viii Chronology

The Shawl, Goodman Theater, Chicago, 1985; Royal Court Theatre Upstairs, London, 1986

Speed-the-Plow, Lincoln Center Theater at the Royale Theater, Broadway, New York, 1988; National Theatre, London, 1989


An Interview (in Death-Defying Acts), Variety Arts Theater, off-Broadway, New York, 1995

SCREENPLAYS

The Postman Always Rings Twice 1981
The Verdict 1982
The Untouchables 1987
House of Games, written and directed by David Mamet 1987
Things Change, directed by David Mamet, written by David Mamet and Shel Silverstein 1988
We’re No Angels 1989
Homicide, written and directed by David Mamet 1991
Glengarry Glen Ross, directed by James Foley 1992
Hoffa 1992
Oleanna, written and directed by David Mamet 1994

Glengarry Glen Ross

Always be closing.
— Practical sales maxim

This play is dedicated to Harold Pinter
Glengarry Glen Ross was first presented in the Cottesloe auditorium of the National Theatre, London, on 21 September 1983 with the following cast:

Shelly Levene, fifties  Derek Newark
John Williamson, forties  Karl Johnson
Dave Moss, fifties  Trevor Ray
George Aaronow, fifties  James Grant
Richard Roma, forties  Jack Shepherd
James Lingk, forties  Tony Haygarth
Baylen, forties  John Tams

Directed by Bill Bryden
Designed by Hayden Griffin
Lighting by Andy Phillips
Sound by Caz Appleton

The US première of the play took place at the Goodman Theater of the Arts Institute of Chicago in a Chicago Theater Groups Inc. production on 6 February 1984 with the following cast:

Shelly Levene  Robert Prosky
John Williamson  J. T. Walsh
Dave Moss  James Tolkan
George Aaronow  Mike Nussbaum
Richard Roma  Joe Mantegna
James Lingk  William L. Peterson
Baylen  Jack Wallace

Directed by Gregory Mosher

Glengarry Glen Ross opened on Broadway at the John Golden Theater on 25 March 1984, presented by Elliot Martin, the Shubert Organization, Arnold Berhard and the Goodman Theater. The cast was as follows:

Shelly Levene  Robert Prosky
John Williamson  J. T. Walsh
Dave Moss  James Tolkan
George Aaronow  Mike Nussbaum
Richard Roma  Joe Mantegna
James Lingk  Lane Smith
Baylen  Jack Wallace

Directed by Gregory Mosher
Lighting by Kevin Rigdon
Costumes by Nan Gibula
Sets by Michael Merritt

The three scenes of Act One take place in a Chinese restaurant.
Act Two takes place in a real estate office.
Author’s Note

David Mamet himself worked for a while in a real estate office in 1969. Here are his comments describing that time.

The office was a fly-by-night operation which sold tracts of undeveloped land in Arizona and Florida to guillible Chicagoans. The firms advertised on radio and television and their pitch was to this effect: ‘Get in on the ground floor . . . Beautiful home-sites in scenic/historic Arizona/Florida. For more information call . . . for our beautiful brochure.’ Interested viewers would telephone in for the brochure and their names and numbers were given to me. My job was to call them back, assess their income and sales susceptibility, and arrange an appointment with them for one of the office salesmen.

This appointment was called a lead — in the same way that a clue in a criminal case is called a lead — i.e. it may lead to the suspect, the suspect in this case being a prospect. It was then my job to gauge the relative worth of these leads and assign them to the salesforce. The salesmen would then take their assigned leads and go out on the appointments, which were called sits . . . i.e. a meeting where one actually sits down with the prospects . . .

So that’s the background to the play. We are in a real estate office. There is a sales contest near its end. The four salesmen have only several more days to establish their position on the sales graph, the board. The top man wins a Cadillac, the second man wins a set of steak knives, the bottom two men get fired. The competition centers around the leads, with each man trying desperately to get the best ones.

Act One

Scene One

A booth at a Chinese restaurant, Williamson and Levene are seated at the booth.

Levene John . . . John . . . John. Okay. John. Look: (Pause) The Glengarry Highland's leads, you're sending Roma out. Fine. He's a good man. We know that he is. He's fine. All I'm saying, you look at the board, he's throwing . . . wait, wait, wait, he's throwing them away, he's throwing the leads away. All that I'm saying, that you're wasting leads. I don't want to tell you your job. All that I'm saying, things get set, I know they do, you get a certain mindset . . . A guy gets a reputation. We know how this . . . all I'm saying, put a closer on the job. There's more than one man for the . . . Put a . . . wait a second, put a proven man out . . . and you watch, now wait a second — and you watch your dollar volumes . . . You start closing them for fifty 'stead of twenty-five . . . you put a closer on the . . .

Williamson Shelly, you blew the last . . .


Williamson . . . you didn't close . . .

Levene . . . I, if you'd listen to me. Please. I closed the cocksucker. His 'ex', John, his ex, I didn't know he was married . . . he, the judge invalidated the . . .

Williamson Shelly . . .
Levene ... and what is that, John? What? Bad luck. That’s all it is. I pray in your life you will never find it runs in streaks. That’s what it does, that’s all it’s doing. Streaks. I pray it misses you. That’s all I want to say.

Williamson (pause) What about the other two?

Levene What two?

Williamson Four. You had four leads. One kicked out, one the judge, you say...

Levene ... you want to see the court records? John? Eh? You want to go down...

Williamson ... no...

Levene ... do you want to go down-town...?

Williamson ... no...

Levene ... then...

Williamson ... I only...

Levene ... then what is this ‘you say’ shit, what is that? (Pause.) What is that...?

Williamson All that I’m saying...

Levene What is this ‘you say’? A deal kicks out... I got to eat. Shit, Williamson... Shit You, Moss... Roma... look at the sheets... look at the sheets. Nineteen eighty, eighty-one... eighty-two... six months of eighty-two... who’s there?

Who’s up there?

Williamson Roma.

Levene Under him?

Williamson Moss.

Levene Bullshit. John. Bullshit. April, September 1981. It’s me. It isn’t fucking Moss. Due respect, he’s an order taker, John. He talks, he talks a good game, look at the board, and it’s me, John, it’s me...

Williamson Not lately it isn’t.
Levene ... and I’m going to get bounced and you’re...

Williamson ... let me ... are you listening to me ...?

Levene Yes.

Williamson Let me tell you something, Shelly. I do what I’m hired to do. I’m ... wait a second. I’m hired to watch the leads. I’m given ... hold on, I’m given a policy. My job is to do that. What I’m told. That’s it. You, wait a second, anybody falls below a certain mark I’m not permitted to give them the premium leads.

Levene Then how do they come up above that mark? With dreck ...? That’s nonsense. Explain this to me. Cause it’s a waste, and it’s a stupid waste. I want to tell you something ...?

Williamson You know what those leads cost?

Levene The premium leads. Yes. I know what they cost. John. Because I, I generated the dollar revenue sufficient to buy them. Nineteen senny-nine, you know what I made? Senny-Nine? Ninety-six thousand dollars. John? For Murray ... For Mitch ... look at the sheets ...

Williamson Murray said ...

Levene Fuck him. Fuck Murray. John? You know? You tell him I said so. What does he fucking know? He’s going to have a ‘sales’ contest ... you know what our sales contest used to be? Money. A fortune. Money lying on the ground. Murray? When was the last time he went out on a sit? Sales contest? It’s laughable. It’s cold out there now, John. It’s tight. Money is tight. This ain’t sixty-five. It ain’t. It just ain’t. See? See? Now, I’m a good man — but I need a ...

Williamson Murray said ...

Levene John. John ...

Williamson Will you please wait a second. Shelly. Please. Murray told me: The hot leads ...

Levene ... ah, fuck this ...
Levene  Why?

Williamson  The leads are assigned randomly...

Levene  Bullshit, Bullshit, you assign them... What are you telling me?

Williamson  ... apart from the top men on the contest board.

Levene  Then put me on the board.

Williamson  You start closing again, you'll be on the board.

Levene  I can't close these leads, John. No one can. It's a joke. Look, look: you put me in with Roma — we'll go out together, him and me, we'll doubleteam 'em...

Williamson  Dream on.

Levene  Okay. Okay... (Pause.) John, look: just give me a hot lead. Just give me two of the premium leads. As a 'test', alright? As a 'test'. And I promise you...

Williamson  I can't do it, Shelly...

Levene  I'll give you ten per cent.

Pause.

Williamson  Of what?

Levene  Of my end what I close.

Williamson  And what if you don't close?

Levene  I will close.

Williamson  What if you don't close...?

Levene  I will close.

Williamson  What if you don't? Then I'm fucked. You see...? Then it's my job. That's what I'm telling you.

Levene  I will close. John, John, ten per cent. I can get hot. You know that...

Williamson  Not lately you can't...
Pause.

Levene Now? (Pause.) Now?

Williamson Now. (Pause.) Yes ... When?

Levene Ah, shit, John ...

Pause.

Williamson I wish I could.

Levene You fucking asshole ... (Pause.) I haven't got it. (Pause.) I haven't got it, John. (Pause.) I'll pay you tomorrow. (Pause.) I'm coming in here with the sales, I'll pay you tomorrow. (Pause.) I haven't got it, when I pay, the gas ... I get back to the hotel, I'll bring it in tomorrow.

Williamson Can't do it.

Levene I'll give you thirty on them now, I'll bring the rest tomorrow. I've got it at the hotel. (Pause.) John? (Pause.) We do that, for chrissake?

Williamson No.

Levene I'm asking you. As a favor to me? (Pause.) John. (Long Pause.) John: my daughter ...

Williamson I can't do it, Shelly.

Levene Well, I want to tell you something, fella, wasn't long I could pick up the phone, call Murray and I'd have your job. You know that? Not too long ago. For what? For nothing. 'Mur, this new kid burns my ass.' Shelly, he's out. You're gone before I'm back from lunch. I bought him a trip to Bermuda once ...

Williamson I have to go ... (He gets up.)

Levene Wait. Alright. Fine. (He starts going in his pockets for money.) The one. Give me the lead. Give me the one lead. The best one you have.

Williamson I can't split them.

Pause.

Levene Why?
Moss You have to cheer up, George, you aren't out yet.

Aaronow I'm not?

Moss You missed a fucking sale. Big deal. A deadbeat Polack. Big deal. How you going to sell 'em in the first place? Your mistake, you shoun'a took the lead.

Aaronow I had to.

Moss You had to, yeah. Why?

Aaronow To get on the . . .

Moss To get on the board. Yeah. How you goan a get on the board sell'n a Polack? And I'll tell you, I'll tell you what else. You listening? I'll tell you what else: don't ever try to sell an Indian.

Aaronow I'd never try to sell an Indian.

Moss You get those names come up, you ever get 'em, 'Patel'?

Aaronow Mmm . . .

Moss You ever get 'em?

Aaronow Well, I think I had one once.

Moss You did?

Aaronow I . . . I don't know.

Moss You had one you'd know it. Patel. They keep coming up. I don't know. They like to talk to salesmen. (Pause.) They're lonely, something. (Pause.) They like to feel superior, I don't know. Never bought a fucking thing. You're sitting down 'The Rio Rancho this, the blah blah blah,' 'The Mountain View,' 'Oh yes. My brother told me that . . . ' They got a grapevine. Fuckin' Indians, George. Not my cup of tea. Speaking of which I want to tell you something: (Pause.) I never got a cup of tea with them. You see them in the restaurants. A supercilious race. What is this look on their face all the time? I don't know. (Pause.) I don't know. Their broads all look like they just got fucked with a dead cat, I don't know. (Pause.) I don't know. I don't like it. Christ . . .

Aaronow What?

Moss The whole fuckin' thing . . . The pressure's just too great. You're ab . . . you're absol . . . they're too important. All of them. You go in the door. I . . . 'I got to close this fucker, or I don't eat lunch.' 'Or I don't win the Cadillac . . . ' . . . we fuckin' work too hard. You work too hard. We all, I remember when we were at Platt . . . huh? Glen Ross Farms . . . didn't we sell a bunch of that . . . ?

Aaronow They came in and they, you know . . .

Moss Well, they fucked it up.

Aaronow They did.

Moss They killed the goose.

Aaronow They did.

Moss And now . . .

Aaronow We're stuck with this . . .

Moss We're stuck with this fucking shit . . .

Aaronow . . . this shit . . .

Moss It's too . . .

Aaronow It is.

Moss Eh?

Aaronow It's too . . .

Moss You get a bad month, all of a . . .

Aaronow You're on this . . .

Moss All of, they got you on this 'board' . . .

Aaronow I, I . . . I . . .

Moss Some contest board . . .

Aaronow I . . .

Moss It's not right.

Aaronow It's not.
Moss No.

Pause.

Aaronow And it's not right to the customers.

Moss I know it's not. I'll tell you, you got, you know, you got... what did I learn as a kid on Western? Don't sell a guy one car. Sell him five cars over fifteen years.

Aaronow That's right?

Moss Eh...?

Aaronow That's right?

Moss Goddam right, that's right. Guys come on: 'Oh, the blah blah blah, I know what I'll do: I'll go in and rob everyone blind and go to Argentina cause nobody even thought of this before.'

Aaronow ... that's right...

Moss Eh?

Aaronow No. That's absolutely right.

Moss And so they kill the goose, I, I, I'll... and a fuckin' man, worked all his life has got to...

Aaronow ... that's right...

Moss Cower in his boots.

Aaronow (simultaneously with 'boots') Shoes, boots, yes...

Moss For some fuckin' 'Sell ten thousand and you win the steak knives...'

Aaronow For some sales pro...

Moss ... Sales promotion, 'you lose, then we fire your'...

No. It's medieval... it's wrong. 'Or we're going to fire your ass.' It's wrong.

Aaronow Yes.

Moss Yes, it is. And you know who's responsible?

Aaronow Who?

Moss You know who it is. It's Mitch. And Murray. Cause it doesn't have to be this way.

Aaronow No.

Moss Look at Jerry Graff. He's clean, he's doing business for himself, he's got his, that list of his with the nurses... see? You see? That's thinking. Why take ten per cent? A ten per cent comm... why are we giving the rest away? What are we giving ninety per... for nothing. For some jerk sit in the office tell you 'Get out there and close.' 'Go win the Cadillac.' Graff. He goes out and buys. He pays top dollar for the... you see?

Aaronow Yes.

Moss That's thinking. Now, he's got the leads, he goes in business for himself. He's... that's what I... that's thinking!

'Who? Who's got a steady job, a couple bucks nobody's touched, who?'

Aaronow Nurses.

Moss So Graff buys a fucking list of nurses, one grand—if he paid two I'll eat my hat—four, five thousand nurses, and he's going wild...

Aaronow ... he is?

Moss He's doing very well.

Aaronow I heard that they were running cold.

Moss The nurses?

Aaronow Yes.

Moss You hear a lot of things... He's doing very well. He's doing very well.

Aaronow With River Oaks?

Moss River Oaks, Brook Farms. All of that shit. Somebody told me, you know what he's clearing himself? Fourteen, fifteen grand a week.

Aaronow Himself?
Moss That's what I'm saying. Why? The leads. He's got the good leads ... what are we, we're sitting in the shit here. Why? We have to go to them to get them. Huh. Ninety percent our sale, we're paying to the office for the leads.

Aaronow The leads, the overhead, the telephones, there's lots of things.

Moss What do you need? A telephone, some broad to say 'Good morning,' nothing ... nothing ...

Aaronow No, it's not that simple, Dave ...

Moss Yes. It is. It is simple, and you know what the hard part is?

Aaronow What?

Moss Starting up.

Aaronow What hard part?

Moss Of doing the thing. The dif ... the difference. Between me and Jerry Graff. Going to business for yourself. The hard part is ... you know what it is?

Aaronow What?

Moss Just the act.

Aaronow What act?

Moss To say 'I'm going on my own.' Cause what you do, George, let me tell you what you do: you find yourself in thrall to someone else. And we enslave ourselves. To please. To win some fucking toaster ... to ... to ... and the guy who got there first made up those ...

Aaronow ... that's right ...

Moss He made up those rules, and we're working for him.

Aaronow That's the truth ...

Moss That's the god's truth. And it gets me depressed. I swear that it does. At MY AGE. To see a goddam: 'Somebody wins the Cadillac this month. P.S. Two guys get fucked.'

Aaronow Huh.

Moss You don't axs your sales force.

Aaronow No.

Moss You ...

Aaronow You ...

Moss You build it!

Aaronow That's what I ...

Moss You fucking build it! Men come ...

Aaronow Men come work for you ...

Moss ... you're absolutely right.

Aaronow They ...

Moss They have ...

Aaronow When they ...

Moss Look look look look, when they build your business, then you can't fucking turn around, enslave them, treat them like children, fuck them up the ass, leave them to fend for themselves ... no. (Pause) No. (Pause) You're absolutely right, and I want to tell you something.

Aaronow What?

Moss I want to tell you what somebody should do.

Aaronow What?

Moss Someone should stand up and strike back.

Aaronow What do you mean?

Moss Somebody ...

Aaronow Yes ...?

Moss Should do something to them.

Aaronow What?

Moss Something. To pay them back.

Pause.
Someone, someone should hurt them. Murray and Mitch.

**Aaronow** Someone should hurt them.

**Moss** Yes.

*Pause.*

**Aaronow** How?

**Moss** How? Do something to hurt them. Where they live.

**Aaronow** What?

*Pause.*

**Moss** Someone should rob the office.

**Aaronow** Huh.

**Moss** That's what I'm saying. We were, if we were that kind of guys, to knock it off, and *trash* the joint, it looks like robbery, and *take* the fuckin' leads out of the files... go to Jerry Graff.

*Long pause.*

**Aaronow** What could we get for them?

**Moss** What could we *get* for them? I don't know. Buck a *throw*... buck-a-half a throw... I don't know... Hey, who knows what they're worth, what do they *pay* for them? All told... must be, I'd... three bucks a throw... I don't know.

**Aaronow** How many leads have we got?

**Moss** The *Glengarry*... the premium leads...? I'd say we got five thousand. Five. Five thousand leads.

**Aaronow** And you're saying a fella could take and sell these leads to Jerry Graff.

**Moss** Yes.

**Aaronow** How do you know he'd buy them?

**Moss** Graff? Because I worked for him.

**Aaronow** You haven't talked to him.
Moss Yes. (Pause.) I said ‘Not actually’. The fuck you care, George? We’re just talking...
Aaronow We are?
Moss Yes.
Pause.
Aaronow Because, because, you know, it’s a crime.
Moss That’s right. It’s a crime. It is a crime. It’s also very safe.
Aaronow You’re actually talking about this?
Moss That’s right.
Pause.
Aaronow You’re going to steal the leads?
Moss Have I said that?
Pause.
Aaronow Are you?
Moss Did I say that?
Pause.
Aaronow Did you talk to Graff?
Moss Is that what I said?
Aaronow What did he say?
Moss What did he say? He’d buy them.
Pause.
Aaronow You’re going to steal the leads and sell the leads to him?
Pause.
Moss Yes.
Aaronow What will he pay?
Moss A buck a shot.
Aaronow For five thousand?

Moss However they are, that’s the deal. A buck a throw. Five thousand dollars. Split it half and half.
Aaronow You’re saying ‘me’.
Moss Yes. (Pause.) Twenty-five hundred apiece. One night’s work, and the job with Graff. Working the premium leads.
Pause.
Aaronow A job with Graff.
Moss Is that what I said?
Aaronow He’d give me a job.
Moss He would take you on. Yes.
Pause.
Aaronow Is that the truth?
Moss Yes. It is, George. (Pause.) Yes. It’s a big decision. (Pause.) And it’s a big reward. (Pause.) It’s a big reward. For one night’s work. (Pause.) But it’s got to be tonight.
Aaronow What?
Moss What? What? The leads.
Aaronow You have to steal the leads tonight?
Moss That’s right, the guys are moving them down-town. After the thirtieth. Murray and Mitch. After the contest.
Aaronow You’re, you’re saying so you have to go in there tonight and...
Moss You...
Aaronow I’m sorry?
Moss You.
Pause.
Aaronow Me?
Moss You have to go in. (Pause.) You have to get the leads.
Pause.
Aaronow I do?
Moss Yes.
Aaronow I...
Moss It's not something for nothing, George, I took you in on this, you have to go. That's your thing. I've made the deal with Graff. I can't go. I can't go, I've spoken on this too much. I've got a big mouth. (Pause.) 'The fucking leads' et cetera, blah blah blah '... the fucking tight-ass company...'
Aaronow They'll know when you go over to Graff...
Moss What will they know? That I stole the leads? I didn't steal the leads, I'm going to the movies tonight with a friend, and then I'm going to the Como Inn. Why did I go to Graff? I got a better deal. Period. Let 'em prove something. They can't prove anything that's not the case.
Pause.
Aaronow Dave.
Moss Yes.
Aaronow You want me to break into the office tonight and steal the leads?
Moss Yes.
Pause.
Aaronow No.
Moss Oh, yes, George.
Aaronow What does that mean?
Moss Listen to this. I have an alibi, I'm going to the Como Inn, why? Why? The place gets robbed, they're going to come looking for me. Why? Because I probably did it. Are you going to turn me in? (Pause.) George? Are you going to turn me in?
Aaronow What if you don't get caught?
Moss They come to you, you going to turn me in?
Aaronow Why would they come to me?
Moss They're going to come to everyone.
Aaronow Why would I do it?
Moss You wouldn't, George, that's why I'm talking to you. Answer me. They come to you. You going to turn me in?
Aaronow No.
Moss Are you sure?
Aaronow Yes, I'm sure.
Moss Then listen to this: I have to get those leads tonight. That's something I have to do. If I'm not at the movies... if I'm not eating over at the Inn... If you don't do this, then I have to come in here...
Aaronow ... you don't have to come in.
Moss ... and rob the place...
Aaronow ... I thought that we were only talking...
Moss ... they take me, then. They're going to ask me who were my accomplices.
Aaronow Me?
Moss Absolutely.
Aaronow That's ridiculous.
Moss Well, to the law, you're an accessory. Before the fact.
Aaronow I didn't ask to be.
Moss Then tough luck, George, because you are.
Aaronow Why? Why, because you only told me about it?
Moss That's right.
Aaronow Why are you doing this to me, Dave? Why are you talking this way to me? I don't understand. Why are you doing this at all...?
Moss That's none of your fucking business...
Aaronow Well, well, well, talk to me, we sat down to eat dinner, and here I'm a criminal...

Moss You went for it.

Aaronow In the abstract...

Moss So I'm making it concrete.

Aaronow Why?

Moss Why? Why you going to give me five grand?

Aaronow Do you need five grand?

Moss Is that what I just said?

Aaronow You need money? Is that the...

Moss Hey, hey, let's just keep it simple, what I need is not the... what do you need...?

Aaronow What is the five grand? (Pause.) What is the, you said that we were going to split five...

Moss I lied. (Pause.) Alright? My end is my business. Your end's twenty-five. In or out. You tell me, you're out you take the consequences.

Aaronow I do?

Moss Yes.

Pause.

Aaronow And why is that?

Moss Because you listened.

Scene Three

The restaurant. Roma is seated alone at the booth. Lingk is at the booth next to him. Roma is talking to him.

Roma ... all train compartments smell vaguely of shit. It gets so you don't mind it. That's the worst thing that I can confess. You know how long it took me to get there? A long
time. When you die you're going to regret the things you don't do. You think you're queer...? I'm going to tell you something: we're all queer. You think that you're a thief? So what? You get befuddled by a middle-class morality...? Get shut of it. Shut it out. You cheated on your wife...? You did it, lie with it. (Pause.) You fuck little girls, so be it. There's an absolute morality? May be. And then what? If you think there is, then be that thing. Bad people go to hell? I don't think so. If you think that, act that way. A hell exists on earth? Yes. I won't live in it. That's me. You ever take a dump made you feel you'd just slept for twelve hours...?

Lingk Did I...?

Roma Yes.

Lingk I don't know.

Roma Or a piss...? A great meal fades in reflection. Everything else gains. You know why? Cause it's only food. This sh*t we eat, it keeps us going. But it's only food. The great fucks that you may have had. What do you remember about them?

Lingk What do I...?

Roma Yes.

Lingk Mmmm...

Roma I don't know. For me, I'm saying, what it is, it's probably not the orgasm. Some broads, forearms on your neck, something her eyes did. There was a sound she made... or, me, lying, in the, I'll tell you: me lying in bed: the next day she brought me café au lait. She gives me a cigarette, my balls feel like concrete. Eh? What I'm saying, What is our life: (Pause.) it's looking forward or it's looking back. And that's our life. That's it. Where is the moment? (Pause.) And what is it that we're afraid of? Loss. What else? (Pause.) The bank closes. We get sick, my wife died on a plane, the stock market collapsed... the house burnt down... what of these happen...? None of 'em. We worry anyway. What does this mean? I'm not secure. How can I be secure? (Pause.) Through
amassing wealth beyond all measure? No. And what's beyond all measure? That's a sickness. That's a trap. There is no measure. Only greed. How can we act? The right way, we would say, to deal with this: 'there is a one-in-a-million chance that so and so will happen . . . Fuck it, it won't happen to me' . . . No. We know that's not right, I think, we say the correct way to deal with this is 'There is a one in so-and-so chance this will happen . . . God protect me. I am powerless, let it not happen to me . . . ' But no to that. I say. There's something else. What is it? 'If it happens, AS IT MAY for that is not within our powers, I will deal with it, just as I do today with what draws my concern today.' I say this is how we must act. I do those things which seem correct to me today. I trust myself. And if security concerns me, I do that which today I think will make me secure. And every day I do that, when that day arrives that I need a reserve, a) odds are that I have it and, b) the true reserve that I have is the strength that I have of acting each day without fear. (Pause.) According to the dictates of my mind. (Pause.) Stocks, bonds, objects of art, real estate. Now: what are they? (Pause.) An opportunity. To what? To make money? Perhaps. To lose money? Perhaps. To 'indulge' and to 'learn' about ourselves? Perhaps. So fucking what? What isn't? They're an opportunity. That's all. They're an event. A guy comes up to you, you make a call, you send in a brochure, it doesn't matter, 'There these properties I'd like for you to see.' What does it mean? What you want it to mean. (Pause.) Money? (Pause.) If that's what it signifies to you. Security? (Pause.) Comfort? 'Some schmuck wants to make a buck on me'; or, 'I feel a vibration fate is calling' . . . all it is is THINGS THAT HAPPEN TO YOU. (Pause.) That's all it is. How are they different? (Pause.) Some poor newly married guy gets run down by a cab. Some busboy wins the lottery . . . (Pause.) All it is, it's a carnival. What's special . . . what draws us . . . ? (Pause.) We're all different. (Pause.) We're not the same . . . (Pause.) We're not the same . . . (Pause.) Hmm . . . (Pause. Sighs.) It's been a long day. (Pause.) What are you drinking?

**Lingk** Gimlet.

**Roma** Well, let's have a couple more. My name is Richard Roma, what's yours?

**Lingk** Lingk. James Lingk.

**Roma** James. I'm glad to meet you. (*They shake hands.*) I'm glad to meet you, James. (Pause.) I want to show you something. (Pause.) It might mean nothing to you . . . and it might not. I don't know. I don't know anymore. (Pause. He takes out a small map and spreads it on a table.) What is that? Florida. Glengarry Highlands. Florida. 'Florida. Bullshit.' And maybe that's true; and that's what I said: but look here: What is this? This is a piece of land. Listen to what I'm going to tell you now:
Act Two

The Real Estate Office. Ransacked. A broken plate glass window boarded up, glass all over the floor. Aaronow and Williamson standing around, smoking.

Pause.

Aaronow People used to say that there are numbers of such magnitude that multiplying them by two made no difference.

Pause.

Williamson Who used to say that?

Aaronow In school.

Pause.

Baylen, a detective, comes out of the inner office.

Baylen Alright...?

Roma enters from the street.

Roma Williamson... Williamson, they stole the contracts...?

Baylen Excuse me, sir...

Roma Did they get my contracts?

Williamson They got...

Baylen Excuse me, fella.

Roma ...did they...

Baylen Would you excuse us, please...?

Roma Don't fuck with me, fella. I'm talking about a fuckin' Cadillac car that you owe me...

Williamson They didn't get your contract. I filed it before I left.

Roma They didn't get my contracts?

Williamson They: excuse me... (He goes back into the inner room with the detective.)

Roma Oh, fuck. Fuck. (He starts kicking the desk.) FUCK FUCK FUCK! WILLIAMSON!!! WILLIAMSON!!! (He goes to the door Williamson went into, tries the door, it's locked.) OPEN THE FUCKING... WILLIAMSON...

Baylen (coming out) Who are you?

Williamson comes out.

Williamson They didn't get the contracts.

Roma Did they...

Williamson They got, listen to me...

Roma Th...

Williamson Listen to me: they got some of them.

Roma Some of them...

Baylen Who told you...?

Roma Who told me wh...? You've got a fuckin', you've... a... who is this...? You've got a board-up on the window... Moss told me.

Baylen (looking back toward the inner office) Moss... Who told him?

Roma How the fuck do I know? (To Williamson.) What... talk to me.

Williamson They took some of the con...

Roma ...some of the contracts... Lingk. James Lingk. I closed...

Williamson You closed him yesterday.

Roma Yes.

Williamson It went down. I filed it.
Roma You did?
Williamson Yes.
Roma Then I'm over the fucking top and you owe me a Cadillac.
Williamson I...
Roma And I don't want any fucking shit and I don't give a shit, Lingk puts me over the top, you filed it, that's fine, any other shit kicks out you go back. You...you reclose it, cause I closed it and you...you owe me the car.
Baylen Would you excuse us, please.
Aaronow I, um, and may, maybe they're in, they're in...you should, John, if we're ins...
Williamson I'm sure that we're insured, George... (Going back inside.)
Roma Fuck insured. You owe me a car.
Baylen (stepping back into his room) Please don't leave. I'm going to talk to you. What's your name?
Roma Are you talking to me?
Pause.
Baylen Yes.
Pause.
Roma My name is Richard Roma.
Baylen goes back into the inner room.
Aaronow I, you know, they should be insured.
Roma What do you care...?
Aaronow Then, you know, they wouldn't be so ups...
Roma Yeah. That's swell. Yes. You're right. (Pause.) How are you?
Aaronow I'm fine. You mean the board? You mean the board...?
(Pause.) I mean, talk about a fucking streak, that would sap anyone's self-confi... I got to go out and reclose all my... Where's the phones?

Aaronow They stole...

Roma They stole the...

Aaronow What. What kind of outfit are we running where... where anyone...

Roma (to himself) They stole the phones.

Aaronow Where criminals can come in here... they take the... They stole the phones.

Roma They stole the leads. They're... Christ. (Pause.) What am I going to do this month? Oh shit... (He starts for the door.)

Aaronow You think they're going to catch... where are you going?

Roma Down the street.

Williamson sticks his head out of the door.

Williamson Where are you going?

Roma To the restaura... what do you fucking...?

Williamson aren't you going out today?

Roma With what? (Pause.) With what, John, they took the leads...

Williamson I have the stuff from last year's...

Roma Oh. Oh. Oh your 'Nostalgia' file, that's fine. No. Swell. Cause I don't have to...

Williamson you want to go out today...?

Roma Cause I don't have to eat this month. No. Okay. Give 'em to me... (To himself.) Fucking Mitch and Murray going to shit a br... what am I going to do all...

Williamson starts back into the office. He is accosted by Aaronow.

Aaronow Were the leads...

Roma... what am I going to do all month...

Aaronow Were the leads insured?

Williamson (long suffering) I don't know, George, why?

Aaronow Cause, you know, cause they weren't, I know that Mitch and Murray uh...

Pause.

Williamson What?

Aaronow That they're going to be upset.

Williamson That's right. (Going back into his office. To Roma.) You want to go out today...? (Pause.)

Aaronow He said we're all going to have to go talk to the guy.

Roma What?

Aaronow He said we...

Roma To the cop?

Aaronow Yeah.

Roma Yeah. That's swell. Another waste of time.

Aaronow A waste of time? Why?

Roma Why? Cause they aren't going to find the guy.

Aaronow The cops?

Roma Yes. The cops. No.

Aaronow They aren't?

Roma No.

Aaronow Why don't you think so?

Roma Why? Because they're stupid. 'Where were you last night...?'

Aaronow Where were you?

Roma Where was I?
Aaronow Yes.
Roma I was at home, where were you?
Aaronow At home.
Roma See . . . ? Were you the guy who broke in?
Aaronow Was I?
Roma Yes.
Aaronow No.
Roma Then don’t sweat it, George, you know why?
Aaronow No.
Roma You have nothing to hide.
Aaronow (pause) When I talk to the police, I get nervous.
Roma Yeah. You know who doesn’t?
Aaronow No, who?
Roma Thieves.
Aaronow Why?
Roma They’re inured to it.
Aaronow You think so?
Roma Yes.
Pause.
Aaronow But what should I tell them?
Roma The truth, George. Always tell the truth. It’s the easiest thing to remember.
Williamson comes out of the office with leads. Roma takes one, reads it.
Roma Patel? Ravidam Patel? How am I going to make a living on these deadbeat wogs? Where did you get this, from the morgue?
Williamson If you don’t want it, give it back.
Roma I don’t ‘want’ it, if you catch my drift.

Williamson I’m giving you three leads. You . . .
Roma What’s the fucking point in any case . . . ? What’s the point? I got to argue with you, I got to knock heads with the cops, I’m busting my balls, sell your dirt to fucking deadbeats money in the mattress, I come back you can’t even manage to keep the contracts safe, I have to go back and close them again . . . what the fuck am I wasting my time,fuck this shit. I’m going out and reclose last week’s stuff . . .
Williamson Don’t do it, they might find him.
Roma They might find the guy?
Williamson Yes.
Roma Your ‘source’ tells you that?
Williamson The word from Murray is: leave them alone. If we have to get a new sig he’ll go out himself, he’ll be the President, just come in, from out of town . . .
Roma Okay, okay, okay, gimme this shit. Fine. (He takes the leads.)
Williamson I’m giving you three . . .
Roma Three? I count two.
Williamson Three.
Roma Patel? Fuck you. Fuckin’ Shiva handed him a million dollars, told him ‘sign the deal’, he wouldn’t sign. And Vishnu, too. Into the bargain. Fuck that, John. You know your business, I know mine. Your business is being an asshole, and I find out whose fucking cousin you are, I’m going to go to him and figure out a way to have your ass . . . fuck you—I’ll wait for the new leads.
Levene enters.
Levene Get the chalk. Get the chalk . . . get the chalk! I closed ‘em! I closed the cocksucker. Get the chalk and put me on the board. I’m going to Hawaii! Put me on the Cadillac board, Williamson! Pick up the fuckin’ chalk. Eight units. Mountain View . . .
Roma You sold eight Mountain View?
Levene You bet your ass. Who wants to go to lunch? Who wants to go to lunch? I’m buying. *(He slips a contract down on Williamson’s desk.)* Eighty-two fucking grand. And twelve grand in commission. John. *(Pause.)* On fucking deadbeat magazine subscription leads.
Williamson Who?
Levene *(pointing to the contract)* Read it. Bruce and Harriett Nyborg. *(Looking around.)* What happened here?
Aaronow Fuck. I had them on River Glen.
Levene looks around.
Levene What happened?
Williamson Somebody broke in.
Roma Eight units?
Levene That’s right.
Roma Shelly...!
Levene Hey, big fucking deal. Broke a bad streak...
Aaronow Shelly, the Machine, Levene.
Levene You...
Aaronow That’s great.
Levene Thank you, George.
Baylen sticks his head out of the room, calls in ‘Aaronow’.
Aaronow goes into the side room.
Levene Get on the phone, call Mitch...
Roma They took the phones...
Levene They...
Baylen Aaronow...
Roma They took the typewriters, they took the leads, they took the cash, they took the contracts...
Levene Wh... wh... Wha...?

Aaronow We had a robbery.
Pause.
Levene When?
Roma Last night, this morning...
Pause.
Levene They took the leads?
Roma Mmm.
Moss comes out of the interrogation.
Moss Fuckin’ asshole.
Roma What, they beat you with a rubber bat?
Moss Cop couldn’t find his dick two hands and a map. Anyone talks to this guy’s an asshole...
Roma You going to turn States?
Moss Fuck you, Ricky. I ain’t going out today. I’m going home. I’m going home because nothing’s accomplished here... Anyone talks to this guy is...
Roma Guess what the Machine did?
Moss Fuck the Machine.
Roma Mountain View. Eight units.
Moss Fuckin’ cop’s got no right talk to me that way. I didn’t rob the place...
Roma You hear what I said?
Moss Yeah. He closed a deal.
Roma Eight units. Mountain View.
Moss *(to Levene)* You did that?
Levene Yeah.
Pause.
Moss Fuck you.
Roma Guess who?
Moss  When . . .
Levene  Just now.
Roma  Guess who?
Moss  You just this morning . . .
Roma  Harriet and blah blah Nyborg.
Moss  You did that?
Levene  Eighty-two thousand dollars.
Pause.
Moss  Those fuckin' deadbeats . . .
Levene  My ass. I told 'em. (To Roma.) Listen to this: I said . . .
Moss  Hey, I don't want to hear your fucking war stories . . .
Roma  Fuck you, Dave . . .
Levene  'You have to believe in yourself . . . you,' look, 'alright . . .?'
Moss (to Williamson)  Give me some leads. I'm going out . . . I'm getting out of . . .
Levene  ' . . . you have to believe in yourself . . .'
Moss  Na, fuck the leads, I'm going home.
Levene  'Bruce, Harriet . . . Fuck me, believe in yourself . . .'
Roma  . . . we haven't got a lead . . .
Moss  Why not?
Roma  They took 'em . . .
Moss  Hey, they're fuckin' garbage any case . . . This whole goddam . . .
Levene  ' . . . You look around, you say "this one has so-and-so, and I have nothing" . . .'
Moss  Shit.
Levene  'Why? Why don't I get the opportunities . . .?'
volume. You were on a bad one and I brought it up to you you’d harbor it. (Pause.) You’d harbor it a long long while. And you’d be right.

**Roma** Who said ‘Fuck the Machine’?

**Moss** ‘Fuck the Machine?’ ‘Fuck the Machine?’ What is this? Courtesy class . . . ? You’re fucked, Rick – are you fucking nuts? You’re hot, so you think you’re the ruler of this place . . . ?! You want to . . .

**Levene** Dave . . .

**Moss** ... Shut up. Decide who should be dealt with how? Is that the thing? I come into the fuckin’ office today, I get humiliated by some jagoff cop. I get accused of . . . I get this shit thrown in my face by you, you genuine shit, because you’re top name on the board . . .


**Moss** Sittin’ on top of the world, sittin’ on top of the world, everything’s fucking peachfuzz . . .

**Roma** Oh, and I don’t get a moment to spare for a bust-out humanitarian clown on his luck lately. Fuck you, Dave, you know you got a big mouth, and you make a close the whole place stinks with your farts for a week. ‘How much you just ingested,’ what a big man you are, ‘Hey, let me buy you a pack of gum. I’ll show you how to chew it.’ Your pal closes, all that comes out of your mouth is bile, how fucking up you are . . .

**Moss** Who’s my pal . . . ? And what are you, Ricky, huh, what are you, Bishop Shea? Who the fuck are you, Mr Slick . . . ? What are you, friend to the workingman? Big deal. Fuck you, you got the memory a fuckin’ fly. I never liked you.

**Roma** What is this, your farewell speech?

**Moss** I’m going home.

**Roma** Your farewell to the troops?

**Moss** I’m not going home. I’m going to Wisconsin.

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**Roma** Have a good trip.

**Moss** Fuck you. Fuck the lot of you. Fuck you all.

**Moss exits. Pause.**

**Roma** (to Levene) You were saying? (Pause.) Come on. Come on, you got them in the kitchen, you got the stats spread out, you’re in your shirtsleeves, you can smell it. Huh? Snap out of it, you’re eating her crumb cake.

**Pause.**

**Levene** I’m eating her crumb cake . . .

**Roma** ... how was it . . . ?

**Levene** From the store.

**Roma** ... fuck her . . .

**Levene** ‘What we have to do is admit to ourself that we see that opportunity . . . and take it. (Pause.) And that’s it.’ And we sit there . . . (Pause.) I got the pen out . . .

**Roma** Always Be Closing . . .

**Levene** That’s what I’m saying. The old ways. The old ways . . . convert the mother fucker . . . sell him . . . sell him . . . make him sign the check. (Pause.) The . . . Bruce, Harriett . . . the kitchen, blah: They got their money in government bonds . . . I say fuck it, we’re going to go the whole route. I plait it out eight units. Eighty-two grand. I tell them, ‘This is now. This is that thing that you’ve been dreaming of, you’re going to find that suitcase on the train, the guy comes in the door, the bag that’s full of money. This is it, Harriett . . .’

**Roma** (reflectively) Harriett . . .

**Levene** Bruce . . . ‘I don’t want to fuck around with you. I don’t want to go round this, and pussyfoot around the thing, you have to look back on this. I do, too. I came here to do good for you and me. For both of us. Why take an interim position? The only arrangement I’ll accept is full investment. Period. The whole eight units. I know that you’re saying ‘be safe’, I know what you’re saying. I know if I left you to
yourselves, you'd say 'come back tomorrow' and when I walked out that door, you'd make a cup of coffee... you'd sit down... and you'd think 'let's be safe...’ and not to disappoint me you'd go one unit or maybe two, because you'd become scared because you'd met possibility. But this won't do, and that's not the subject...’ Listen to this, I actually said this: 'That's not the subject of our evening together.' Now I handed them the pen. I held it in my hand. I turned the contract eight units eighty-two grand. 'Now I want you to sign.' (Pause.) I sat there. Five minutes. Then, I sat there, Ricky, twenty-two minutes by the kitchen clock. (Pause.) Twenty-two minutes by the kitchen clock. Not a word, not a motion. What am I thinking? 'My arm's getting tired? No. I did it. Like in the old days, Ricky. Like I was taught... Like, like, like I used to do... I did it.

Roma Like you taught me...

Levene Bullshit, you're... No. That's raw... well, if I did, them I'm glad I did. I, well, I locked on them. All on them, nothing on me. All my thoughts are on them. I'm holding the last thought that I spoke: 'Now is the time.' (Pause.) They signed, Ricky. It was great. It was fucking great. It was like they wilted all at once. No gesture... nothing. Like together. They, I swear to God, they both kind of imperceptibly slumped. And he reaches and takes the pen and signs, he passes it to her, she signs. It was so fucking solemn. I just let it sit. I nod like this. I nod again. I grasp his hands. I shake his hands. I grasp her hands. I nod at her like this. ‘Bruce... Harriett...’ I'm beaming at them. I'm nodding like this. I point back in the living-room, back to the sideboard. (Pause.) I didn't fucking know there was a sideboard there! He goes back, he brings us a drink. Little shotglasses. A pattern in 'em. And we toast. In silence.

Pause.

Roma That was a great sale, Shelly.

Pause.

Levene ... Ah fuck.
Levene Would you? Would you . . .? Or you’re gonna what, fire me?

Williamson It’s not impossible.

Levene On an eighty-thousand dollar day? And it ain’t even noon.

Roma You closed ’em today?

Levene Yes. I did. This morning. (To Williamson.) What I’m saying to you: things can change. You see? This is where you fuck up, because this is something you don’t know. You can’t look down the road. And see what’s coming. Might be someone else, John. It might be someone new, eh? Someone new. And you can’t look back. Cause you don’t know history. You ask them. When we were at Rio Rancho, who was top man? A month . . .? Two months . . .? Eight months in twelve for three years in a row. You know what that means? You know what that means? Is that luck? Is that some, some, some purloined leads? That’s skill. That’s talent, that’s, that’s . . .

Roma . . . yes . . .

Levene . . . and you don’t remember. Cause you weren’t around. That’s cold calling. Walk up to the door. I don’t even know their name. I’m selling something they don’t even want. You talk about soft sell . . . before we had a name for it . . . before we called it anything, we did it.

Roma That’s right, Shel.

Levene And, and, and, I did it. And I put a kid through school. She . . . and . . . Cold calling fell a. Door to door. But you don’t know. You don’t know. You never heard of a streak. You ever heard of ‘marshalling your sales force’ . . . what are you, you’re a secretary, John. Fuck you. That’s my message to you. Fuck you and kiss my ass. You don’t like it, I’ll go talk to Jerry Graff. Period. Fuck you. Put me on the board. And I want three worthwhile leads today and I don’t want any bullshit about them and I want ’em close together cause I’m going to hit them all today. That’s all I have to say to you.

Roma He’s right, Williamson.

Williamson goes into a side office. Pause.

Levene It’s not right. I’m sorry, and I’ll tell you who’s to blame is Mitch and Murray.

Roma sees something outside the window.

Roma (sotto) Oh Christ.

Levene The hell with him. We’ll go to lunch, the leads won’t be up for . . .

Roma You’re a client. I just sold you five waterfront Glengarry Farms. I rub my head, throw me the cue ‘Kenilworth’.

Levene . . . What is it?

Roma Kenilw . . .

James Lingk enters the office.

Roma (to Levene) I own the property, my mother owns the property, I put her into it. I’m going to show you on the plats. You look when you get home A–3 through A–14 and 26 through 30. You take your time and if you still feel.

Levene No, Mr Roma. I don’t need the time, I’ve made a lot of investments in the last . . .

Lingk I’ve got to talk to you.


Levene Glad to meet you.

Roma I just put Jim into Black Creek . . . are you acquainted with . . .

Levene No . . . Black Creek. Yes. In Florida?

Roma Yes.

Levene I wanted to speak with you about . . .

Roma Well, we’ll do that this weekend.

Levene My wife told me to look into . . .
Roma Beautiful. Beautiful rolling land. I was telling Jim and Jinny, Ray, I want to tell you something. (To Levene.)
You, Ray, you eat in a lot of restaurants. I know you do... (To Lingk.) Mr Morton's with American Express... he's (To Levene.) I can tell Jim what you do...

Levene Sure.

Roma Ray is Director of all European Sales and Services for American Ex... (To Levene.) But I'm saying you haven't had a meal until you've tasted... I was at the Lingks' last... as a matter of fact, what was that Service Feature you were talking about...

Levene Which...

Roma 'Home Cooking'... what did you call it, you said it... it was a tag phrase that you had...

Levene Uh...

Roma Home...

Levene Home cooking...

Roma The monthly interview...?

Levene Oh! For the magazine...

Roma Yes. Is this something that I can talk ab...

Levene Well, it isn't coming out until the February iss... sure. Sure, go ahead, Rick.

Roma You're sure?

Levene (nods) Go ahead.

Roma Well, Ray was eating at one of his company's men's home in France... the man's French, isn't he?

Levene No, his wife is.

Roma Ah! Ah, his wife is. Ray: what time do you have...?

Levene Twelve fifteen.

Roma Oh! My God... I've got to get you on the plane!

Levene Didn't I say I was taking the two o'...

Roma No. You said the One. That's why you said we couldn't talk till Kenilworth.

Levene Oh, my God, you're right! I'm on the One...

(Getting up.) Well, let's scoot...

Lingk I've got to talk to you...

Roma I've got to get Ray to O'Hare... (To Levene.)

Come on, let's hustle... (Over his shoulder.) John! Call American Express in Pittsburgh for Mr Morton, will you, tell them he's on the one o'clock. (To Lingk.) I'll see you... Christ, I'm sorry you came all the way in... I'm running Ray over to O'Hare... You wait here, I'll... no. (To Levene.) I'm meeting your man at the Bank... (To Lingk.)

I wish you'd phoned... I'll tell you, wait: (To Lingk.) Are you and Jinny going to be home tonight? (He rubs his forehead.)

Lingk I...

Levene Rick.

Roma What?

Levene Kenilworth...?

Roma I'm sorry...?

Levene Kenilworth.

Roma Oh, God... Oh, God... (Roma takes Lingk aside, sotto.) Jim, excuse me... Ray, I told you, who he is is the Senior Vice-President American Express. His family owns thirty-two per... Over the past years I've sold him... I can't tell you the dollar amount, but quite a lot of land. I promised five weeks ago that I'd go to the wife's birthday party in Kenilworth tonight. (He sighs.) I have to go. You understand. They treat me like a member of the family, so I have to go. It's funny, you know, you get a picture of the Corporation Type Company Man, all business... this man, no. We'll go out to his home sometime. Let's see. (He checks his datebook.) Tomorrow. No. Tomorrow, I'm in L.A.... Monday... I'll take you to lunch, where would you like to go?
Lingk  My wife...
Roma  rubs his head.
Levene (standing in the door)  Rick...?
Roma  I'm sorry, Jim. I can't talk now. I'll call you tonight...I'm sorry. I'm coming, Ray.
    *He starts for the door.*
Lingk  My wife said I have to cancel the deal.
Roma  It's a common reaction, Jim. I'll tell you what it is, and I know that that's why you married her. One of the reasons is prudence. It's a sizeable investment. One thinks twice...it's also something women have. It's just a reaction to the size of the investment. *Monday*, if you'd invite me for dinner again...*(To Levene.)* This woman can *cook*...
Levene (simultaneously)  I'm sure she can...
Roma  (to Lingk)  We're going to talk. I'm going to *tell* you something. Because *(Sotto.)* there's something about your acreage I want you to know. I can't talk about it now. I really shouldn't. And, in fact, by law, I...*(He shrugs, resigned.)* The man next to you, he bought his lot at forty-two, he phoned to say that he'd *already* had an offer...*(Roma rubs his head.)*
Levene  Rick...?
Roma  I'm coming, Ray...what a day! I'll call you this evening, Jim. I'm sorry you had to come in...Monday, lunch.
Lingk  My wife...
Levene  Rick, we really have to go.
Lingk  My wife...
Roma  Monday.
Lingk  She called the Consumer...the Attorney, I don't know. The Attorney Gen...they said we have three days...
Roma  Who did she call?

Lingk  I don't know, the Attorney Gen...the...some Consumer office, umm...
Roma  Why did she do that, Jim?
Lingk  I don't know. *(Pause.)* They said we have three days. *(Pause.)* They said we have three days.
Roma  Three days.
Lingk  To...you know. *(Pause.)*
Roma  No I don't know. *Tell* me.
Lingk  To change our minds.
Roma  Of course you have three days.
    *Pause.*
Lingk  So we can't talk *Monday*.
    *Pause.*
Roma  Jim, Jim, you saw my book...I *can't*, you saw my book...
Lingk  But we have to *before* Monday. To get our money back...*
Roma  Three *business* days. They mean three *business* days.
Lingk  Wednesday, Thursday, Friday.
Roma  I don't understand.
Lingk  That's what they are. Three business...if I wait till Monday, my time limit runs out.
Roma  You don't count Saturday.
Lingk  I'm not.
Roma  No, I'm saying you don't include Saturday...in your three days. It's not a *business* day.
Lingk  But I'm not *counting* it. *(Pause.)* Wednesday. Thursday. Friday. So it would have elapsed.
Roma  What would have elapsed?
Lingk  If we wait till Mon...
Roma When did you write the check?

Lingk Yes.

Roma What was yesterday?

Lingk Tuesday.

Roma And when was that check cashed?

Lingk I don't know.

Roma What was the earliest it could have been cashed?

Pause.

Lingk I don't know.

Roma Today. (Pause.) Today. Which, in any case, it was not, as there were a couple of points on the agreement I wanted to go over with you in any case.

Lingk The check wasn't cashed?

Roma I just called down-town, and it's on their desk.

Levene Rick...

Roma One moment, I'll be right with you. (To Lingk.) In fact, a... one point, which I spoke to you of which (He looks around.) I can't talk to you about here.

Baylen puts his head out of the doorway.

Baylen Levene!!!

Lingk I, I...

Roma Listen to me, the statute, it's for your protection. I have no complaints with that, in fact, I was a member of the board when we drafted it, so quite the opposite. It says that you can change your mind three working days from the time the deal is closed.

Baylen Levene!

Roma Which, wait a second, which is not until the check is cashed.

Baylen Levene!!

Aaronow comes out of the Detective's office.

Aaronow I'm through, with this fucking mishagis. No one should talk to a man that way. How are you talking to me that...?

Baylen Levene!

Williamson puts his head out of the office.

Aaronow ... how can you talk to me that... that...

Levene (to Roma) Rick, I'm going to flag a cab.

Aaronow I didn't rob...

Williamson sees Levene.

Williamson Shelly: get in the office.

Aaronow I didn't... why should I... 'Where were you last...' is anybody listening to me...? Where's Moss...? Where...?

Baylen Levene! (To Williamson.) Is this Lev... (Baylen accosting Lingk.)

Levene (taking Baylen into the office) Ah. Ah. Perhaps I can advise you on that... (To Roma and Lingk, as he exits.) Excuse us, will you...?

Aaronow (simultaneous with Levene's speech above) ... Come in here... I work here, I don't come in here to be mistreated...

Williamson Go to lunch, will you...

Aaronow I want to work today, that's why I came...

Williamson The leads come in, I'll let...

Aaronow ... that's why I came in. I thought I...

Williamson Just go to lunch.

Aaronow I don't want to go to lunch.

Williamson Go to lunch, George.

Aaronow Where does he get off to talk that way to a working man? It's not...
Williamson (buttonholes him) Will you take it outside, we have people trying to do business here...

Aaronow That’s what, that’s what, that’s what I was trying to do. (Pause.) That’s why I came in... I meet Gestapo tac...

Williamson (going back into his office) Excuse me...

Aaronow I meet Gestapo tactics... I meet Gestapo tactics... that’s not right... No man has the right to... ‘call an attorney’, that means you’re guilty... you’re under sus... ‘Co’, he says, ‘Cooperate’ or we’ll go down-town. That’s not... as long as I’ve...

Williamson (bursting out of his office) Will you get out of here? Will you get out of here? Will you? I’m trying to run an office here. Will you go to lunch? Go to lunch. Will you go to lunch? (He retreats into his office.)

Roma (to Aaronow) Will you excuse...

Aaronow Where did Moss...? I...

Roma Will you excuse us please?

Aaronow Uh uh, did he go to the restaurant?
(Pause.) I... I... (He exits.)

Roma I’m very sorry, Jimmy. I apologize to you.

Lingk It’s not me, it’s my wife.

Roma (pause) What is?

Lingk I told you.

Roma Tell me again.

Lingk What’s going on here?

Roma Tell me again. Your wife.

Lingk I told you.

Roma You tell me again.

Lingk She wants her money back.

Roma We’re going to speak to her.

Lingk No. She told me ‘right now’.

Roma We’ll speak to her, Jim...

Lingk She won’t listen.

Baylen sticks his head out.

Baylen Roma.

Lingk She told me if not, I have to call the State’s Attorney.

Roma No, no. That’s just something she ‘said’. We don’t have to do that.

Lingk She told me I have to.

Roma No, Jim.

Lingk I do. If I don’t get my money back...

Williamson points out Roma to him.

Baylen Roma! (To Roma.) I’m talking to you...

Roma I’ve... look. (Generally.) Will someone get this guy off my back.

Baylen You have a problem?

Roma Yes, I have a problem. Yes, I do, my fr... It’s not me that ripped the joint off, I’m doing business. I’ll be with you in a while. You got it...? (He looks back, Lingk is heading for the door.) Where are you going?

Lingk I’m...

Roma Where are you going...? This is me... This is Ricky, Jim. Jim, anything you want, you want it, you have it. You understand? This is me. Something upset you. Sit down, now sit down. You tell me what it is. (Pause.) Am I going to help you fix it? You’re goddamned right I am. Sit down. Tell you something...? Sometimes we need someone from outside. It’s... no, sit down... Now talk to me.

Lingk I can’t negotiate.

Roma What does that mean?

Lingk That...
Roma ... what, what, say it. Say it to me ...
Lingk I...
Roma What...?
Lingk I...
Roma What...? Say the words.
Lingk I don’t have the power. (Pause.) I said it.
Roma What power?
Lingk The power to negotiate.
Roma To negotiate what? (Pause.) To negotiate what?
Lingk This.
Roma What, ‘this’?
Pause.
Lingk The deal.
Roma The ‘deal’, forget the deal. Forget the deal, you’ve got something on your mind, Jim, what is it?
Lingk (rising) I can’t talk to you, you met my wife, I...
Pause.
Roma What? (Pause.) What? (Pause.) What, Jim: I tell you what, let’s get out of here ... let’s go get a drink.
Lingk She told me not to talk to you.
Roma Let’s... no one’s going to know, let’s go around the corner and we’ll get a drink.
Lingk She told me I had to get back the check or call the State’s Att...
Roma Forget the deal, Jimmy. (Pause.) Forget the deal ... you know me. The deal’s dead. Am I talking about the deal? That’s over. Please. Let’s talk about you. Come on. (Pause.
Roma rises and starts walking toward the front door.) Come on. (Pause.) Come on, Jim. (Pause.) I want to tell you something.
Your life is your own. You have a contract with your wife.
You have certain things you do jointly, you have a bond there...

... and there are other things. Those things are yours. You needn’t feel ashamed, you needn’t feel that you’re being untrue ... or that she would abandon you if she knew, this is your life. (Pause.) Yes. Now I want to talk to you because you’re obviously upset and that concerns me. Now let’s go. Right now.
Lingk gets up and they start for the door.
Baylen (sticks his head out of the door) Roma...
Lingk ... and ... and...
Pause.
Roma What?
Lingk And the check is...
Roma What did I tell you? (Pause.) What did I say about the three days...?
Baylen Roma, would you, I’d like to get some lunch...
Roma I’m talking with Mr Lingk. If you please, I’ll be back in. (He checks his watch.) I’ll be back in a while ... I told you, check with Mr Williamson.
Baylen The people down-town said...
Roma You call them again. Mr Williamson ...!
Williamson Yes.
Roma Mr Lingk and I are going to...
Williamson Yes. Please. Please. (To Lingk.) The police (He shrugs.) can be...
Lingk What are the police doing?
Roma It’s nothing...
Lingk What are the police doing here...?
Williamson We had a slight burglary last night.
Roma It was nothing ... I was telling Mr Lingk...
Williamson Mr Lingk. James Lingk. Your contract went out. Nothing to...
Roma John...
Williamson Your contract went out to the bank.
Pause.
Lingk You cashed the check?
Williamson We...
Roma ... Mr Williamson ...
Williamson Your check was cashed yesterday afternoon. And we’re completely insured, as you know, in any case.
(Pause.)
Lingk (to Roma) You cashed the check?
Roma Not to my knowledge, no ...
Williamson I’m sure we can...
Lingk Oh, Christ ... (He starts out the door.) Don’t follow me ... Oh, Christ ... (Pause. To Roma.) I know I’ve let you down. I’m sorry. For ... Forgive ... for ... I don’t know anymore. (Pause.) Forgive me. (Lingk exits.) (Pause.)
Roma (to Williamson) You stupid fucking cunt. You, Williamson ... I’m talking to you, shithead ... You just cost me six thousand dollars. (Pause.) Six thousand dollars. And one Cadillac. That’s right. What are you going to do about it? What are you going to do about it, asshole. You fucking shit. Where did you learn your trade. You stupid fucking cunt. You idiot. Whoever told you you could work with men?
Baylen Could I ...
Roma I’m going to have your job, shithead. I’m going downtown and talk to Mitch and Murray, and I’m going to Lemkin. I don’t care whose nephew you are, who you know, whose dick you’re sucking on. You’re going out, I swear to you, you’re going ...
Baylen Hey, fella, let’s get this done ...
Roma Anyone in this office lives on their wits ... (To Baylen.) I’m going to be with you in a second. (To Williamson.) What you’re hired for is to help us — does that seem clear to you? To help us. Not to fuck us up ... to help men who are going out there to try to earn a living. You fairy. You company man ... I’ll tell you something else. I hope you knocked the joint off, I can tell our friend here something might help him to catch you. (He starts into the room.) You want to learn the first rule you’d know if you ever spent a day in life, you never open your mouth till you know what the shot is. (Pause.) You fuckin’ child ... (Levene has come out during the diatribe with Lingk and has sat at the back listening. To Levene.) Don’t leave. I have to talk to you. (To Williamson.) You fucking child ... (Roma goes into the inner room.)
Levene You are a shithed, Williamson ... (Pause.)
Williamson Mmm.
Levene You can’t think on your feet you should keep your mouth closed. (Pause.) You hear me? I’m talking to you. Do you hear me ... ?
Williamson Yes. (Pause.) I hear you.
Levene You can’t learn that in an office. Eh? He’s right. You have to learn it on the streets. You can’t buy that. You have to live it.
Williamson Mmm.
Levene Yes. Mmm. Yes. Precisely. Precisely. ‘Cause your partner depends on it. (Pause.) I’m talking to you, I’m trying to tell you something.
Williamson You are?
Levene Yes, I am.
Williamson What are you trying to tell me?
Levene What I was trying to tell you yesterday. Why you don’t belong in this business.
Williamson Why I don’t ... 
Levene You listen to me, someday you might say, ‘Hey ... ’ No, fuck that, you just listen what I’m going to say: Your
partner depends on you. Your partner ... a man who’s your ‘partner’ depends on you ... you have to go with him and for him ... or you’re shit, you’re shit, you can’t exist alone ...

Williamson (brushing past him) Excuse me...

Levene ... excuse you, nothing, you be as cold as you want, but you just fucked a good man out of six thousand dollars and his goddam bonus cause you didn’t know the shot, if you can do that and you aren’t man enough that it gets you, then I don’t know what, if you can’t take some thing from that ... (Blocking his way.) you’re scam, you’re fucking white-bread. You be as cold as you want. A child would know it, he’s right. (Pause.) You’re going to make something up, be sure it will help or keep your mouth closed.

Pause.

Williamson Mmm.

Levene lifts up his arm.

Levene Now I’m done with you.

Pause.

Williamson How do you know I made it up?

Levene (pause) What?

Williamson How do you know I made it up?

Levene What are you talking about?

Williamson You said ‘You don’t make something up unless it’s sure to help.’ (Pause.) How did you know that I made it up?

Levene What are you talking about?

Williamson I told the customer that his contract had gone to the bank.

Levene Well, hadn’t it?

Williamson No. (Pause.) It hadn’t.

Levene Don’t fuck with me, John, don’t fuck with me ... what are you saying?

Williamson Well, I’m saying this, Shel: Usually I take the contracts to the bank. Last night I didn’t. How did you know that? One night a year that I left a contract on my desk. Nobody knew that but you. Now how did you know that? (Pause.) You want to talk to me, you want to talk to someone else ... because this is my job on the line, and you’re going to talk to me: Now how did you know that contract was on my desk?

Levene You’re so full of shit.

Williamson You robbed the office.

Levene (laughs) Sure!

Williamson What’d you do with the leads? (Pause. He points to the Detective’s room.) You want to go in there? I tell him what we know, he’s going to dig up something ... You got an alibi last night? You better have one. What did you do with the leads? If you tell me what you did with the leads, we can talk.

Levene I don’t know what you are saying.

Williamson If you tell me where the leads are, I won’t turn you in. If you don’t, I am going to tell the cop you stole them, Mitch and Murray will see that you go to jail.

Levene They wouldn’t do that.

Williamson They would and they will. What did you do with the leads? I’m walking in that door – you have five seconds to tell me: or you are going to jail.

Levene I ... 

Williamson I don’t care. You understand? Where are the leads? (Pause.) Alright. (Williamson goes to open the office door.)

Levene I sold them to Jerry Graff.

Williamson How much did you get for them? (Pause.) How much did you get for them?

Levene Five thousand. I kept half.

Williamson Who kept the other half?
Pause.

Levene  Do I have to tell you? (Pause. Williamson starts to open the door.) Moss.

Williamson  That was easy wasn't it?

Pause.

Levene  It was his idea.

Williamson  Was it?

Levene  I... I'm sure he got more than the five, actually.

Williamson  Uh huh?

Levene  He told me my share was twenty-five.

Pause.

Williamson  Mmm.

Levene  Okay: I, look: I'm going to make it worth your while. I am. I turned this thing around. I closed the old stuff, I can do it again. I'm the one's going to close 'em. I am! I am! Cause I turned this thing a... I can do that, I can do anything... last night. I'm going to tell you, I was ready to Do the Dutch. Moss gets me, 'Do this, we'll get well...' Why not? Big fuckin' deal. I'm hoping to get caught. To put me out of my... (Pause.) But it taught me something. What it taught me, that you've got to get out there. Big deal. So I wasn't cut out to be a thief. I was born a salesman. And now I'm back, and I got my balls back... and, you know, John, you have the advantage on me now. Whatever it takes to make it right, we'll make it right. We're going to make it right.

Williamson  I want to tell you something, Shelly. You have a big mouth.

Pause.

Levene  What?

Williamson  You've got a big mouth, and now I'm going to show you an even bigger one. (He starts toward the Detective's door.)

Levene  Where are you going, John? ... you can't do that, you don't want to do that... hold, hold on... hold on... wait... wait... wait... (He pulls money out of his pockets.) Wait... uh, look... (He starts splitting the money.) Look, twelve, twenty, two, two... twenty-five hundred, it's... take it. (Pause.) Take it... (Pause.) Take it!

Williamson  No, I don't think so, Shel.

Levene  I...

Williamson  No, I think I don't want your money. I think you fucked up my office. And I think you're going away.

Levene  I... what? Are you, are you, that's why...? are you nuts? I'm... I'm going to close for you, I'm going to... (Thrusting money at him.) Here, here, I'm going to make this office... I'm going to be back there Number One... Hey, hey, hey! This is only the beginning... List... list... listen. Listen. Just one moment. List... here's what... here's what we're going to do. Twenty per cent. I'm going to give you twenty per cent of my sales... (Pause.) Twenty per cent. (Pause.) For as long as I am with the firm. (Pause.) Fifty per cent. (Pause.) You're going to be my partner. (Pause.) Fifty per cent. Of all my sales.

Williamson  What sales?

Levene  What sales...? I just closed eight-two grand... Are you fuckin'... I'm back... I'm back, this is only the beginning.

Williamson  Only the beginning...

Levene  Abso...

Williamson  Where have you been, Shelly? Bruce and Harriet Nyborg. Do you want to see the memos...? They're nuts... they used to call in every week. When I was with Webb. And we were selling Arizona... they're nuts... did you see how they were living? How can you deduce yours...

Levene  I've got the check...

Williamson  Frame it. It's worthless.
Pause.

Levene The check’s no good?

Williamson You stick around I’ll pull the memo for you. (He starts for the door.) I’m busy now...

Levene ... their check’s no good? They’re nuts...

Williamson Call up the bank. I called them.

Levene You did?

Williamson I called them when we had the lead... four months ago. (Pause.) The people are insane. They just like talking to salesmen. (Williamson starts for the door.)

Levene Don’t.

Williamson I’m sorry.

Levene Why?

Williamson Because I don’t like you.

Levene John: John: ... my daughter ...

Williamson Fuck you.

Roma comes out of the Detective’s door. Williamson goes in.

Roma (to Williamson) Asshole... (To Levene.) Guy couldn’t find his fuckin’ couch the living-room... Ah, Christ... what a day, what a day... and I haven’t even had a cup of coffee... Jagoff John opens his mouth he blows my Cadillac... (He sighs.) I swear... it’s not a world of men... it’s not a world of men, Machine... it’s a world of clock watchers, bureaucrats, office holders... What it is, it’s a f*cked-up world... there’s no adventure to it... (Pause.) Dying breed. Yes it is. (Pause.) We are the members of a dying breed. That’s... that’s... I want to talk to you. I’ve wanted to talk to you for some time actually... seriously. Did you eat today?

Levene Me?

Roma Yes.

Levene No.

Roma No? Come on, we’re going to swing by the Chinks, we got to talk.

Levene I think I’d better stay here for a while.

Roma Okay: Two things, then. One... I been thinking about this for a month, I said ‘the Machine... There’s a fellow I could work with,’ never, isn’t that funny? I never did a thing. Now: That shit that you were slinging on the guy today was very good, and excuse me if it isn’t even my place to say that to you that way; I’ve been on a hot streak, so big deal. What I’m saying, it was admirable and, so was the deal that you closed. Now listen: there’s things I could learn from you—you see, I knew we’d work well together—Here’s what I was thinking: we Team Up. We team up, we go out together, we split everything right down the middle...

Baylen sticks his head out of the room.

Baylen Mr Levene...?

Roma ... fifty-fifty. Or we could go down the street. You know, we could go anywhere...

Baylen Would you step in here, please...?

Roma So let’s put it together? Okay? (Pause.) Shel? Say ‘okay’.

Levene (pause) Hmm...

Baylen Mr Levene, I think we have to talk.

Roma I’m going to the Chinks. You’re done, come down, we’re going to smoke a cigarette.

Levene I...

Baylen comes over to him and forcefully leads him into the room.

Baylen ... get in the room.

Roma Hey, hey, hey, easy friend. That’s the ‘Machine’. That is Shelly The Machine Leo...

Baylen Come on. Get in the goddamn room...

Levene I...
Roma  I'll be at the resta...

Baylen and Levene have disappeared into the next room and the door is slammed. Pause.

Roma  Williamson: listen to me: when the leads come in...
listen to me: when the leads come in I want my top two off the list. For me. My usual two. Anything you give Levene...

Williamson  ... I wouldn't worry about it.

Roma  Well I'm going to worry about it, and so are you, so you shut up and listen. (Pause.) I GET HIS ACTION. My stuff is mine, whatever he gets, I'm talking half. You put me in with him.

Aaronow enters.

Aaronow  Did they...

Roma  You understand?

Aaronow  Did they catch...

Roma  Do you understand? My stuff is mine, his stuff is ours.

Williamson  Mmm.

Aaronow  Did they find the guy who broke into the office yet?

Roma  No. I don't know...

Pause.

Aaronow  Did the leads come in yet?

Roma  No.

Aaronow (settling into a desk chair) Oh, god I hate this job.

Roma (simultaneous with 'job', going out of the office) I'll be at the restaurant.