BILLY (CONT'D)
 Kill me! Please! Fucking kill me!
 I'll tell you everything! Don't cut
 me! I'm begging you! KILL ME!

Frank grabs him by the nose and cuts. Billy screams. Frank
 discards it and moves back to the table. Billy cries.

BILLY (CONT'D)
 I'm sorry... I'm sorry... I'm
 sorry... I'm sorry...

Frank wipes the blade with the toilet paper and comes back.

FRANK
 Addresses. Names. Descriptions.
 Talk smart or I'll take something
 you can't easily replace.

He pauses then nods.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Skin graphs it is.

Frank pinches his cheek.

EXT. POLICE PRECINCT - DAWN

SONG ENDS

Soap walks to the precinct. Next to the stoop sits a trash bag. He stops and shakes his head.

SOAP
Lazy sons of bitches...

He pulls the bag. It shifts and Soap jumps. He rips it open. Billy sits bound, his face skinned, and ID stapled to his forehead.

INT. ER HALLWAY - DAY

Soap wrings his hands. CHIEF SCHROEDER and a pair of Cops approach. Schroeder looks anxious.

SOAP
He's in recovery. His girlfriend called in a body and a possible break-in.

Schroeder sighs.

SCHROEDER
Christ almighty... Has he talked?

SOAP
Frank Castle.

Schroeder goes pale.

SCHROEDER
Oh. Who d'thunk it?

Schroeder wipes his brow.

SCHROEDER (CONT'D)
If this were a different city he'd be corn-holed at Riker's day one. Either we get Castle off the streets, or George Nero --

NERO
-- Schroeder, you fat-fuck!

Soap and Schroeder turn. GEORGE NERO and Wiseguys approach.

SCHROEDER
Mister Nero --

NERO
-- I don't wanna hear nothing
unless it's a name!

SCHROEDER
We do, sir --

NERO
-- Name, chubbkins!

Schroeder glances at Soap. Nero points a finger.

NERO (CONT'D)
Do you know?

Schroeder puts his hand on Nero.

SCHROEDER
Sir, please --

Nero pushes him against the wall. Wiseguys subdue Cops.

SOAP
Frank Castle! It was Frank Castle!

Nero releases Schroeder.

NERO
Can I get an address with that?

EXT. NEW HOUSE - DAY

A Rolls-Royce pulls up. Nero and more Wiseguys pour out with pistols and Uzis. Nero kicks door.

INT. NEW HOUSE - DAY

Wiseguys search a barren house.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Nero finds the kitchen empty, save for a table. Nero opens the fridge to bare shelves. WISEGUY 1 comes in.

WISEGUY 1

The whole place is cleared out.
Bedroom upstairs is thrashed.

Nero nods.

NERO

So he fucked off before we had the
chance...

He kicks in the bottom cabinets.

NERO (CONT'D)

Shit! Fuck! Fuck! Shit...

He wails on the kitchen a bit longer and stops.

WISEGUY 1

What should we do, boss?

INT. SOAP'S CADILLAC - DAY

Soap sits down the street, eyes on the house to the left. He
watches Nero and Wiseguys step out.

EXT. NEW HOUSE - DAY

NERO

Find his parents and get some idea
of where he could be.

WISEGUY 1

I know a guy in the Reds that knows
a guy named Castle. Messing with
his folks might stir up trouble.

They stop on the sidewalk.

NERO

I'm not telling you to take
fingers. Just ask 'em about their
kid. And I want you to ask this guy
of yours, capisce?

WISEGUY 1

You got it, boss.

Wiseguys 1's head explodes. Nero falls back, his face
splattered in brain matter.

NERO

Fuckin'-shit!

Wiseguys form around him and shoot in all directions. Another round kills a Wiseguy and wounds WISEGUY 2. Nero and the others pile into the car and drive off.

Soap darts across and attends Wiseguy 2.

SOAP

You're okay, man. I got you.

He pulls a radio before two muffled shots kill Wiseguy 2. Soap jumps back.

Frank comes up with sup-1911 drawn. He wears BDU pants, boots, black shirt, flight gloves, mask, a holster on his hip, and an M700 rifle on his back.

SOAP (CONT'D)

JESUS CHRIST! Why'd you do that!

FRANK

He was moving.

Frank loots the corpses for wallets, guns, and ammo. Soap draws his pistol and Frank shoots it out of his hand.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I'm not the enemy, Martin. Pass that on to your CO.

SOAP

Frank, you got your revenge and made Billy suffer. It's time to stop. Don't be stupid.

FRANK

I'll let you know when it's time to stop.

Frank slings the Uzis on his shoulder.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Keep your cops away from the Gnucis. Don't want any collateral.

Frank sprints away. Sirens blare in the distance.

LATER

Cops examine the scene. Soap sits on the stoop. Schroeder paces before him.

SCHROEDER

I want you working this. You grew up with him and know what he's capable of. I want a profile and service record next Friday.

SOAP

...I'm going to need something to help the investigation.

Schroeder stops.

SCHROEDER

Like what?

SOAP

An office goes without saying, but...

Soap stands and comes closer. He whispers.

SOAP (CONT'D)

...I'm gonna need a list of family and associates of George Nero.

Schroeder goes pale.

SCHROEDER

My desk before you go home tonight.

Soap nods.

SOAP

Thank you, sir.

INT. SOAP'S APT. HALL - NIGHT

Soap carries a suitcase. He opens the door and his wife, NIKA, sits in the kitchen with their son MAX. Frank feeds the baby a diced pizza. Soap freezes.

NIKA

Hey, honey! Frank showed up looking for you. I gave him a bit of dinner while he waited.

FRANK

Best pizza this side of Harlem.

Nika smiles.

NIKA

Oh, I don't know about that.

Frank stands.

FRANK

Well, I'm gonna settle my business
with Martin. Good night, ma'am.

He pats Max on the head.

FRANK (CONT'D)

You too, little-man.

Frank steps into the hall. His face reverts to neutrality.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I forgot to mention: if I see
Wiseguys at my parent's house,
you're going to find more bags.

SOAP

I already sent a unit to watch 'em.
We had Andy surveilled since the
shooting so he's fine.

Frank unzips his jacket, pulls an envelop, and passes it to Soap.

FRANK

The furniture's in storage at
Bellerose. The address and key are
in there.

SOAP

What is this?

FRANK

My house. Might have to remodel the
master bed and bath, but I'll help
you in due time.

Frank starts on his departure.

SOAP

Hold up.

He turns and Soap presents the suitcase.

SOAP (CONT'D)

Every snitch, package boy, soldier,
lawyer, and relation to George
Nero. Bring it back by 0430.

Frank takes the suitcase.

FRANK

I owe you.

SOAP

I want you to stop, but I don't
wanna kill you... Just try to keep
it clean.

FRANK

It's not supposed to be clean. And
when the bodies pile up, I want you
to know it's not your fault. This
war's mine.

INT. BEACH HOUSE OFFICE - NIGHT

Nero sits at a desk with his back to the beach at Long
Island. He wears a robe and talks on a phone.

NERO

...About a month for the graphs to
take... I know. He broke the
mirrors in his room and attacked a
nurse for staring...

Nero's face turns red.

NERO (CONT'D)

...I'm gonna destroy 'im and all
the rest of those Polaks; stomp 'em
out for good...

Nero nods.

NERO (CONT'D)

...Thank you, Izzy. You're too good
to me and my boy... I will. I love
you too. Tell Francesca good night
for me... Alright. Good night.

Nero hangs up, rubs his eyes, and goes outside.

EXT. B. H. BALCONY - NIGHT

He holds the railing and stares out. He looks at the beach to
find it empty and storms back inside.

INT. B. H. FOYER - NIGHT

By the front door sits ROCCO with 4 Wiseguys spread around
the foyer. Nero comes down the stairs.

NERO
'Ey! Where the fuck are the guys
outside?

Rocco shrugs.

ROCCO
I just saw 'em. Ain't they out
there?

Nero reaches the bottom floor.

NERO
No they're not fuckin' out there!

ROCCO
Sorry, boss. They're probably on
their smoke break --

A Wiseguy flies through one front window, his throat open,
followed by another through the other.

NERO
HOLY SHIT!

ROCCO
Get behind me! Boys, get down here!

Wiseguys surround Nero. The lights go out and one Wiseguy
squeezes off a burst.

ROCCO (CONT'D)
Hold your fire!

WISEGUY 3
The fuck, man!

WISEGUY 4
I just shit my pants!

ROCCO
Shut up and listen!

The Wiseguys go quiet. Something splashes in the house. The
noise grows closer.

WISEGUY 5
What is that?

Rocco sniffs.

ROCCO
Gasoline?

A flare hisses. Frank holds it before Rocco, an LBE harness added to his costume. He jams the flare into his head. Rocco's eyes glow red from the inside.

SLOW MOTION

Frank tosses the flare right. He shoves Rocco to Wiseguy 6 at the left and moves right. Wiseguy 3 brings up his Uzi. Frank slashes his throat.

Frank hooks him with his knife and pulls himself to Wiseguy 4. He shove-kicks him in the groin. When he bends forward, Frank stabs him in side of the head.

Frank rolls across Wiseguy 4's back, pulls his knife, and brings it down on Wiseguy 5's face. He gets him in an arm-lock, spins about, and throws him into Wiseguy 6.

While he's staggered, Frank draws his pistol, and puts two in the head. He turns on Nero and they freeze.

END OF SLOW MOTION

The flare hits the wall and sets it on fire in an explosion.

INT. B. H. HALL - NIGHT

The fire spreads. Frank pulls Nero by the collar.

NERO

Fuck you, Castle! I left flowers
for your wife and kids, you fuck!
You're a dead man!

FRANK

I'm sure you're right.

EXT. BALCONY - NIGHT

Frank holds Nero by the chin from behind and forces him over the railing.

NERO

Kill me and you set loose the
Gnucci wolves! You're gonna suffer!

FRANK

We all suffer.

Frank drags his knife across Nero's throat.

INT. SOAP'S OFFICE - DAY

Soap sticks pins into a map of NYC, with a body-count tally and newspaper clippings in the corners. Schroeder walks in.

SCHROEDER
My office. Now.

Soap follows.

INT. SCHROEDER'S OFFICE - DAY

A wall mounted TV plays the news.

ANCHOR WOMAN
...Started last night until fireman arrived. Less than a dozen bodies were found, including City Councilman George Nero without...

Schroeder turns to Soap.

SCHROEDER
Drop whatever you're doing and get out there.

SOAP
If he's willing to torch a house, we should expect worse. Now we really need to pull our under-covers.

Schroeder sits at his desk and rubs his eyes.

SCHROEDER
What's next? He gonna blow up a building? A friggin' block? This is domestic terrorism, plain and simple.

Soap looks at the floor. STAN LEE comes in with a square box.

STAN LEE
Package for y', Chief.

Lee places it on the desk and leaves. Schroeder pulls a letter opener.

SCHROEDER
We need the Feds. This is gonna get too big. Better yet, we need the Army.

SOAP

Castle is the Army... and the
Marine Corps.

SCHROEDER

Oy ve...

Schroeder breaks the seal on the package.

SCHROEDER (CONT'D)

The last thing we need is a Paul
Kersey knock-off, running around
with a- FUCK!

Schroeder jumps back. Cops rush in. Soap sees the head of
George Nero in the box with a note, signed with the Punisher
Skull. He pulls it and reads aloud.

SOAP

Put Billy in jail. If the charges
don't stick, I'll send you a judge
stuffed with Gnucci money. You
can't stop what's coming.

Cops look at each other and Soap puts the note down.

SOAP (CONT'D)

...I'll head- I mean, get a report
from the guys at Long Island.

Soap turns to Cops.

SOAP (CONT'D)

I want four units on Billy Nero.
Don't let anyone see him except a
lawyer. Get to it, people.

Cops disperse and Soap takes the box.

SONG: "Tears" by Health

INT. BUTCHERS - DAY

Among hanging meat three Wiseguys play cards. LABORERS cut
cocaine on an adjacent table. From the meat comes Frank in
costume with a sup-MAC10.

He greases the Wiseguys. Laborers drop to their knees, hands
up. Frank turns over the table, loots the Wiseguys, and
leaves. Laborers remain, one with soaked pants.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - NIGHT

Frank angles a lamp on an NYC map. It has pins with notes on the sides. Frank comes up with his notebook, crosses out an address, and takes a pin off.

INT. SOAP'S OFFICE - DAY

Soap puts a pin in the map and three dashes on the tally.

EXT. JERSEY CITY - DAY

A Chevy sits at a light with WISEGUY 7, cigar in his mouth. Frank pulls up beside on a motorcycle. He wears jeans, jacket, and mask up like a beanie. He smiles at Wiseguy 7.

FRANK

Cuban?

WISEGUY 7

Fuck you.

Wiseguy 7 turns and gasps. Frank has his mask down, puts two under his eye, and rides off.

INT. SOAP'S OFFICE - DAY

Soap puts on another pin and dash, the tally half full.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - NIGHT

More lights illuminate the interior with a makeshift bed, wire-spool table, cinder-block shelves, chairs, table saw, blow torch, belt sander, and reloading stand.

Frank cuts the barrel of an M16. He replaces the handguard with black pipe. He removes the buttstock, but leaves the buffer housing. He finishes with a Chopped M16 (C-M16).

INT. SOAP'S OFFICE - DAY

Soap cuts out newspaper clippings that call Frank THE PUNISHER and puts them in an stuffed file.

INT. STRIPPER BOOTH - NIGHT

WISEGUY 8 watches STRIPPER from behind a two-way mirror. Frank comes up behind Stripper with the sawed-off.

LATER

Soap questions Stripper. He looks to the booth. Forensics examine the obliterated Wiseguy 8.

INT. NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Techno lights flash while CLUBBERS flee. Wiseguys shoot at Frank behind the bar. He has the C-M16 loaded with a drum magazine.

Frank shoves the barrel through the bar and puts a towel in the trigger guard. While it goes off Frank draws the M1911 and moves out.

Spread across the dance floor Wiseguys take cover behind tables. Frank gets the jump on them.

INT. SOAP'S OFFICE - DAY

Soap comes in with a New Jersey map and adds it to the first.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Frank beats WISEGUY 9 between the walls. Frank tightens a noose around his neck and walks him to an open manhole. Tied to the cover sits the rope.

Wiseguy 9 begs until Frank pushes him in. The cover shuts. Frank waits for the choking to end before sees COP 1 at the exit. They stare at each other before COP 1 walks away.

INT. SOAP'S OFFICE - DAY

A small Christmas tree stands in the corner with decorations spread throughout. Soap rests at his desk with bags under his eyes.

He looks at the maps full of pins. The tally has a fresh sheet on top of a small ream. On his desk lays a thick file marked PUNISHER MURDERS.

END OF SONG

EXT. GNUCCI MANSION - DAY

Trees stand absent color under a grey sky. A pair of limbos escorted by Sedans pull up to the front door. The escorts drive on and park outside the fence.

At the door stands LUCIANO, 74, in a suit and bow tie, with a troop of Bodyguards in black trench coats and MP5s. From the limbo emerges Mama Gnucci in furs and a black veil.

Behind follows Children, dressed in black. Lucian hugs Mama.

LUCIANO

(Italian)
How was the ceremony?

MAMA

(Italian)
There have been so many I am used to them. All that is left are the children.

They walk to the door.

LUCIANO

(Italian)
Thank God they are innocent You will live to see them grow. You have my word, Isabella.

They stop before the door.

MAMA

(Italian)
Come drink with me.

LUCIANO

(Italian)
I will, momentarily.

Mama goes inside with Children. Luciano faces Bodyguards.

LUCIANO (CONT'D)

(Italian)
To your posts. Radio checks every hour.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Frank wears the harness and black fleece, mask up. He has a beard and longer hair. He sits in a tree with a poncho liner, and stares at the mansion through a scope.

POV:

Bodyguards patrol the grounds, the corners of the mansion marked with security cameras.

BACK TO SCENE

Frank tallies the numbers of men and cameras in a notebook and climbs down. His camp below has a fox hole, rucksack, and compound bow. Frank steps into the hole and shuts his eyes.

EXT. MANSION PERIMETER - DUSK

Frank kneels behind a tree. He carries the bow, arrows, sup-1911, sup-MAC10, and a bundle of rope.

Frank looks at Bodyguards on the fence. He moves back and sits. He relaxes until snow begins to fall. He catches some flakes before wind casts them away.

He peers to the sky. Dark clouds approach. Frank pulls down his mask.

INT. GUEST HOUSE - DUSK

A communal table runs down the center with beds occupied by Bodyguards. At the end of the table stands a stack of TVs.

Luciano watches the screens fill with snow. He goes outside to see the blizzard consume the grounds. He walks back and speaks into a walkie-talkie.

LUCIANO

(Italian)

Door men, inside. Everyone on the perimeter, to the guest house. And someone put the tarp over the pool.

INT. MANSION LIVING ROOM - DUSK

Mama and the Children watch the weather report on the TV. It shows the blizzard will last till tomorrow morning.

MAMA

I guess we're inside for the night.

She stands.

MAMA (CONT'D)

Now who wants to help me light a fire to make s'mores?

Children cheer and Mama smiles.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mama sits at the bedside of JENNY CESARE, 5, and a few other Children. She puts a book down on the night stand.

MAMA

That's enough of Seuss for the night. Time to go to sleep.

She kisses her on the forehead and stands.

JENNY

Is the Punisher coming to get us, Grammy?

Mama pauses and smiles.

MAMA

No, sweetheart. He's not coming near you or anyone in this house.

JENNY

Everyone at school says he will because Daddy was a bad man.

MAMA

Uncle Luciano will keep you safe. There's nothing to worry about.

She kneels.

MAMA (CONT'D)

From now on, you and your sister will be going to a new school without all those rotten kids. Okay?

Jenny nods and Mama walks to the door.

MAMA (CONT'D)

Good night, dear.

She turns the light off.

INT. MANSION HALL - NIGHT

Two Bodyguards stand at each door. Mama steps out and joins her two escorts. They follow her down the hall.

MAMA

Have you boys been fed?

BODYGUARD 1
Yes, Mama.

BODYGUARD 2
Yes, Mama.

MAMA (CONT'D)
And the ones in the guest house?

BODYGUARD 1
I'm sure there's plenty for 'em in
the pantry.

MAMA
Yeah, if the maids listened and
restocked. Fucking immigrants...

The escorts look at each other.

MAMA (CONT'D)
I need a drink

INT. MANSION FOYER - NIGHT

The Christmas tree shines with Bodyguards posted around. Mama descends the stairs and makes for the kitchen.

INT. MANSION KITCHEN - NIGHT

Maids tend dishes in the sink. Mama heads for the liquor cabinet.

MAMA
What's you're poison?

BODYGUARD 2
I don't think we're allowed --

MAMA
-- What I say goes and I say drink.
What do you two want?

The escorts pause.

BODYGUARD 1
Whiskey.

BODYGUARD 2
Scotch, please.

Mama puts the drinks on the counter. The escorts get glasses. Mama leaves with a bottle of wine and sits at the table. She drinks from the bottle. The escorts watch.

She points outside to the blizzard.

MAMA (CONT'D)
 God sent that, y'know? Let's see
 Castle try to hit us this time.

The escorts take sips.

MAMA (CONT'D)
 You know why He sent that storm?

BODYGUARD 1
 Because... God loves us?

MAMA
 Exactly! He loved our ancestors
 when they left the Old Country,
 kept 'em safe, and even now He
 want's us to survive.

Bodyguard 2 makes an uneasy smile.

BODYGUARD 2
 Uh, God bless the Gnucci Family.

Mama smiles with stained teeth.

MAMA
 You're goddamn right.

Luciano walks in. He looks scared.

LUCIANO
 (Italian)
 You two, take her to the study and
 barricade the door.

The escorts move.

MAMA
 (Italian)
 What's the matter?

LUCIANO
 (Italian)
 The guest house has not checked in.
 I am not taking any chances.

Mama stands.

MAMA
 (Italian)
 I'm sure it's just the storm.

LUCIANO

(Italian)
I am going to see what has
happened. Get going.

The escorts usher Mama away. Lucian speaks into his radio.

LUCIANO (CONT'D)

(Italian)
Everyone inside, post at the study.
No one goes in and no one comes out
without an escort.

EXT. MANSION BACKYARD - NIGHT

Luciano fights through the blizzard to the guest house and sees the lights off. Before he could go in he sees the camera above impaled by an arrow.

The door opens. A hand pulls Luciano into the darkness.

INT. MANSION HALL - NIGHT

Bodyguards stand around the door to the study.

INT. STUDY - NIGHT

A pushed-over bookcase barricades the door. Mama sits at a desk with a tall window at her back. The escorts stand at the back corners. The power goes out.

BODYGUARD 1

Oh shit!

Bodyguard 2 pulls out a flashlight and walks to the door.

BODYGUARD 2

'Ey! Send somebody to check the
fuse box!

BODYGUARD 3 (O.S.)

Fuck you! We're not going anywhere!

BODYGUARD 2

Then send a bunch of youse!

INT. MANSION HALL - NIGHT

Three Bodyguards walk together. At the threshold to the foyer Frank hides with night vision goggles (NVGs).

INT. STUDY - NIGHT

The escorts tense up at thumps and shouts. When the house goes quiet, Bodyguard 2 bangs on the door.

BODYGUARD 2
'Ey!... 'Ey! Anyone out there?

At no reply he backs away.

BODYGUARD 2 (CONT'D)
Mama, I need you to get under the desk and pull the chair in.

Mama takes the last drop.

MAMA
There are enough guns out there to take over the Empire State Building. Don't be paranoid.

INT. MANSION BATHROOM - NIGHT

Frank sheaths his knife and reloads his pistol. He climbs under the skylight. At the top he pushes the glass out.

INT. STUDY - NIGHT

The ceiling creaks. The escorts move to opposite corners, eyes up. The creaks stop and they freeze.

MAMA
It's the wind.

BODYGUARD 2
Mama, get on the other side of the desk and lay down.

BODYGUARD 1
For your own safety, please get away from the window.

Mama takes an empty swig.

MAMA
If I say God is keeping us safe, we're safe. If I say it's the wind, it's the fuckin' wind --

The escorts cock their guns.

BODYGUARD 2

-- Get away from the window!

She throws the bottle and stands.

MAMA

Don't you ever raise your voice to me! Nobody tells me wha --

Two rounds hit each Bodyguard. Mama turns in time for Frank to crash through and kick her in the head. He rolls to the floor into a kneel. He turns to Mama laid on the desk.

She chuckles with glass in her face.

INT. MANSION HALL - NIGHT

Bodyguards carpet the floor, stuck with arrows, holes, or open throats. Mama flies out the study and hits the wall. Frank grabs and throws her to the left.

She chuckles.

MAMA

You think I'm the worst? You don't know shit, you pinko commie rat!

Frank walks down the hall.

FRANK

I'm Ukrainian...

He grabs her by the neck.

FRANK (CONT'D)

...Jewish...

He throws her against the wall.

FRANK (CONT'D)

...And Italian.

He drags her by the hair, her body limp.

MAMA

A Christ-Killer on top of a Red.
Every ounce a piece of shit.

At a bend Frank throws her. She lands face-first in corpses.

MAMA (CONT'D)

Knock me off, get ready for a fight...

(MORE)

MAMA (CONT'D)
 The Paddies, Chinks, Fisk... Who'll
 be left to hold the leash? You?

She turns over.

MAMA (CONT'D)
 I AM THE EAST COAST, YOU FUCK!

FRANK
 One neck makes it all the more easy
 to squeeze.

INT. GNUCCI FOYER - NIGHT

Frank holds Mama over the top bannister.

MAMA
 You killed all the useful men in my
 life. Even the sickest bastard
 wouldn't kill a woman.

Frank yanks off the NVGs and brings Mama to his eyes.

FRANK
 I don't kill children, either.

He pushes her back and draws his knife.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 Last words, whore?

A bloody smile forms before a laugh.

MAMA
 Hail --

The blade flashes and skin tears.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. STUDY - NIGHT

A clock reads 3:06. Frank stands by a phone, his gear
 removed. He dials 911.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)
 9-1-1, what's your emergency?

FRANK
 1913 Hunter's Hill Drive; Conway,
 New Jersey.
 (MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)
Send Detective Martin Soap. His
phone number is 718-479-1921. Tell
him it's Frank Castle.

He puts it down off the hook.

INT. SEDAN - DUSK

Frank drives through snowy rural New Jersey in a trench coat. Guns and cash sit at the foot of the backseats under coats.

SONG: "Real Hero" by College

A ray of sun beams through the dark. He shields his eyes then slowly looks into it. Frank starts to laugh and smiles. In the rear-view he sees Maria and the twins.

They smile back.

EXT. NEW HOUSE - DAY

Soap walks out the door and sees a shoe box on the stoop. He finds stacks of money inside. On top a note reads: I'M DONE.

EXT. PARENT'S HOUSE - DAY

The door opens. Katrina falls to her knees and weeps before Frank walks in.

INT. APT. HALL - DAY

Frank knocks on the door. It opens to Andrei in a tank-top and boxers, his vor tattoos visible. They embrace.

INT. ANDREI'S APT. - DAY

The brothers sit in the living room. Frank stares at the stars on Andrei's knees.

ANDREI
The cops stopped coming around
November.

FRANK
...Did they say why they were
looking for me?

Andrei shakes his head.

ANDREI

I thought it was about the park,
but they never said, like they
didn't give a shit. I said you
became a monk after Martin got the
house.

Frank chuckles.

FRANK

No, I'm not a monk, but I needed to
give it up. It helped.

ANDREI

Where are you living now?

FRANK

Just some hole in Manhattan.

ANDREI

...Are you really okay, Frankie?

Frank pauses and looks at him.

FRANK

I'm alright... It took a while and
a lot of work, but everything seems
normal again.

He smiles.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I'm happy.

Andrei smiles.

ANDREI

Think you're happy enough for a New
Years party?

Frank pauses.

FRANK

Sure. I'm game.

SONG ENDS

INT. LIMO - NIGHT

In the back sits Andrei, Piotr, Ivan, and two Gangsters. They
sing "Auld Lang Sign" in slurry Russian. Frank remains sober.
He looks out to the crowded sidewalk on New Year's Day.

Frank speaks over the singing.

FRANK
You guys can let me out here.

ANDREI
Oh no! It's not over yet!

FRANK
It's late, Andy. I need --

PIOTR
-- Listen to brother. We go to
better place!

The limo cheers. Ivan shoves a shot in Frank's hand.

IVAN
To victory.

FRANK
For what?

Ivan smiles and glances at Piotr.

IVAN
Gnuccis. Bitches all dead. We rise.

Frank turns to Piotr. He makes a toothy grin. Frank remains silent then forces a smile.

FRANK
In that case...

He raises the shot.

FRANK (CONT'D)
(Russian)
Oorah, comrades.

The limbo cheers. They chug bottles and Frank casts the shot over his shoulder. His expression goes to tense neutrality.

INT. BROTHEL LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A sound system plays "Digital Versicolor" by Glass Candy. In the center stands a stripper pole occupied by DANCER with silver hair, surrounded by couches with Gangsters and GIRLS.

Piotr leads the group upstairs to the room. ANYA, 43, greets them in a fancy dress.

ANYA

(Polish)
Welcome, Papa! Happy New Year!

Piotr kisses her hand.

PIOTR

(Polish)
Made all the more happy in your
presence.

The room goes inaudible.

Frank looks at Girls, young with dark spots under vacant eyes. He looks to Dancer. The scream returns. With every spin her face changes. He sees Maria, then Lisa.

ANDREI

Frank? Hey, Frankie?

The scream stops and all sound returns.

FRANK

Huh?

ANDREI

Miss Anya's asking which girl you want.

FRANK

Andy, I can't --

PIOTR

-- It is on house, Francis. Take your pick.

Frank looks awkward and points to Dancer.

ANYA

(Polish)
You want Daisy? I hope you can control yourself, big-man.

She calls to DAISY. Frank watches her slow approach and they go upstairs. Andrei and the others cheer.

INT. BROTHEL HALL - NIGHT

Frank and Daisy pass other rooms and enter one at the end.

INT. BROTHEL ROOM - NIGHT

Frank closes the door and stops. Daisy moves to the bed and takes off her shirt.

FRANK
How old are you?

She says nothing. He repeats the question in Ukrainian.

DAISY
(Ukrainian)
Fourteen.

He puts his back to the door when she comes closer. She unbuttons his coat.

DAISY (CONT'D)
(Ukrainian)
Come to bed, baby. I'm good.

Frank grabs her hands and sees track marks. The scream returns. He sees her as Maria.

MARIA
I'm good.

INT. BROTHEL HALLWAY - DAY

Andrei stands a mess at Daisy's room and knocks.

ANDREI
You awake, Frankie?

He knocks again.

ANDREI (CONT'D)
Let me give you a ride. I'll drop
you off... where ever.

He opens the door.

INT. BROTHEL ROOM - DAY

He finds the window slightly open and bed made. He moves to the window and tries to close it, but it is too stiff. He pauses to catch his breath and looks out.

The alley sits two stories below. Andrei moves away and scratches his head. He moves back but cannot see past the glass. He starts to sweat.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - DAY

Laundry hangs on lines of para-cord. Frank cleans his C-M60 at the table by a kettle atop a hotplate. At his back Daisy sleeps in bed next to a makeshift couch.

She stirs. Frank stands and pours the kettle into a mug of coco powder. He kneels beside her.

DAISY
(Ukrainian)
Where am I?

FRANK
(Ukrainian)
Somewhere safe. How are you
feeling?

Daisy sweats. He touches her forehead. She tries to sit up.

DAISY
(Ukrainian)
Madame Anya has my papers. I must --

Frank lays her down gently.

FRANK
(Ukrainian)
-- You need to rest. It'll take a
few days to flush all that shit out
of your system.

Daisy retreats behind the blanket.

FRANK (CONT'D)
(Ukrainian)
What's your real name?

DAISY
(Ukrainian)
Romashka... Sablinova.

FRANK
(Ukrainian)
Where are you from, Roma?

ROMA
(Ukrainian)
Donetsk.

Frank smiles and passes her the coco. He helps it to her lips

FRANK
 (Ukrainian)
 My mother is from Odessa. She met
 my father after the war... Do you
 remember how your came to America?

INT. BROTHEL LIVING ROOM - DUSK

Anya tends five Gangsters with a handful of Girls. Frank
 comes up behind in jeans and jacket.

FRANK
 (Polish)
 Afternoon, ma'am.

She turns and smiles.

ANYA
 (Polish)
 Mister Castle!

She puts her hands on his giant chest.

ANYA (CONT'D)
 (Polish)
 I am afraid Daisy has run away, but
 I am here for whatever you need.

Frank smiles.

FRANK
 (Polish)
 I was hoping you could help me with
 my Polish.

She unzips his jacket.

ANYA
 (Polish)
 I have some time. Is it a phrase or
 a word?

FRANK
 (Polish)
 I think it goes, ardeit macht frei?

Anya pauses and sees white under the jacket. She backs away.

ANYA
 (Polish)
 But that's German, honey.

Frank nods.

FRANK

(Russian)
It's what you tell the new girls
before your boys show them whose in
control. Then you jab their bodies
full of heroin.

Gangsters rear their heads.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(Russian)
I think the expression goes "An
unbeaten woman is like an untidy
house".

Gangsters gather towards Frank. They stop and their eyes go wide when he draws his knife and sup-1911, the Skull on his chest. Frank looks at them.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(Russian)
Are you bitches ready for your
lumps?

Frank kneecaps Anya and kills two Gangsters before the rest charge. They die to the last round. Anya cries on the floor. Girls watch, unfazed. Frank reloads and calls downstairs.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(Ukrainian)
It's clear. Come on up.

Roma comes upstairs in modest clothes. She looks around then grinds her foot on Anya's wound. Frank lets her go then pulls her off. He gestures Girls.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(Ukrainian)
Keep them here until I get back.

She nods and Frank goes upstairs. Roma walks over the corpses to Girls.

GIRL 1

(Ukrainian)
We thought a customer stole you.

She shakes her head.

ROMA

(Ukrainian)
He is here to rescue us.

INT. BROTHEL OFFICE - DUSK

Anya dials a code into a safe on the floor. Frank sits on a desk. Roma and Girls watch from behind. The safe opens.

Inside sits money, a leather case, and a stack of papers. Anya hands the papers to Frank. He puts them on the desk and Roma passes them among the Girls.

ANYA

You have what you want. Let me --

Frank pistol-whips her in the mouth and reaches for the case. He finds syringes inside. He glances at Girls and back to Anya. He lifts and slams her on the desk facing up.

FRANK

(Ukrainian)
Hold her arms.

Roma and Girls oblige. Frank holsters his pistol.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I'm not a fan of needles...

He straddles her and takes the syringes by the fistful.

FRANK (CONT'D)

...I don't think the girls liked them either.

Anya screams.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DUSK

BYSTANDERS walk by when Anya hits the pavement in a splatter, syringes bored into her eyes. Bystanders scream. The Gangsters pile on top of her in quick succession.

INT. CADILLAC - NIGHT

Andrei sweats behind the wheel. He glances at the rear-view. He pulls up to a boom barrier manned by GUARD in a booth. Guard raises the barrier and Andrei enters the Docks.

EXT. DOCKS - NIGHT

Stacked shipment containers sit behind harbor cranes before an anchored freighter. Across the river Manhattan stands in bright contrast against the dark.

Andrei drives through the stacks to the Waterfront.

EXT. WATERFRONT - NIGHT

White vans sit in a line between the stacks, the end facing the water. 14 Gangsters in coats and jeans stand around two containers separate from the stacks.

They turn when Andrei pulls up and gets out.

GANGSTER 2
(Russian)
What's up, Captain?

ANDREI
Dumb-ass! No Russian!

GANGSTER 3
Sorry, boss. He's new.

Andrie walks to the containers and glances over his shoulder. Gangster 3 meets him.

GANGSTER 3 (CONT'D)
Everything okay?

ANDREI
Yeah, yeah. How we doing?

GANGSTER 3
Almost there.

Gangsters open the containers and point flashlights inside. NEW GIRLS sit pushed to the back, huddled with blankets. Gangsters walk in.

GANGSTER 4
Welcome to America!

Andrei pulls Gangster 3 to the side and walks to his car.

ANDREI
We need to get outta here. The quicker we move them, the better.

GANGSTER 3
Consider it done.

They stop at the car. Andrei looks back.

ANDREI

I want people on top of the boxes
watching for anything outta the
ordinary.

GANGSTER 3

But that'll draw attention.

Andrei reaches into his coat and hands Gangster 3 a roll of
money.

ANDREI

Share it with the boys. After
tonight we're going on hiatus.

Andrei makes for the driver's seat.

GANGSTER 3

What is "hiatus"?

ANDREI

A very long break until further
notice.

He gets in and drives off. Gangster 3 pockets the money and
walks back to the containers.

GANGSTER 3

Hey! Sasha and new guy, climb to
the top of the boxes.

INT. CADILLAC - NIGHT

Andrei pulls up the barrier. He honks for it to rise and sees
the glass spider-webbed. He gets out.

EXT. DOCKS - NIGHT

He runs over and finds Guard hog-tied on the floor. Andrei
hyperventilates and looks back towards the Waterfront.

EXT. STACK TOP - NIGHT

POV:

Through a scope Frank sees the vans, New Girls, and Gangsters
75 yards out. He sees two Gangsters on top of the closest
stacks.

BACK TO SCENE

He carries his sup-1911, sup-MAC10, and mask up. He crouches beside his bow, arrows, and a bundle of rope on the edge of the container.

Frank puts the scope in the butt-pouch of his harness, and pulls the mask down.

FRANK (V.O.)

The Bulats were smart, studied how the vory v zakone failed. Made their operation small so I couldn't find them.

Frank takes off one glove and feels the breeze.

FRANK (V.O.)

They brought Slavs, Muslims, Croats, Serbs, Romanians, Albanians...

He puts it back on and takes up the bow.

FRANK (V.O.)

...Daughters, widows, and orphans they made in Bosnia.

Frank knocks, draws, and aims at one of the Gangsters on top.

FRANK (V.O.)

For the worst decade of my life, sometimes I miss the 80s.

SONG: "Sinnerman" by Nina Simone

Frank releases. The arrow strikes and Gangster 2 falls off. The other on the stack shouts below before Frank puts an arrow in him.

Frank puts the bow down, throws out the rope, and rappels down the stack.

EXT. DOCKS - CONTINUOUS

On the ground Frank heads right between the stacks. At the corner of a path he peers round the corner.

At the far end sit the vans and Gangsters. With flashlights in hand they run towards him. Frank glances at the stun-grenade taped to the corner of the container.

He draw his sup-1911 and moves left in a brisk walk. At another corner starts a path towards the Waterfront. The glow of lights come closer from around the stacks.

Frank sprints to an single container down the path and climbs on top. He gets in the corner and crouches. On the ground a pair of Gangsters pass by.

With some distance between, Frank hops off and kills them. He sprints to the other side of the path and scales the containers.

EXT. STACK TOP - CONTINUOUS

He moves quiet and navigates until he sees the rope of his previous vantage point across the path. On the ground a pair of Gangsters arrive with pistols drawn.

GANGSTER 5

Face us, Punisher! Fight like man --

The stun grenade goes off to the left. The pair moves to the corner clouded by smoke.

Frank follows them. The pair meets the other as they shout at one another. A third pair stands in cover of a perpendicular path towards the Waterfront.

Frank steps off the stack.

EXT. DOCKS - CONTINUOUS

Frank lands on Gangster 5 feet first. His bones crunch and Frank rolls back, the other three Gangsters before him. He puts them down just as the pair down the path open fire.

Bullets spark across the ground. Frank rolls left into cover. His pistol empty, he holsters and brings round the sup-MAC10.

He blind fires round the corner down the path. Still firing, he sprints from cover towards the pair. He keeps left.

At the perpendicular path Frank draws his knife and meets GANGSTER 6 and GANGSTER 7.

He grabs the one closest on the corner, 6, and shoves him to the side. 7 stands just behind. Frank stabs him, but 6 comes back with a punch.

Frank pulls the knife and stabs 6. He stabs back into 7 then into 6. The two fall to ground and breath their last breaths.

Frank wipes his blade, reloads his guns, and looks round the corner to the Waterfront.

SONG ENDS

EXT. WATERFRONT - NIGHT

Gangster 3 and the last three kneel bruised and bloody against the van by the water, handcuffed. New Girls watch them on the opposite side.

Frank stands at the front of the van tying a rope to the bumper. He takes the remainder and ties a knot around each of the Gangster's necks. They plead and cry.

Frank opens the driver's door and releases the breaks. The van slows back. The rope tightens. The van plunges into the water and pulls the Gangsters down.

Frank walks to the edge and stares into the black water.

EXT. DOCKS - NIGHT

Andrei crouches in shadow, hand over his mouth. He watches Frank. He whimpers and fights back a cry.

Andrei makes for his car away from the stacks. Tears pour from his eyes in silence.

INT. SEDAN - DAY

Frank drives Roma, a bag in her lap. Frank pulls up to his parent's house and stops.

FRANK
(Ukrainian)
Nervous?

ROMA
(Ukrainian)
A little.

FRANK
(Ukrainian)
Don't be. They'll be happy to have
you.

Frank reaches back and hands her an American History textbook.

FRANK (CONT'D)
(Ukrainian)
I'll pick you up in two weeks. Make
sure you practice and study.

Frank pulls two photos of Piotr and Andrei from his jacket.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 (Ukrainian)
 Call me if you see them. If you
 can't reach me, run.

Roma pauses and takes her time.

ROMA
 They w-will not take m-me.

She looks at the house.

ROMA (CONT'D)
 (Ukrainian)
 Let me stay. I feel safer with you.

FRANK
 (Ukrainian)
 The farther I am from those that
 matter, the better. Anything else
 is too close.

He leans over and opens her door.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 (Ukrainian)
 Watch for cars.

She quickly plants a kiss on his cheek.

ROMA
 T-thank you. You are good to me.

They share a silence before she steps out. Frank waits for
 her to go inside.

FRANK (V.O.)
 You could have been normal... not a
 monster like me.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DUSK

In Spring Frank stands at the grave with flowers.

FRANK
 I'm going to do something horrible.
 All I've done is evil, but this is
 worse... I wish it happened then. I
 wish they suffered in your place...
 Our lives would've gone on and I
 would be there to take care you...
 because it's my job...

He lingers, places the flowers, and kisses the tombstone.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I'm going to see you all again. If
not tonight, one day I will.

He walks away unzipping his jacket, Skull underneath.

INT. V.L. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

BOSESSES with Gangsters gather at a long table. At the head sits Piotr, Andrei, and Ivan. Andrei wrings his hands. The doors of the lounge close and lock.

PIOTR

(Russian)
We have lost much in these past few months. The Punisher has found us his prey and profits have subsided. What are we to do?

BOSS 1

(Russian)
Give our boys better guns. 38s and 9mms are not enough.

BOSS 2

(Russian)
They would have them if that skull-fuck had not raided our shipments.

BOSS 3

(Russian)
How does he know our operations?

BOSS 1

(Russian)
He tortures for information. The police find the bodies, but they do nothing. We must pay them for help.

Andrei finally speaks.

ANDREI

(Russian)
The cops do nothing because they love the Punisher. They stood by while the Gnuccis were slaughtered because he does more than they ever could. No amount of money is going to convince them otherwise.

BOSS 4 eyes Andrei.

ANDREI (CONT'D)

(Russian)
 We have grown too comfortable with
 our gains and let our guard down.
 The best we can do is keep low and
 our eyes open.

Boss 4 points at Andrei.

BOSS 4

(Russian)
 Why is this half-breed punk allowed
 to speak?

PIOTR

(Russian)
 He is my nephew --

ANDREI

(Russian)
 I'm allowed to talk because I know
 what to say. Unlike you, I have
 seen enough bodies and stolen girls
 to know how to fix this. My stables
 gave you a grand a week. It's not
 wise to insult your beard-winner,
 filthy Cossack.

Boss 4 stands.

BOSS 4

(Russian)
 I'll take your fucking head, boy!

Other Bosses calm him back to his seat.

PIOTR

(Russian)
 Andrei is right. We have stayed fat
 and weak. Tonight we fix it and we
 are not leaving until we can --

The door creaks open, followed by heavy footsteps, and a rattle of bullets. Bosses stand and look to the front. Andrei pushes his way through before the footsteps stop.

INT. V.L. FRONT - NIGHT

Frank holds his C-M60 connected to a belt of ammo from a bag at his left. In the other hand is the C-M16.

Bosses and Gangsters stare in frozen horror. Frank looks to Andrei.

ANDREI

Frankie...

He cries.

ANDRIE

...Jesus Christ --

Frank fires both weapons.

Bullets tear through the restaurant. Bosses and Gangsters fall into each other with Verhoeven levels of gore, their screams drowned by discharge, and the shred of meat.

The rounds skip across fallen bodies like stones on water and find purchase in those that try to flee for the kitchen at the back.

The barrel of the C-M60 glows orange as Frank moves in.

INT. V.L. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

He sees turned-over tables in half before the C-M60 clicks empty. A fog of gun smoke settles. The restaurant goes quiet, bodies and puddles everywhere.

Frank reloads the C-M16 and walks further to execute survivors. He finds Piotr. Before he could shoot, Ivan charges in, the side of his head torn out.

He grabs Frank and drops the C-M16. Half way across the room Ivan trips. Frank falls, rolls to his feet, and draws his pistol. Ivan takes a full clip in the chest but stays up.

In the middle of a reload Ivan swings. Frank ducks, but takes a spinning punch. The pistol flies from his hand. Frank staggers and draws his knife.

He dodge-rolls to the back and slashes Ivan's leg. His knee bends and Frank goes for the throat. Ivan grabs and throws him forward. Frank lands face-first.

He wipes blood from his face and looks up to see Ivan's foot in a stomp. Frank rolls and drags the knife through as his leg comes down. Frank stands and takes a strong shove.

He lands back at Piotr and shakes the stars from his eyes. Ivan charges. Frank snatches the C-M16, gets on his feet, and meets him. They fall together, Ivan on top.

He shakes with a faint rumble before the barrel bursts out his back. Frank pushes Ivan off, walks Piotr, and puts two in the head. Frank pauses to catch his breath.

He looks to a choked cough and sees Andrei under a body. Frank walks over. Andrei reaches into his suit-jacket and pulls the bible and card. It falls from his fingers.

ANDREI

I guess... I wasn't good enough.

Frank squats down before him. Andrei hawks a wad of blood.

ANDREI (CONT'D)

You fucking monster... You're own family.

FRANK

My family's gone.

ANDREI

You think... think you're better than me? You're worse. A... m-mass murderer... Why didn't you stay in 'Nam with all the rest?

Frank's eyes turn red.

FRANK

Nobody asked us to come home and all you people wanted us gone.

He stands and points at Andrei's head. Tears roll down his cheek.

FRANK (CONT'D)

And you're right Andy. I am a monster...

He grits his teeth.

FRANK (CONT'D)

...But at least I fucking know it!

He squeezes the trigger.

CUT TO BLACK

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

A coffin lowers into the ground. Max, 27, his sisters KATHRYN, 24, and JASMINE, 21, stand in police uniforms. Max's WIFE, 26, holds their son MARTIN, 2, beside Nika.

Other Cops attend. Bagpipes play "Amazing Grace".

LATER

The attendees walk away with Nika on Max and Kathryn's arm. Jasmine walks with Wife behind them. Martin stares back. A man in Marine Class A's salutes the grave.

MARTIN
Who's that, Mommy?

The family stops and turns.

WIFE
I don't know, sweet heart.

NIKA
That's Mister Castle. He was
grandpa's friend... and a kind man.

She pauses. The siblings look at each other. Nika walks on her own to Wife.

NIKA (CONT'D)
Can I hold him, honey?

WIFE
Of course. You want grandma to
carry you?

Martin smiles and nods. Nika takes him and walks ahead, Wife behind. The siblings stay and stare at Frank.

JASMINE
Should we say hi?

Max and Kathryn look at her as if she said something stupid.

JASMINE (CONT'D)
I'm just being nice.

They turn back.

MAX
He's better off by himself. It's
how he likes it.

Frank relaxes and walks away. The siblings move on.

KATHRYN
Rule number one, Jas: only speak
when he comes to you. It can't look
like we associate regularly.

JASMINE
But the whole city loves him.

MAX

We have to keep up appearances.
Just like Dad.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAWN

Frank, 61, wears sweats pants and shirt. He has longer hair pulled into a wolf tail, greyed at the sides, and a trimmed beard. He jogs on his own before YOUNG RUNNERS join him.

EXT. PARENT'S HOUSE - DAY

Roma, 40, stands tall and broad. She walks her step-son, JOSEPH, 12, down the stoop to a Crown Vic on the crib.

Roma looks down the sidewalk and sees Frank on his jog. She stops while Joseph moves to the car and waves.

ROMA

Hey, Charlie!

She speaks with flawless English.

Frank stops, jogs in place, and speaks in his terrible Boston accent.

FRANK

Hey! How y' doin'?

ROMA

I'm taking Joey to his friend's house. You?

FRANK

Great. I was on my usual route and I figured I come say hi. How you doin', Joe?

Joseph smiles, but turns and tries to open the car door.

Frank chuckles.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Well, I better get on to the gym. Tell Dan I said hi.

ROMA

Okay. Have a good day. Tell Mister Fort goodbye, Joey.

Joseph turns.

JOSEPH

Goodbye.

Frank jogs on. Roma watches him and moves on to the car.

INT. GYM - DAY

GYM RATS watch Frank lift a stacked bar. He counts off reps in the fifties before he stops. Rats clap.

GYM RAT 1

Good job, old man.

GYM RAT 2

That was nuts.

Frank stands and takes a swig of protein.

GYM RAT 3

That all you got?

Frank smirks.

FRANK

No, but I'd like to see you try better.

Rats chuckle before the power goes out.

GYM RAT 2

What the hell?

GYM RAT 1

Is it a thunder storm?

GYM RAT 3

Yeah, a thunder storm in broad daylight --

A boom shakes the gym. Frank shudders and rushes outside.

EXT. GYM - DAY

Bystanders run down the street. Frank turns to the opposite direction and looks with divine horror. From the top of Stark Tower CHITAUURI pour from a portal and shoot into the city.

The scream comes back to Frank.

INT. P.H. FOYER - DAY

The front door bursts open with Frank. He runs down the hall.

FRANK

Roma! Roma!

INT. P.H. KITCHEN - DAY

Roma ducks under the table with an AK-47 in hand.

ROMA

What's going on?

Frank makes for the basement door.

FRANK

Call Joseph and Dan. Tell them to get under something heavy.

ROMA

Is it terrorists?.

FRANK

I don't know.

Frank opens the door and rushes down.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Frank shoves away a stack of boxes for a footlocker underneath.

ROMA

What are you doing?

Frank stomps off the lock and opens it.

FRANK

Sorry for barging in like this. I couldn't get to my main cache.

Frank pulls out a pair of tan boots, Multi-cam trousers, Multi-cam plate carrier vest, tan knuckle gloves, black Combat Shirt, and the mask.

FRANK (CONT'D)

If I make it back, remind me to buy you a new car.

ROMA

What?

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - DAY

Two Cops crouch behind a wrecked car. They take shots at Chitauri. COP 2 lays beside them.

COP 2
We gotta move guys. It's getting
crazy out here.

COP 3 kneels beside her.

COP 3
Stay with us!

WOUNDED COP
I'm not going anywhere, y' idiot!
We need t- LOOK OUT!

Cops turn to CHITAUURI 1 at the right. It brings up its rifle before the Crown Vic pins it to a lamp post. Frank steps out in costume with an AA-12 in hand and C-M16 slung.

He puts two shells in its face as he pulls a duffle from the car. He kneels with Cops and hands them two shotguns from the bag. He slings the bag and points to Cop 2.

FRANK
Get her outta here.

Frank pulls a grenade from his vest and tosses it over the car. It blows and he vaults over the hood. Cops watch Frank engage the Chitauri in open combat.

COP 4
Is that the friggin' Punisher?!

EXT. CAFE - DAY

Frank crouches behind a car, covered in dust, his sleeve torn, and vest burnt from a laser shot. The duffle lays on the ground with spent guns and shells spread about.

He reloads a Fugly Mosin Nagant when the car explodes. It sends him into the cafe.

INT. CAFE - DAY

He hits the bar and slumps to the floor. His ears ring.

POV:

He looks ahead in a blur. Chitauri move in before FIGURE takes them down. When they're dead Figure walks to Frank.

FIGURE
You alright... Hey?

Frank feels himself helped to his feet. His vision returns and sees a battle-worn Captain America.

END OF POV

CAP
Can you move?

FRANK
Y- yes, sir.

They walk out.

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - DAY

CAP
That's quite a uniform. How are you on ammo?

FRANK
Not too bad, sir. If need be I can use their weapons.

They stop. Cap nods.

CAP
Can you handle yourself from here?

FRANK
As long as I stay away from exploding cars.

CAP
If you need help, head to Stark Tower.

FRANK
Yes, sir.

Cap starts on his way out.

CAPTAIN
Stay alert; stay alive.

Frank watches him sprint away. He takes off his mask, eyes wide, and stares until he cannot see him anymore.

FRANK

Wow...

INT. HELICARRIER CORRIDOR - DUSK

MARIA HILL walks with a file under her arm, bandages on her face. She stops at the door and presses her ear piece.

HILL

I'm at the door.

The door opens and she walks in.

INT. HELICARRIER OFFICE - DUSK

The door closes, locks, and Hill walks to a steel desk. She opens the file and lays out monochrome photos of Frank in combat.

One shows him without his mask.

HILL

Agent Russo made a positive match with facial recognition. I can't believe he still fights at his age.

A hand picks up one photo of Frank with Captain America.

HILL (CONT'D)

How should we proceed, Director?

INT. LOFT - NIGHT

Frank cleans guns in sweat pants on a table against a wall, windows at his left, and a front door right.

He hears creaks from the door. He faces it and takes his knife from the table. A window bursts at his back. He turns and takes a kick from BLACK WIDOW.

She rolls to the floor and moves in for a punch. Frank counters. She kicks. Frank grabs her leg and swings her into the wall over the table.

He grabs her by the neck and raises his knife. Widow shoves a pistol in his eye. The two freeze before the door slams open.

Cap comes in flanked by STRIKE TEAM. Frank turns and his eyes go wide.

CAP
Natasha, I told you to wait!

WIDOW
Talking doesn't work on guys like
him, Steve.

CAPTAIN
I beg to differ.

Captain takes off his helmet.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)
Sergeant Castle? Frank? I --

Frank lets go and drops the knife. Widow moves to stand and draws a second gun. He faces Cap, goes to his knees, and puts his hands behind his head.

FRANK
I surrender.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. ??? - ???

A light beams down on a table where Frank sits with his arms behind in metal braces, his head hunched. A door opens and PERSON sits down.

Person places thick files on the table, each stamped with a city name. Frank looks up. He chuckles and shakes his head.

FRANK
Before you kill me, you gotta tell
me how you lost it. I bet it's
quite a story.

NICK FURY interlocks his fingers on the table.

FURY
What happened to you, Sergeant?

Frank smiles.

FRANK
I lost something.

SONG: "Nuclear" by Mike Oldfield

ROLL CREDITS

ENDING CREDITS SEQUENCE

INT. RIKER'S PENITENTIARY - DAY

Bar doors slide open. PRISONER with two COS walk down a corridor to the release center.

INT. RELEASE CENTER - CONTINUOUS

COs do not look at Prisoner as he walks to a booth. He receives an old suit and a wallet. Prisoner opens it and leaves an expired ID.

EXT. PARKINGLOT - DAY

A limbo awaits when Prisoner comes out. YAKUZA in shark-skin suits stand by. One holds the door open.

YAKUZA 1

Mister Nero. Wilson Fisk would like
to have you for lunch.

Billy, 50, has a face of patchwork-skin. The scream grows in volume as he forms a toothy smile.