

"THE GUMSHOE"

Pilot Episode

"The Veronica Davis Case"

By

Sean King & Raymond Starmann

WGA #1438067

FADE IN:

SUPER: LOS ANGELES, 1947

INT. A HOUSE - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

A 1940's home decorated for a successful bachelor. Glenn Miller's "Moonlight Serenade" plays gently in the still night air. A coat rack that contains a worn Fedora and a weathered trench coat stand next to the hallway entrance. We float down the hallway and pass personal pictures and war mementos.

We follow the music which leads to an open bedroom. Discarded clothes and shoes litter the floor. Three period magazines and a .38 Detective Special revolver sit on a footlocker at the end of the bed.

Sitting on a night stand are a dozen red roses, an empty bottle of champagne, an empty engagement ring case and a radio. NICK MCGRAW, 35, reaches over and turns off the radio. DARCIÉ FAIRBANKS, 29, his beautiful girlfriend is still overwhelmed by Nick's proposal.

DARCIÉ

I still can't believe it.

She holds up her hand and displays the ring.

DARCIÉ (CONT'D)

Mrs. McGraw...It's got a ring to it.

NICK

You're damn right it does.

He kisses her. A phone rings, jolting them out of this tender moment. McGraw reaches for the receiver. He coolly picks it up.

NICK (CONT'D)

Hello?

BEN "BUCK" LAFORGE, Nick's assistant is on the line. There's a lot of noise in the background.

SPLIT SCREEN:

BUCK

It's Buck.

NICK

Yeah, I figured as much. You're the only one who calls at this hour. This better be good.

BUCK

Nick, you gotta get down here.  
There's five reporters in the  
office and they're asking a lot of  
questions.

NICK

Can't you handle it? Isn't that why  
I hired you?

Darcie strokes his shoulder.

NICK (CONT'D)

Besides, I'm a little... occupied.

BUCK

They're all over the VERONICA DAVIS  
case. Somebody tipped 'em off. They  
know we cracked it.

NICK

Is that so?

BUCK

MARTY JENKINS said if you don't get  
down here, he's putting it on the  
front page of the evening edition.

Nick puts his hand on his forehead and through his bed head  
hair.

NICK

Don't tell 'em a thing. I'll be  
there in fifteen minutes.

BUCK

Wait. What about the letter? You  
gonna bring it in so we can put it  
in the safe?

NICK

I'll handle it. I don't want it  
anywhere near that office. Don't  
let 'em leave. I'm on my way.

He hangs up and quickly scrambles to get dressed.

DARCIE

You're leaving?

A rumble of thunder in the distance can be heard.

NICK

Yes, but I'll be back before the  
first raindrop hits.

DARCIE

Promise?

NICK  
 Promise, and I'll swing by  
 Johnnie's and pick you up a slice  
 of apple pie on the way back.

She smiles.

NICK (CONT'D)  
 Don't worry gorgeous, after  
 tomorrow, things are gonna get a  
 whole lot easier for us.

Nick opens his night stand drawer. He pulls out a letter marked, "Special Delivery." He quickly places it in his front pocket and kisses her goodbye. He walks into the living room and over to a heating vent. He pries open a floor board perpendicular to the vent and places the letter between the two boards. He stamps down on the board, securing it.

EXT./INT. NICK'S CAR - NIGHT

Nick drives his 1947 Plymouth down Wilshire Boulevard. He becomes lost in his thoughts.

NICK (V.O.)  
 Veronica Davis was an up and coming  
 actress at RKO Pictures. Her  
 contract was up and apparently so  
 was her number. Rumor had it that  
 she was going to be the next Vivien  
 Leigh. Rumor also had it she was  
 smack dab in the middle of a love  
 triangle between LA's most powerful  
 young tycoon, Randolph Grant and  
 Warner Brothers contract star Bryce  
 Neville. The affair was cut short  
 when Neville and Davis' bullet  
 riddled bodies were fished out of  
 the La Brea tar pits like a couple  
 mastodons.

Nick pulls up to the curb and walks over to two ARMY OFFICERS standing underneath an awning, smoking. There's a crack of thunder and the skies open up with rain.

NICK (CONT'D)  
 Evening fellas, nice night, huh?  
 They got ya slaving away even on  
 Valentine's day.

ARMY OFFICER#1  
 You were in the service Nick. They  
 never heard of love. They work us  
 like the postal service.

ARMY OFFICER#2

"Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor  
gloom of night stays these couriers  
from the swift completion of their  
appointed rounds."

He pulls out a flask and gives Nick a nip. Nick takes a nip  
and points to Army Officer#2.

NICK (TO ARMY OFFICER#1)

Didn't know you were working with  
Shakespeare did ya?

The officers laugh.

NICK (CONT'D)

Stay safe boys.

Nick enters the lobby. JOHNNY, a 60 year old African-American  
doorman sits behind a reception desk reading DIME DETECTIVE  
MAGAZINE. He scrambles to get from behind the door and open  
the access gate to the hallway.

NICK (CONT'D)

Thanks Johnny.

JOHNNY

Evenin' Mr. McGraw. There's a whole  
slew of folks upstairs waitin' on  
you.

NICK

Is that a fact? The dogs must be  
hungry for a story again.

Nick heads for the staircase. It's roped off.

JOHNNY

Leo just waxed the staircase.  
You'll have to take the elevator.

Johnny opens the door to the elevator. Nick steps into the  
elevator and points to the magazine.

NICK

You keep reading those pulps and  
you'll be putting me out of  
business.

JOHNNY

I doubt that sir.

NICK

Stay dry, my friend.

The doors close.

INT. FOURTH FLOOR - SAME

Nick walks out of the elevator. He can hear loud commotion coming from behind his office. Through the frosted glass, he can see several men in Fedora hats milling about. The sign on the door reads, "NICK MCGRAW, PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR." Nick opens the door and enters.

NICK'S OFFICE

He's greeted by five reporters that he's well acquainted with. A photographer snaps a picture. It explodes across his face, temporarily blinding him for a second. Nick removes his trench coat and hat and hangs them on a rack.

NICK

Easy with the bulbs boys. You're just wasting 'em. There's no story here.

Buck finally makes his way out of Nick's office and into the lobby.

BUCK

I told em' Nick they wouldn't listen.

Marty Jenkins, senior crime reporter for the LA TIMES pushes Buck aside and gets in Nick's face.

MARTY JENKINS

Come on Nick we all know that's hogwash. Did you crack the Davis case or what?

Nick pokes Jenkins in the chest backing him off.

NICK

Let's get a few things straight. One, the only thing I'm going to crack is your skull if you don't get out of my face. Two, get yourself some Listerine. And three, I ain't gonna be bullied into any statements by you, the coppers or anyother two bit scribbler. Got it?

MARTY JENKINS

We're just doing our job, Nick. You know that. Throw me a scrap, anything.

NICK

Listen, I'm making an official statement today down at the Wilshire precinct. Marty, I'll give you a copy beforehand so you can lead with it and give copies to the others.

(MORE)

NICK (CONT'D)

Now, if you don't mind, I gotta a dame waitin on me with legs down to San Diego.

The guys all laugh.

REPORTER#1

That's the story I want Nick.

NICK

You would, you dirty rat. Now, get outta here.

The guys laugh again and exit. Nick closes the door behind him and turns his back to Buck.

NICK (CONT'D)

You couldn't take care of those knuckleheads?

BUCK

I thought I had it under control.

NICK

Yeah...just like you had it under control when I had to save your ass from the krauts in St. Lo.

Buck kind of smiles. Nick pats him on the back.

NICK (CONT'D)

Don't sweat it. You're still learning the game kid. Tomorrow's gonna be a big day for us. Go hit the rack. I'll lock up.

Buck starts to exit.

NICK (CONT'D)

I'm calling Adamonis and then I'm going home to my fiancée.

Buck smiles.

BUCK

You did it?

Nick nods.

NICK

How'd you like to be my best man?

BUCK

I'd be honored. Congratulations pal.

He shakes Nick's hand.

NICK  
Thanks. Sleep fast.

Nick picks up the phone and DIALS. A gravelly voice on the other end answers.

OFFICER#1 (V.O.)  
Wilshire Precinct.

NICK  
This is McGraw. Get me CAPTAIN  
ADAMONIS.

OFFICER#1 (V.O.)  
McGraw, it's two in the morning. He  
ain't here. Unlike you, some of us  
have lives.

NICK  
Yeah, well you better wake him. I  
just cracked the Davis case. If he  
wants the scoop make sure he's at  
Johnnie's at eight sharp.

Click. Nick puts on his coat and hat. He turns out the lights. Lighting crackles and illuminates the office. The building seems to shake violently from thunder.

INT. ELEVATOR - LATER

Nick steps inside and pushes "G". The doors close. The elevator moves down two floors then begins to shake. The lights flicker on and off.

TOP OF THE BUILDING

A loud CRACK of lightning hits the radio antenna. Electricity flashes brilliantly through a series of wires and coils on the roof. The electricity travels violently down the elevator shaft, which acts as a super conductor.

The elevator STOPS.

NICK  
Jesus...

He takes out a cigar and lights it. He leaves the Zippo lighter burning and looks for the call box. He picks up the receiver and hears nothing. Suddenly, the elevator sways violently back and forth. The force is so great, he's knocked to the floor. The shaking STOPS and the lights come ON. The elevator continues moving toward the lobby as if nothing happened.

The doors open. Nick stumbles out, bumping into a couch. He makes a dash for the street, where he vomits.

ON THE STREET

He looks down the dark street and realizes there's no rain. He continues around the building and notices his car is gone. He walks back inside the building. He looks around for Johnny. Something's off.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Johnny, you feel that?

No answer. Bums are crashed out on a couple worn lobby couches.

NICK (CONT'D)  
(louder this time) Johnny, you seen my car? (a beat) Johnny?

No answer. Nick takes the stairs two at a time until he gets to the second floor. He walks down the hallway and stops in front of his office. A sign on the door reads, GOMEZ, GOMEZ AND GUTIERREZ - ATTORNEYS AT LAW - SE HABLA ESPANOL.

NICK (CONT'D)  
What the hell?

He tries to open the door and the lock doesn't work. He goes down the hallway and stops in front of another door. A sign on it reads, IN HEAT PRODUCTIONS - EROTIC VIDEO DISTRIBUTION.

NICK (CONT'D)  
In Heat Productions?

There's a silhouette sticker of a woman with enormous fake breasts.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Nice cans...

Nick exits the floor and emerges inside the lobby again. The bums are fast asleep. He looks around.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Johnny!

He runs outside and looks down the empty street. He runs up the street to the intersection of Wilshire Boulevard. He stares in awe at modern billboards, placards and cars. He sees one familiar building, Johnnie's Diner, which stands out like a lighthouse in a dense fog.

Nick enters the diner. It's almost deserted. The diner has kept its unique 40's decor. He sits down at the end of the counter trying to make heads or tails of the situation. He sees a newspaper on the seat next to him. He picks it up and looks at the date. FEBRUARY 14, 2012. He drops the paper in disbelief.

A WAITRESS walks over to him.

WAITRESS  
What can I get you sweetie?

NICK  
Ah...a cup of Joe.(still reeling)

WAITRESS  
Cream and sugar?

NICK  
Black.

She places a cup and saucer in front of him and pours him a cup.

WAITRESS  
Anything else?

NICK  
Yeah...peace of mind. What's the date?

WAITRESS  
Monday.

NICK  
No, the year.

WAITRESS  
2010...

She pulls out her I Phone and shows him the date and time.

INSERT I PHONE

FEBRUARY 15, 2012, 2:11 A.M.

BACK TO SCENE

WAITRESS (CONT'D)  
Here, see.

He looks at it astounded, and backs off the counter in shock.

NICK  
It's not 1947?

WAITRESS  
(laughs a little) You're a pretty good actor. You had me going for a second. Late night on the set? I love your costume. It's so authentic.

He looks confused and glances at the newspaper again. TWO COPS enter. A cook turns on a large plasma TV to ESPN Sports Center. Nick looks at it in amazement. The waitress walks over to the cops who are standing behind Nick.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)  
(whispering) Officers, that guy over there.

McGraw stares in bewilderment at the TV screen.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)

I think this man's confused or something.

COP#1

What's wrong with him?

WAITRESS

I don't know. He thinks it's 1947.

COP#2

Great...another method actor.

The cops walk over to Nick who's frozen and staring at the TV.

COP#1

Excuse me sir.

No answer.

COP#2

Sir!

Nick snaps out of it and starts to back away.

COP#1

Take it easy. We just want to ask you a few questions.

NICK

Questions? I got a question. Where the hell am I?

COP#1

You're in Los Angeles.

NICK

The hell I am. (pointing to TV)  
What's that?

COP#2

I think you're a little confused sir.

NICK

Damn right I am. (a beat) Wait a second. Did Jenkins put you up to this?

COP#1

Jenkins?

NICK

Captain Adamonis? And, you expect me to believe you're cops? What kind of copper get-up is that?

Points to COP#2.

COP#2

Sir, just take it easy. Do you live around here? We'll drive you home. Or, do you have your own vehicle?

NICK

Course I do; but some hood stole it.

COP#1

Okay...what's the make and model? We'll see if we can locate it.

NICK

It's a '47 Plymouth Coupe.

COP#2

Classic huh? Nice...

NICK

Classic? Thing's brand new.

The cops look at each other.

COP#1

What's the license number?

NICK

W-9-4-5.

COP#1

Sir, we don't have time for this. Why don't we just give you a lift?

The waitress hands each the officers a couple cups of coffee to go and a bag of donuts.

INT. POLICE CAR - LATER

Nick sits in the back, taking in the environment. The cops sit in the front. The radio scanner is on and the laptop flashes alerts constantly.

NICK

What's that typewriter gizmo you keep looking at?

COP#1

Sir, you don't have to stay in character anymore. What's your address?

NICK

It's right up the road, 710 North Robertson.

The cops look strangely at one another and pull out into traffic.

EXT. 710 NORTH ROBERTSON BLVD. - MINUTES LATER

The police car stops in front of the house. A Rainbow flag hangs in the front.

COP#1  
Is this it?

NICK  
Ah...yeah.

COP#2  
Have a good night sir.

NICK  
Thanks fellas.

He exits as the cops gets a call.

POLICE RADIO (V.O.)  
139, we've got a 211 in progress at  
1932 Grace Avenue, please copy.

Nick walks up the sidewalk to his front door. He stares at the rainbow flag. He takes out his keys and tries to open the front door. It won't open.

NICK  
Son of a bitch.

He walks around the house to a window that belongs to a spare bedroom. He lightly pounds on the glass to cause a vibration, jimmying the round lever to come loose. After a few seconds, the window flies open and a BURGLAR ALARM begins to wail LOUDLY. He panics and starts to move toward the front of the house.

A FLOODLIGHT illuminates the driveway. A very large GAY MAN, CHARLIE stands in the driveway. He's big and shirtless and holds a shotgun on Nick.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Take it easy bub.

CHARLIE  
You take it easy Dick Tracy. You're the one breaking into my house.

NICK  
Your house?

HARLEY, Charlie's significant other walks down off the porch and hides behind his lover. He's a small, wiry Cuban-American. He wears a tank top that reads, "Top or Bottom?" He brandishes a butter knife like John Rambo.

HARLEY  
Yeah, our house.

NICK  
Easy toots. I can explain.

HARLEY  
Save it for the cops Columbo. Cause  
they're on the way.

SIRENS.

INT. POLICE CAR - LATER

Nick sits in the backseat. His hands are cuffed in front of  
him.

COP#2  
We leave you for five minutes and  
the next thing we know, we get a  
breaking and entering call.

NICK  
B and E? You got it all wrong. My  
keys wouldn't work, so I tried to  
jimmy my bedroom window. Next thing  
I know, Tom and Jerry are holding  
me at bay with a 12 gauge and some  
silverware.

COP#1  
Mr. McGraw we're going to have to  
take you downtown and book you.

NICK  
Do whatever you have to do boys.  
Fact remains, that's my house those  
two queens are nesting in. And, I  
got the papers to prove it.

INT. POLICE STATION - LATER

Your typical late night police station. Nick McGraw sits in  
front of a desk as a POLICE SERGEANT examines his i.d.'s.

POLICE SERGEANT  
Sir, I don't have time for this.  
Where's your real i.d.?

NICK  
It's all there, buzzer and driver's  
license.

POLICE SERGEANT

I don't know what game you're playing, but I've got three hookers and a loan shark to process before I can leave. You're not helping.

NICK

The hell I'm not! I told them I wanted to speak with Captain Adamonis! He'll vouch for me!

He stands up, enraged.

POLICE SERGEANT

Sir, sit down! There's no Adamonis here.

CAPTAIN SULLIVAN (O.S.)

There was.

CAPTAIN NATE SULLIVAN enters.

CAPTAIN SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

(to Nick) Are you talking about Paul Adamonis sir?

NICK

Of course I am. Get him on the horn and he'll clear up this malarkey.

CAPTAIN SULLIVAN

It's alright sergeant. I'll take it from here.

He escorts Nick over to a wall of plaques and pictures. He points to a plaque.

INSERT PLAQUE

It shows a picture of a 65 year old Commissioner Paul Adamonis taken in 1969. An engraving reads, LAPD - 1926-1969, 43 years of faithful service to the city of Los Angeles.

BACK TO SCENE

Nick stares in awe at the plaque.

NICK

Commissioner? 1969?

He looks at other photos and plaques.

NICK (CONT'D)

Ratigan? Muldoon? Kincaid? What's going on here?

He's now really confused.

CAPTAIN SULLIVAN  
Commissioner Adamonis passed away  
in '88.

Nick looks up at him and passes out.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESS SERVICES - MORNING

Nick awakens on a couch inside a social worker's office. A pretty Asian woman, CINDY NAKAMURA, 32, sits on a chair with a pad of paper on her lap.

CINDY  
Mr. McGraw?

Nick's blurred vision begins to focus in on her. He starts to see long, tan legs and slowly makes his way up to a pretty woman with a flower in her hair.

NICK  
Ah...yeah. Where am I? Some kind of  
rub and tug?

CINDY  
(unphased) No...You're in my office  
at the Department of Homeless  
Services. You were brought here by  
the police. I'm Cindy Nakamura,  
your social worker.

Nick props himself up on the couch, runs his hand through a head of greasy hair and looks at her.

NICK  
Yeah, and I'm Tojo honey.

She feels a bit uncomfortable at his racist remark and fidgets in her seat.

CINDY  
Mr. McGraw, you'll be happy to  
know, that all charges against you  
have been dropped. And, through  
California's generous "Homeless to  
Happiness" program, we're going to  
help you get back on your feet.

Nick sort of laughs. He reaches into his pocket and extracts a pack of Lucky Strikes. He pulls one out and is about to light up.

CINDY (CONT'D)  
Sir, it's against the law in  
California to smoke in a building.

Nick ignores her and lights up.

NICK  
Yeah, right. Good one.

He looks around for an ash tray.

NICK (CONT'D)  
You got an ash tray around here  
gorgeous?

CINDY  
If you don't put it out, I'm going  
to have to call security.

She grabs the phone.

NICK  
Security? Whatever happened to  
smoke 'em if you got 'em?

Nick extinguishes the cig.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Happy?

CINDY  
As I was saying, I'm here to help  
you get a job and a place to stay.

NICK  
I already got a place. At least I  
thought I did before Hansel and  
Gretel weasled their way in.

She shakes her head.

CINDY  
Look, I know this has been a very  
trying day for you. Why don't I  
drive you over to your hotel?

He looks her up and down.

NICK  
Fine. Run me over to the Sahara on  
Sunset.

INT. POLICE COLD CASE ARCHIVES - SAME

Captain Sullivan sits at a table examining a copy of the LA Times from 1947. He looks at a headline that reads, "**Private Dick Disappears - Coppers Suspect Foul Play.**" Under the headline is a picture of Nick McGraw in his trademark Fedora hat. He's standing with LAPD officers and other private eyes. The article is written by Marty Jenkins.

Upon seeing Nick's picture, Sullivan pulls out a magnifying glass from his drawer.

SULLIVAN

No way...

He shakes his head, pushes the paper away and stares into space.

SFX: KNOCKS ON A DOOR

EXT./INT. OLD HOUSE - SAME

Captain Sullivan knocks on a door. After more knocks, an older woman in her 80's, MARGIE, answers the door.

MARGIE

Yes?

Sullivan flashes his badge.

SULLIVAN

Sorry to bother you ma'am. Captain Sullivan, LAPD. May I come in?

She opens the door and lets him in.

MARGIE

Is everything okay officer?

SULLIVAN

Yes. I had a few questions I wanted to ask you about a private detective you might have known when you worked at the Wilshire Precinct.

They sit down on a sofa.

MARGIE

Sure, I worked there for forty years. Who are you referring to?

SULLIVAN

Nick McGraw.

MARGIE

(She laughs) Oh yes, Nick. What a character. Nice fellow. Handsome. A shame he died so young.

She shakes her head.

SULLIVAN

Did you know him well?

MARGIE

Not socially. I was married back then and he was a bachelor. So, we didn't run in the same circles.

SULLIVAN

Ma'am, did he have any type of physical characteristic you remember?

MARGIE

What do you mean?

SULLIVAN

You know. Like a mole or a scar, anything?..

A beat.

MARGIE

No...(thinking) Wait. He was in the war over in Europe. He had a bad time like most of the boys. That war was hell.

Sullivan nods.

MARGIE (CONT'D)

He was wounded.

SULLIVAN

Did he tell you that?

MARGIE

Not exactly. I remember seeing him at the precinct summer carnival. He was wearing a short-sleeve shirt. He had a large scar that ran from his wrist all the way up to his elbow.

She runs her hand from her wrist to her elbow.

MARGIE (CONT'D)

I didn't say anything to him. I heard he'd been wounded in Belgium.

Sullivan nods.

SULLIVAN

Thank you. You've been a big help.

MARGIE

Why all this interest in Nick now?

SULLIVAN

A production company was asking about the Veronica Davis case. They wanted to know a little about Nick.

MARGIE

If you say so.

SULLIVAN

Thanks you for your time. I can see myself out.

Sullivan exits.

INT. SULLIVAN'S OFFICE - LATER

Sullivan sits in front of his computer. After a moment, he opens Nick McGraw's service record and looks at it.

INSERT PAGES:

MILITARY SERVICE RECORD - McGraw, Nicholas C., Serial Number, 0934783. Born - 14 July 1912. Santa Clara, California.

Commanded D Company, 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division. Wounded in action - 10 January 1945 near Malmedy, Belgium.

Honorably discharged at Fort Dix, New Jersey - 22 December 1945.

BACK TO SCENE

Sullivan finishes reading, prints it and places it in his jacket pocket.

INT. CINDY'S CAR - LATER

Cindy drives down Sunset Boulevard as Nick soaks in the city's metamorphosis. Nick stares at her.

CINDY

What it is Mr. McGraw?

NICK

Oh nothing.

CINDY

What?

NICK

I just don't get it. You're a Jap and a woman. Shouldn't you be at home raising the Chan klan and watering a bonsai tree?

She turns right and drives underneath an arch and into the Sahara Sunset Motel parking area. She squeals hard to a stop.

CINDY

I'm an American Mr. McGraw, just like you. And, I'm damn proud to be a successful working woman. And, if you can't handle that, I suggest you request a new social worker.

(MORE)

CINDY (CONT'D)

Now, are you sure this is where you want to stay.

NICK

First of all, Mr. McGraw was my pop. Call me Nick. And, second, if this joint is good enough for Sinatra, it's good enough for me.

The hotel has definitely seen better days. Coming across the parking lot is a black transvestite and a white trash, obese, vacationing redneck family. Nick gets out of the car.

CINDY

Oh Nick.

She motions for him to come over to her side of the car. He walks around to her.

CINDY (CONT'D)

I almost forgot.

She hands him a piece of paper.

NICK

What's this?

CINDY

I got you a job interview tomorrow morning.

NICK

Thanks, toots.

CINDY

First of all, my name is Cindy. And, second, toots is out-dated. Good night.

She drives away. He smiles. He appreciates her sense of humor.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

From inside a room, a hotel door opens slowly. McGraw enters a dumpy room, turns on the light and looks around. He throws his Fedora like a Frisbee and it lands safely on the bedpost. He stares in awe at the modern phone on the night stand. He picks up the receiver and hears a dial tone. He looks at the buttons. McGraw dials "422-6549."

COMPUTER RECORDING (V.O.)

Your call cannot be connected as dialled. Please try again.

NICK

What the Sam Hill?

He hits the "0" button. A very young, female voice answers.

FEMALE OPERATOR (V.O.)  
Operator, how can I help you?

NICK  
Yeah, connect me to Garden 2 - 6,  
5, 4, 9.

FEMALE OPERATOR (V.O.)  
Excuse me sir?

NICK  
Garden 2 - 6, 5, 4, 9; and make it  
snappy.

FEMALE OPERATOR (V.O.)  
Sir, that isn't a number. But, I'll  
connect you to directory  
assistance.

SFX: Line clicking off and transferring.

NICK  
Hello? Hello?

411 COMPUTER RECORDING (V.O.)  
City and state please.

NICK  
Eh...Hollywood, California.

411 OPERATOR (V.O.)  
Your listing sir?

NICK  
I'm trying to reach Darcie  
Fairbanks in Hollywood.

The operator types away in the background.

411 OPERATOR (V.O.)  
I'm sorry sir, there's no listing  
for a Darcie Fairbanks in  
Hollywood.

NICK  
She's gotta be there. Try again.

A beat.

411 OPERATOR (V.O.)  
Sorry sir, do you want me to try  
another listing?

NICK  
No, that's okay.

McGraw hangs up slowly. He walks over to a circa 1990 TV mounted on a cheap stainless steel stand. A remote control sits on top of the TV. McGraw looks at it strangely. He hits some buttons on it, but it won't work since it's not pointed at the TV. The door to his room is still open and he spots the REDNECK DAD AND REDNECK SON walking past his room.

NICK (CONT'D)

Hey, Mac, give me a hand here will ya.

The Redneck Dad and his son enter the room.

REDNECK DAD

What's the problem?

NICK

What's with this radio contraption. I can't get it to work.

The dad and son look at each other strangely. The kid grabs the remote and turns on the TV. The kid starts surfing through a variety of cable stations.

REDNECK SON

That's not a radio. It's a really old TV. But, but at least you've got cable.

McGraw is taken aback by the modern technology. He looks behind the TV, expecting to find some kind of gag.

NICK

This thing is like a little movie theater box huh? Can you get Jack Benny and George Burns on here?

REDNECK DAD

Who?

NICK

How about Bogie?

It doesn't register either.

NICK (CONT'D)

Humphrey Bogart?

REDNECK DAD

I don't know...try Turner Classic Movies?

The kid channel surfs. He stops long enough on a station for McGraw to see something.

NICK

Wait. Hold it. Hold on.

REDNECK SON

What? It's some stupid commercial.

The commercial begins to play. A middle-aged Hispanic man in a cheap three piece suit sits at a large desk with books surrounding him.

TV (V.O.)

I'm Hector Gomez. Are you a victim of asbestos poisoning? Have you recently been diagnosed with mesothelioma? Call Gomez, Gomez and Gutierrez at 1-800-LAW-SUIT. Call now and we'll fight for you! Se habla espanol.

NICK

That greaser stole my office!

REDNECK DAD

Heck, they're stealing the whole damn country if you ask me. Well, we gotta get goin. Our NASCAR race is about to start. Nice meeting ya.

NICK

Likewise, thanks for the help.

They exit and shut the door. McGraw plays with the TV. He finds "Johnny Eager", an old B&W, B movie from the 40's. He smiles. He's found someone he recognizes, Lana Turner.

NICK (CONT'D)

That's more like it. What a dish.

McGraw walks over to the bed, which advertises a built-in, coin-operated massager for 50 cents.

NICK (CONT'D)

Fifty cents. That's highway robbery.

A beat.

He's exhausted and throws himself on the bed fully clothed. He falls asleep watching the movie. A scene plays with Robert Taylor as Johnny Eager, walking down a street.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Nick tosses and turns on the bed, mumbling incoherently to himself while dreaming.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREET - MORNING

Robert Taylor becomes Nick, as he strolls down the street, back at home in the 1940's. He turns a corner and--

INT. NICK'S HOUSE - SAME

Nick barges into his house with a smile. He's home. Nothing has changed since he left for the office, except now it's early morning.

NICK

Hey gorgeous, you're not going to believe what happened to me.

The house is silent. Nick walks into the kitchen, expecting her to be making breakfast. The kitchen is empty. Nick walks into the living room.

SPLIT SCREEN:

Darcie appears in the living room. They're standing next to each other, in separate dimensions.

DARCIE

Nick, is that you?

They can't see one another, but they can hear each other.

NICK

I'm home. I'm here.

DARCIE

Where are you?

Nick looks around. He heads toward the bedroom.

NICK

I'm in the bedroom.

Nick enters the bedroom. It's empty, but someone has slept in the bed. Darcie runs into the bedroom. They're still standing next to each other, but in separate DIMENSIONS.

DARCIE

(loudly) I'm here, I'm here!

Nick lays down on the bed.

NICK

Darcie, Darcie?

The sun bathes his face in hues of red and orange.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - SAME

The morning sun smothers Nick's face.

NICK  
(quietly, his voice fading like a  
volume control) Darcie?..

He wakes up suddenly. Nick looks around. He realizes the dream is over.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - MORNING

Nick walks down Hollywood Boulevard taking in the bizarre, tourist scenery.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

- Nick stares in awe at the array of stores, tourists and the casual, modern clothes people wear.
- Nick brushes off a Spiderman impersonator who tries to spray him with silly string.
- Nick poses for a picture with "Batman", "Bill Clinton" and an Asian tourist family.

BACK TO SCENE

Nick rounds a corner, and enters a seedy side street. He stops in front of a run down building and looks at a directory. Some of the names are so old, you can't read them.

NICK (V.O.)  
After getting my fill of so-called  
modern civilization, I paid a call  
on Mr. MILO ROBINSON, P.I.

Nick enters the building and leap frogs up two flights of stairs. He opens a door and steps inside a room the size of a hamster cage. MILO ROBINSON, age 45, sits behind a desk smoking a Tiparillo. He's dressed in Western business wear, complete with cowboy boots which are propped up on the desk. He's in the middle of a phone call.

A sign on his desk reads, "**Welcome to Hollywood Realty.**"

ROBINSON  
Okay, okay, so it didn't pan out  
like we thought. But, I can tell  
you, there's some great property in  
Watts you're really gonna love.  
It's all about urban renewal these  
days --

A beat.

ROBINSON (CONT'D)  
Hello? Hello?

Robinson hangs up, takes a puff of his Tiparillo and looks at Nick.

ROBINSON (CONT'D)  
What can I do you for?

NICK  
Sorry, Tex, wrong office. I'm looking for a private dick who calls himself Robinson.

Robinson stands up and switches the sign around. It now reads, "**Milo Robinson, Private Investigator.**"

ROBINSON  
I'm Robinson. You must be the charity case Nakamura called about.

Nick says nothing.

ROBINSON (CONT'D)  
Well, are you or aren't you?

NICK  
Am I what?

Robinson looks at him for a moment.

ROBINSON  
The homeless actor slash P.I. I'm supposed to hire.

NICK  
Homeless actor? You must have me confused with someone else pal.

Nick laughs.

ROBINSON  
Great duds by the way. 20th Century Costume hook you up? (a little quieter) Jesus, they sent me another 51-50.

NICK  
Look bub. I ain't taking no lip from a third-rate shyster like you. So shut your mouth or you'll be nursing a knuckle sandwich all day. I don't even know what I'm doing here.

ROBINSON  
What you're doing here is interviewing for a job.  
(MORE)

ROBINSON (CONT'D)

Besides the Bogart get up do you have any real experience as a private eye?

NICK

Sure I do. I worked for Roland Carmichael for three years before the war broke out.

ROBINSON

Never heard of him.

NICK

Figures. There's a lot of that going around these days. Ever since I got back from the war, I've been in business for myself.

ROBINSON

Were you in Iraq or Afghanistan?

NICK

W.W. Two.

Robinson shakes his head.

ROBINSON

Right... Look, I don't have all day, you want the job or not?

NICK

Doing what exactly?

ROBINSON

Working for me.

Nick whistles. He shakes his head.

ROBINSON (CONT'D)

Starting pay's 300 a week. No benefits. Take it or leave it.

Nick's eyes widen. He thinks 300 a week is the big leagues.

NICK

I'm in. I'm in.

ROBINSON

You got a tux?

NICK

I'll find one.

ROBINSON

Good. Here's your first assignment. It's right up your alley.

Robinson pulls a digital camera out of a desk drawer and hands it to Nick.

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL - NIGHT

A DOORMAN opens the front door for Nick. Nick is dressed in an out of style tux. It's not a perfect fit, but it'll do.

DOORMAN

Welcome to the Beverly Hills Hotel  
sir.

Nick glances at the front facade.

NICK

Thanks pal. It's been a while.

The doorman looks at Nick's bad clothing.

DOORMAN

I bet it has.

Nick strolls inside confidently.

NICK (V.O.)

The last time I was inside the  
Beverly Hills Hotel was in '46,  
when I was working for some jobber  
who thought Errol Flynn was  
schtooping his wife. He was right.  
Apparently, the phrase "In Like  
Flynn" was no joke, if you catch my  
drift.

Nick walks over to a corner and pulls out a small color photo of a beautiful blond woman. He gives it a once over and puts it back in his jacket pocket.

NICK (V.O.)(CONT'D)

The pink hotel had changed little  
in 60 years and neither had human  
nature. I was tailing some dish  
named SKYE FARMINGTON, a 22 year  
old party girl from the Hollywood  
Hills. The word on the street was  
she was having an affair with some  
rich geezer named GOLDMAN. Mrs.  
Goldman suspected the worst. That's  
where I came in. But, like any good  
Gumshoe, first things first. I  
headed over to the nearest gin-  
mill.

Nick strolls over to the bar. A BARTENDER approaches him.

BARTENDER

What can I get you sir?

NICK

Vat 69 - neat, and make it a  
double.

BARTENDER  
Is that a wine?

NICK  
It's bourbon.

BARTENDER  
Never heard of it.

NICK  
Give me whatever you got.

The bartender pours some bourbon for Nick and hands it to him.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Thanks bub. You seen this dame  
around here tonight?

Nick shows him the pic of Skye. The bartender shakes his head.

BARTENDER  
Nope. But, it's a big party. Good  
luck...

The bartender laughs a little.

NICK  
Yeah...

Nick tosses him a quarter and walks away. Nick sees a sign that catches his eye. It reads, "The Grant Foundation - 30th Annual Silent Auction - All Proceeds Go To The Los Angeles Cancer Society." Nick looks at the array of expensive art being auctioned and the wealthy people. He spots Skye Farmington and Goldman. He finishes his drink and follows them.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - LATER

The auction continues. Nick walks back inside. He sees a TV news crew setting up. A make-up artist is touching up someone's face. Nick freezes in step and stares at the man. The man is tan, has a full head of white hair and is in his 80's.

The man sees Nick and their eyes lock on each other for a moment. The man smiles and looks away as a pretty news reporter approaches him. Nick looks like he's just seen a ghost. He takes a step back and almost falls into someone's lap.

NICK  
S'cuse me.

A beat.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Who's that over there?

WOMAN  
Who?

NICK  
The fella with the cotton candy  
hair.

WOMAN  
Really? Come on...That's Randolph  
Grant. It's his party.

MAN  
Mr. Grant holds this auction every  
year. He's a wonderful  
philanthropist. He's donated  
millions.

NICK  
Uh-uh...

Nick turns around and looks at Grant again. He doesn't hear  
the man.

MAN  
You want to meet him? I'd be happy  
to introduce you.

Nick is still daydreaming.

MAN (CONT'D)  
Sir?

NICK  
Huh?

Nick snaps out of it.

NICK (CONT'D)  
No, no thanks. We've already met...

Nick walks away as the man and woman stare at him.

EXT./INT. LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY - DAY

Nick enters the building. He speaks to a woman at an  
information desk. He then walks into a smaller, adjacent  
room. An African-American man, LUTHER, 30's, wearing an army  
field jacket and Elton John type glasses sits in front of  
another viewfinder. He looks at Nick for a moment.

Nick locates a file cabinet marked, "Los Angeles Times - 1945-  
1949." He opens the drawer and pulls out several microfilm  
sheets. He sits in front of a viewfinder and then places a  
thin strip of microfilm on a sheet of glass. He gazes into  
the viewfinder.

INSERT: NEWSPAPER PAGES

The pages fly past rapidly as Nick searches for something.

NICK (V.O.)

When I saw Randolph Grant at the party, I wasn't sure it was him - until he smiled. I knew that smile. So, did Veronica Davis and Bryce Neville. It was the kind of smile that could kill. The years had been kind to Grant; too kind, kinder than I planned on being to him.

The pages slow down and a page comes clearly into focus. Page Two of the L.A. Times, dated February 21st, 1947. **The byline reads, "Fiery Mulholland Crash - Burbank Man Killed."** The article states, "Edward "Eddie" DeRose, long-time chauffeur for the Grant construction family was found dead after his Cadillac apparently careened through a guardrail and cascaded several hundred feet into a canyon. Police say the subsequent explosion incinerated the car and DeRose's body beyond recognition.

Another article, dated June 3, 1947, with a headline that reads, "Davis Double Murder Case Dead Ends."

The pages speed up again and stop. --

Another article, dated January 25, 1948, titled, "Construction Heir Cleared of Murder Charges. DA drops case." Underneath the byline is a picture of RANDOLPH GRANT in 1948. He's on a wooden yacht, surrounded by beautiful women sipping large martinis.

NICK (V.O.) (CONT'D)

You son of a bitch. You'll get yours.

BACK TO SCENE

Nick moves back from the viewfinder and thinks for a moment. He snaps a pencil in his hand like a twig.

LUTHER (O.S.)

Spec?

Nick looks around for the mysterious voice. He sees the African-American man in the army field jacket standing near his desk.

NICK

What?

LUTHER

Spec or assignment?

NICK  
What the hell are you talking  
about?

LUTHER  
Doing research for a screenplay  
right?

Nick laughs.

NICK  
I got enough problems right now.  
Last thing I'll ever be is some  
hack movie scribbler. And, I  
wouldn't trust Sam Goldwyn as far  
as I could throw him.

Luther looks confused.

LUTHER  
Who?

NICK  
I got a question for you boy.

Luther gives him a look.

LUTHER  
Boy? You may look old school. But,  
you need to check that shit at the  
door.

NICK  
Sorry.. if I wanted to find out  
information about someone, like an  
address or phone number, what's the  
easiest way to find it nowadays?

LUTHER  
On the Internet of course.

Nick doesn't understand. Luther picks up on his ignorance.

LUTHER (CONT'D)  
Come with me man.

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Luther leads Nick into the library's computer room. They walk  
over to a free computer and sit down. Nick looks in awe at  
the computers.

LUTHER  
Class is in session.

Luther clicks on Internet Explorer.

NICK  
What kind of device is this?

A young woman next to Nick gives him a glance as Nick looks behind the computer screen in awe.

LUTHER  
It's called a computer. Look man,  
I've had a rough week. You ain't  
messing with me are you?

NICK  
I wish I was. All this is pretty  
confusing to me. What do you do  
with it?

LUTHER  
Anything you want: read the news,  
watch porn, talk to people, pay  
bills. Shit, you can even go to  
college online.

NICK  
College?

Nick is now totally lost.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Can you find someone you lost touch  
with?

LUTHER  
All I need is a name brother.

NICK  
Randolph Grant of Beverly Hills.

LUTHER  
Shit...That's an easy one.

Luther heads over to Google and within seconds has several hits on Randolph Grant. He clicks on Grant Construction's website and finds a picture and bio of Grant.

Nick gazes at it.

NICK  
Jesus, that's him.

LUTHER  
You know him?

NICK  
(laughs a little)Yeah, you could  
say that.

A beat.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Can you run an address for me?

LUTHER  
What are you, a cop?

NICK  
No, better, I'm a gumshoe.

Luther moves to Google Maps.

LUTHER  
What's the address?

NICK  
540 Figueroa Street. Downtown.

Luther finds it. A picture of the building appears on the screen. Nick looks at the building and smiles.

LUTHER  
That what you need?

NICK  
Sure is.

A beat.

NICK (CONT'D)  
I owe you one.

LUTHER  
Actually two, but who's counting.

NICK  
How bout some Joe? There a  
drugstore with a soda fountain  
around here?

Luther gives him another look.

LUTHER  
No, but, there's a Starbucks across  
the street.

NICK  
Lead the way.

INT. STARBUCKS - LATER

Nick and Luther sit and sip their coffees. Nick looks at Luther's army jacket and a patch on his right shoulder.

NICK  
You were in combat with the Marne  
Division?

Luther is a little surprised.

LUTHER  
Yeah, two tours in Iraq. You a vet?

NICK  
Yep. 2nd Infantry Division.  
Normandy and the Bulge. I got hit  
pretty bad in the Ardennes.

Luther looks at him and is about to say something when a barista brings over a pastry and places it in front of Luther. He inhales the Danish pastry.

NICK (CONT'D)  
You might want to come up for air.

LUTHER  
Get off my back man. I haven't  
eaten in two days.

NICK  
Why the hell not?

LUTHER  
Because I'm homeless and  
unemployed, that's why.

NICK  
Homeless?

Nick whistles.

LUTHER  
I lost my teaching job. All my  
savings and unemployment ran out.  
And, here I am.

NICK  
This is America isn't it? Just keep  
knocking on doors and you'll find  
something.

LUTHER  
There ain't no opportunities  
anymore and the dream is dead. Even  
Obama can't fix things.

NICK  
Who?

Luther points at Nick.

LUTHER  
Just lay off the racist shit.

NICK  
I think I can help you out. We vets  
gotta stick together.

LUTHER

Yeah?

NICK

Yeah. But, I need to check with my boss to see if he'll hire a colored man.

Nick slaps him on the back.

LUTHER

(laughing)  
Man, you're a trip...

INT. SOCIAL SERVICES - DAY

Nick walks down a hallway. He enters Cindy's office. A grimy character brushes past Nick and gives him a dirty look. Cindy sees Nick. She wears a sundress and has a fresh flower in her hair.

NICK

Hey doll. You're looking fresh as a daisy.

Cindy gives him a curt smile.

CINDY

Thanks.

Nick sits down and begins to pull out a cigarette case. She looks at him and he stops.

NICK

Oh, that's right. This no smoking thing, how long has this been going on for?

CINDY

Since people found out it causes cancer and a million other things.

NICK

No kidding. I thought all it did was stunt your growth.

CINDY

How's your new job going?

NICK

It's swell. Milo's a little bit of a loose cannon, but I got everything under control.

CINDY

Good. Mr. McGraw, if you don't mind me asking you, do you have any other clothes?

Nick looks at his rumpled suit.

NICK

Sure, I do. At home. I got a whole closet full of shirts, suits, trousers, underwear and socks... back in 1947.

She looks dismayed.

CINDY

Well, I'm authorized to buy you 200 dollars worth of new clothing. How does that sound?

NICK

Let me get this straight. You're gonna buy me clothes?

CINDY

If it will salve your ego any, I'M not buying you anything, the state of California is. Let's go.

EXT./INT. EXPRESS STORE - DAY

Nick and Cindy enter Express. Loud Euro-pop music plays. Nick looks around and shakes his head.

NICK

What kind of joint is this?

CINDY

What do you mean? It's a clothing store. Come on.

She beckons him toward the men's section. A flamboyantly young gay salesman, JEROME, approaches them with a smile as large as a Double Y trailer. He wears tight clothes and has a headset on.

JEROME

Hi, I'm Jerome, welcome to Express. May I help you?

NICK

Help me with what pal?

JEROME

Help you pick out some clothing. We've got some great sales today!

He points to a wildly-colored dress shirt and a pair of jeans with holes in them. Jerome fields a call on his headset.

JEROME (CONT'D)

(to Nick and Cindy) Just a sec...

Jerome walks away a little...

JEROME (CONT'D)

Go with the sage dresser. You know how I hate maple.

Nick looks at Cindy.

NICK

That guy could change a nine dollar bill into threes.

CINDY

What?

NICK

He's a panty waist. A puffer.

CINDY

(laughs) So? Why does that matter?

In the background, Jerome continues to speak on his headset. Nick picks up a purple silk shirt and WHISTLES...

CINDY (CONT'D)

(to Nick) You have to respect everyone; even if they are different from you.

NICK

Is there any place in the City of Angels where a guy can get some duds without being waited on by Peter Pan?

EXT./INT. USED STUDIO CLOTHING STORE - LATER

They enter a store that sells clothing, studios and production companies no longer need. Nick sees a mannequin wearing a 1940's suit. The mannequin has a Panama hat on its head.

NICK

Now, that's what I'm talking about.

Cindy smiles.

MONTAGE: NICK AND CINDY SHOP

- Nick comes out of a dressing room in a three-piece 1940's blue suit. Cindy gives him a thumbs up.

- Cindy helps Nick search for Fedora hats. Nick tries on one that's too small. He places it on Cindy's head. She looks cute modelling it. She looks up at Nick and smiles.

- Nick is dressed in 1940's casual summer wear - khakis, a windbreaker and penny loafers.

- They exit the store, each carrying two shopping bags of clothing. Cindy wears her new Fedora hat.

- They sit outside at a restaurant, eating dinner in a cosy corner. They're laughing and having a good time.

BACK TO SCENE

EXT. RESTAURANT - EARLY EVENING

The waiter clears away their food. Another waiter pours coffee for them.

NICK

That was some great chow.

Cindy looks at Nick.

CINDY

Can I ask you something Nick?

NICK

Anything, shoot.

CINDY

How did you end up on the streets?  
You're so put together. You're not  
like the other people I deal with  
every day.

NICK

I'm not huh?

CINDY

You just don't come across as your  
standard schizo homeless guy.

Nick sips his coffee and glances at her over his cup.

NICK

What exactly did Captain Sullivan  
tell you about me.

CINDY

Not much; just that you lost your  
house and you knew some old cops or  
something and that...

NICK

What?

CINDY

That you were an actor and... you  
had a...you know...that you  
believed you were from 1947.

NICK

I am from 1947.

CINDY  
Please Nick, stop it. That's  
absurd.

Nick leans toward her. She backs away a little.

NICK  
Do you believe in time travel,  
Cindy?

CINDY  
(laughs) I never really thought  
much about it. You know why? Cause  
it's not possible.

NICK  
But, what if I told you that I  
stepped into an elevator during a  
storm one night and when I came out  
of that elevator, I was here.

Cindy shakes her head.

CINDY  
That's just ridiculous. Are you  
listening to yourself?

Nick chuckles to himself. He interrupts her.

NICK  
What if I could prove that I really  
was from 1947?

CINDY  
How are you going to do that?

NICK  
I can't tell you. But, you'll find  
out, believe me. It'll be all over  
the news.

She looks scared now.

CINDY  
I think we better get going Nick.

Cindy motions the waiter over. She hands him her credit card  
before Nick can even respond.

INT. MILO ROBINSON'S OFFICE - NEXT MORNING

Nick and Luther stand in front of Robinson's desk. Nick's  
wearing his new blue suit. Robinson rocks back in his chair,  
sipping coffee. He's reading the sports page.

ROBINSON  
What is it McGraw? I'm really busy  
this morning.

NICK  
I can see that. This  
is...uhh...Mr....

Nick realizes he doesn't know Luther's name.

LUTHER  
LUTHER. Just call me Luther.

NICK  
Right. Luther's a little down and  
out. I told him that you could  
offer him a job.

Robinson spits out his coffee and rockets up in his chair.

ROBINSON  
That was nice of you. Considering  
you've been working here what...48  
hours.

Luther looks at Nick.

ROBINSON (CONT'D)  
Luther, go outside and take five?

LUTHER  
Sure.

Luther exits and shuts the door. He walks over to a coffee  
pot and pours himself a cup. He sees a box of donuts. He  
glances back at Robinson's closed office door. He takes two  
donuts and puts them in his pocket. He takes a bite out of a  
jelly donut and listens with delight to the conversation  
behind the shut door.

NICK (O.S.)  
He's good, real good with this  
thing called the INTER-WEB.

INSIDE ROBINSON'S OFFICE

Robinson leans over the desk toward Nick.

ROBINSON  
(yelling) My three year old niece  
is good with the Internet. Who gave  
you the right to hire some homeless  
bum?

Nick leans across the desk at Robinson. They're inches from  
each other's faces.

NICK  
He's not a bum and I'm on the verge  
of cracking the biggest case this  
town has ever seen.

Robinson moves back in his seat. Nick doesn't.

ROBINSON

(laughs) Sure you are. You could barely figure out how to operate the camera when you were surveilling Skye Farmington.

NICK

How the hell did I know the thing doesn't use any film. It takes some kind of invisible pictures!

A beat.

NICK (CONT'D)

You ever hear of the Veronica Davis murder?

ROBINSON

Yeah, yeah, yeah, who hasn't. It's LA's most famous unsolved mystery. She and some actor were murdered a couple million years ago and dumped in the La Brea Tar Pits. It's ancient history. So what?

NICK

I'm going to crack the Davis case open like a walnut. But, I need his help. He helped me. I'm gonna help him.

Robinson drops his head to the desk and bangs it two times. He lifts his head up and looks at Nick.

ROBINSON

How in the hell are you gonna do that?

NICK

Don't worry about the details. Just think about all the publicity we'll be getting.

ROBINSON

(to himself more than anyone) I always did want a bigger office.

Robinson is almost suffocating in the tiny office as periodicals and books have stacked up over the years.

NICK

We're gonna need extra help. Enter - Mr. Luther.

ROBINSON

Fine, fine. Tell you what. I'll hire him. You got one week to solve the Davis case.

(MORE)

ROBINSON (CONT'D)

If I don't see any results by then,  
you're both outta here. You read  
me?

NICK

Loud and clear buckaroo.

EXT. WILSHIRE PRECINCT BUILDING - AFTERNOON

Police officers and civilians exit and enter the busy  
building.

INT. WILSHIRE PRECINCT CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME

Nick sits at a table in an empty conference room. He lights a  
cigarette and exhales in thought. Sullivan enters.

NICK

Thanks for seeing me captain.

They shake hands.

SULLIVAN

How you doing Mr. McGraw?

NICK

I thought the future was supposed  
to be a better place. I'm not so  
sure.

Sullivan smiles and looks at Nick's cig.

SULLIVAN

You're going to have to put that  
out.

NICK

Here too huh? Does anyone smoke  
anymore?

SULLIVAN

(laughs a little) Only if you have  
a death wish.

NICK

So, I've heard.

There's a moment's pause. Sullivan watches Nick put his cig  
out.

SULLIVAN

How can I help you?

NICK

I've got the goods on Randolph  
Grant.

Sullivan seems perplexed.

SULLIVAN

Excuse me?

NICK

He murdered Veronica Davis and  
Bryce Neville.

Sullivan's mind goes into auto rewind.

SULLIVAN

Whoa...Those are some awfully  
strong allegations Mr. McGraw. I'm  
aware that Mr. Grant was once a  
suspect, but he was officially  
cleared of all charges. It's been a  
cold case for 64 years.

NICK

Well, it's about to heat up because  
I know where he planted the murder  
weapon. Plus, I have an eyewitness  
account.

SULLIVAN

How?

NICK

That's for me to know right now.  
I'm gonna need a search warrant.

SULLIVAN

For what?

NICK

My old house on Robertson  
Boulevard.

SULLIVAN

Why do you know a search warrant  
for your own house?

NICK

It ain't mine anymore. Jack and  
Jill took over the mortgage.

Sullivan looks at him.

SULLIVAN

You better not be wasting my time.

NICK

I give you my word. This is the  
real deal.

SFX: A DOORBELL RINGS

INT. NICK'S OLD HOUSE - NIGHT

Harley and Charlie are hosting a small dinner party. Harley comes to the door in an apron. He opens the blind next to the door and peeks out slightly. He sees McGraw's Fedora-shadowed mug nearly pressed against the window.

HARLEY  
(screams) Ahhh...

CHARLIE (O.S.)  
What is it?

HARLEY  
Dick Tracy's back. Call the police.

SULLIVAN (O.S.)  
I am the police. Captain Sullivan,  
Wilshire Precinct. I've got a  
warrant to search the premises.  
Open up.

He places his badge in the window for Harley to see. Harley opens the door. Sullivan walks inside with Nick. Charlie comes over to the door. Half a dozen gay male dinner guests watch from the dinner table.

CHARLIE  
What's this all about officer?

SULLIVAN  
Mr. McGraw here's looking for a  
document that belongs to him.

HARLEY  
Why would we have anything of his?  
I mean really...

Nick looks down at Harley.

NICK  
Once upon a time, I used to call  
this place home, Mightie Mouse.

Nick brushes past him toward the living room. He looks at the dinner guests at the dining room table.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Sorry to break up the party boys. I  
won't be here long.

CHARLIE  
You can count on that. I'm  
documenting this whole invasion of  
privacy.

He films it with his cell phone. Nick walks into the living room, gives the room a once-over and walks to the heating vent on the floor. By now, all the guests have filtered into the room to watch.

NICK  
 (to Charlie and Harley) I like what  
 you did to the place. It's got  
 class.

They say nothing. Nick gets down on his hands and knees and examines the wooden floor board parallel to the vent.

NICK (CONT'D)  
 I'm gonna need a knife or something  
 to jimmy this open.

HARLEY  
 You are not touching my antique  
 hardwood floor!

NICK  
 Who do you think put this floor in  
 chum?

Nick points at him.

SULLIVAN  
 (to Harley and Charlie)  
 The man says he needs a knife, get  
 him one - NOW.

Charlie walks away and comes back with a steak knife. Harley looks at it.

HARLEY  
 That's our wedding silverware!

Charlie hands it to Nick.

NICK  
 Thanks.

Nick begins to pry off the floor board. It opens with a snap. Nick looks down and sees nothing but dust and dirt.

NICK (CONT'D)  
 What the hell?

He brushes the dust and dirt away and still finds nothing.

HARLEY  
 I knew it. I knew it! (to everyone  
 in general) Do you know how much  
 this is going to cost.

Nick stands up and looks around.

NICK  
Hold your horses, Rochester.

Nick looks back down at the air vent.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Wait a sec...That's not the original air vent. (to Harley and Charlie) Did you fellas put that in?

CHARLIE  
It was here when we moved in.

Nick sees a large wood and glass hutch.

NICK  
Captain, give me a hand will ya?

Sullivan moves to the other side of the hutch. They move the hutch out several feet. Plates and other antiques rattle.

HARLEY  
Please be careful. The Meissen China in there is worth a small fortune.

Nick looks at the hardwood floor. He sees a piece of floor board that's larger than the others. The board is four feet from the open vent.

NICK  
Bingo.

Nick gets back down on his hands and knees. He starts to jimmy the larger floor board. The piece of wood comes off with another SNAP. An old, shut, air vent is revealed.

SULLIVAN  
The old air vent?

NICK  
Yep...It's been sealed shut.

CHARLIE  
I think they put air conditioning in, in the 50's.

Nick begins to pry open a board next to the old air vent. It comes off. There's nothing but more dirt and dust.

HARLEY  
Alright, that's enough. You've had your fun. Get out of here!

Nick sweeps away the dust and dirt with his hand, revealing -- the Special Delivery ENVELOPE. He pulls it out, dusts it off and hands it to Sullivan. Nick hands Harley the bent knife.

Harley takes it away and gives him a dirty look. Charlie looks at the letter.

CHARLIE

Oh my God!

Sullivan opens it up and glances at it for a moment.

SULLIVAN

Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

He looks at Nick then at Harley and Charlie.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

We've got what we came for. Sorry for the inconvenience gentlemen. We'll be on our way.

They exit. Nick and Sullivan walk in silence to his unmarked police car. They get inside. Sullivan turns on the interior light and begins to read the letter out loud.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

February 13, 1947, Los Angeles, California. Dear Mr. McGraw: I've worked for Grant Construction Incorporated since 1935; first as a gardener then in my current position, as the family chauffeur. I have information concerning the murder of Miss Veronica Davis and Mr. Bryce Neville. I'm providing you with this information because I cannot, in good conscience, continue to withhold it from you, the victims families or the police.

FLASHBACK IN BLACK AND WHITE:

A young Randolph Grant makes a call from a pay phone booth on a street corner.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

On the night of February 10th, 1947, I received a call from Randolph Grant. He was at a phone booth near the corner of 8th and Hauser, three blocks from the La Brea Tar Pits. He said he had too much to drink and that he needed a lift home.

Eddie DeRose arrives in a Cadillac and Grant gets inside. His shirt and face are marked with blood.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

When I picked him up, I noticed he had blood on his shirt and face.

(MORE)

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

I asked him what happened and he said he'd been mugged.

The Cadillac pulls into a building site.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

On the way back home, he told me to make a stop downtown at 540 Figueroa, his father's construction site. He said that he was going to change in the trailer. He didn't want his mother or father to see him in that condition. Ten minutes later, I got out myself and followed him. He did change and wash up in the trailer. But, then he did something unexpected. He entered the new site.

From the shadows, Eddie watches Grant enter the construction site and place the pistol inside the cornerstone.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

I watched from a distance as he placed a pistol inside a hollow, white corner stone. He sealed the stone and then cemented it into place. It's the third cornerstone from the ground, on the east side of the building. You can't miss it. I hope this information can be helpful to the police to bring Randolph Grant to justice. Edward De Rose.

BACK TO SCENE

Sullivan places the letter in his jacket pocket. He looks at Nick whose face is illuminated by the light.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

(softly) Just who in the hell are you?

NICK

I told you captain. I'm Nick McGraw.

SULLIVAN

Nick McGraw disappeared off the face of the earth in 1947. I read the newspaper clippings. He was never seen again.

Nick says nothing. He lets Sullivan finish.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

I'm supposed to believe that you're him and that somehow, somehow, you're here now.

Nick nods.

NICK

That's the jist of it. You think you're confused.

SULLIVAN

Will you show me your left arm please.

Nick takes off his suit jacket and rolls up his shirt sleeve, revealing a long scar from his left wrist to past his elbow.

NICK

Satisfied captain?

SULLIVAN

How'd get it?

NICK

I was leading a recon patrol during the Bulge. Krauts hit us hard. The scar's from a bunch of mortar fragments I soaked up like a sponge. I can still hear those burp guns in my sleep.

SULLIVAN

Your unit?

NICK

(smiles) Dog Company, 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry.

SULLIVAN

Division?

NICK

The Second. Anything else? You want to know Virginia Mayo's bra size?

Sullivan laughs a little.

SULLIVAN

I think I need a drink, maybe two or three. You want to join me?

NICK

You'll never have to ask me twice captain. Plus, I got a few questions of my own.

SULLIVAN

Let's head over to Finn McCool's.

They pull away from the curb and drive off into the night.

EXT./INT. BUILDING DEMOLITION SITE AT 540 FIGUEROA STREET -  
NEXT MORNING

Sounds of a jackhammer. A CONSTRUCTION WORKER breaks open the cornerstone on the building as Captain Sullivan watches him. Several other construction workers observe. Police officers guard a makeshift perimeter of yellow tape. The building is scheduled to be demolished that morning.

In the background, a large billboard advertises the future site of Grant Towers, luxury condos. On the street news crews cover the event. Sullivan yells at the construction worker with the jackhammer.

SULLIVAN

How much longer?

The worker stops the jackhammer for a moment.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER

Five minutes, maybe less.

Sullivan nods and the man starts up the jackhammer again. A black limo pulls up in front of the building. A driver jumps out and opens the side door. Randolph Grant emerges from the car with his LAWYER. They walk over to Sullivan.

GRANT

(loudly) What's the meaning of this? This building should've been down by now.

Sullivan pulls out his badge.

SULLIVAN

(loudly) Sullivan, LAPD, Homicide. I've got a warrant to search this property.

LAWYER

On what grounds?

SULLIVAN

Murder one.

LAWYER

Let's see it.

The three move away from the noise. Sullivan pulls out the search warrant and shows it to the lawyer. The lawyer glances at it and looks at Grant.

LAWYER (CONT'D)

There's nothing we can do Mr. Grant.

GRANT

The hell there isn't! No one tears apart one of my buildings without my permission. No one!

SULLIVAN

Tell it to Judge Chandler, Grant. He's the one who signed it.

The lawyer whispers something into Grant's ear. Grant nods and they back off toward a shaded area. Grant leans against a wall. The construction worker stops the jackhammer.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER

(to Sullivan) I've got something sir.

Sullivan walks over and looks down. He puts on a rubber glove and reaches into the stone. He extracts the 9mm Luger and holds it up in the air. Grant and the lawyer look at each other. Sullivan hands the pistol to another detective who places it in a plastic bag. Grant's lawyer walks over to Sullivan. Grant watches the scene and shakes his head.

NICK (O.S.)

Tough break, huh Grant?

Grant slowly turns around. He looks directly into the face of Nick. Grant turns white.

NICK (CONT'D)

It's the ghost of Christmas past.

GRANT

McGraw?

NICK

So you remembered.

GRANT

How? It's not possible.

NICK

Justice is immortal bub.

The lawyer walks over to Nick and Grant. Grant starts to have difficulty breathing.

NICK (CONT'D)

(sarcastically) Is there a problem Grant?

Grant gasps for air.

LAWYER

Mr. Grant, do you need your inhaler, sir?

Grant nods. The lawyer reaches into Grant's jacket and pulls out his inhaler and hands it to him. Grant takes several puffs, which bring him back to life. Nick walks over to Grant and gets in his face.

NICK

Having trouble breathing? Wait to they turn the gas on, you murdering son of a bitch!

LAWYER

(to Nick) Get away from him! (to the cops) He's harassing my client. Get this man out of here!

The cops rush over. Sullivan sees them and runs over himself, grabbing Nick and hustling him away into a nearby unmarked police car. A mob of reporters flood the area. The police car drives away in a hurry. Inside the police car, Nick looks out. He sees Grant watching them. Nick smiles. He knows he's won.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

- Lab technicians examine the 9mm Luger. The pistol is tested for fingerprints.
- Lab technicians run tests on several bullet fragments.
- Eddie DeRose's letter is checked for fingerprints.
- Eddie DeRose's corpse is exhumed from a cemetery.
- A coroner and assistants examine Eddie DeRose's decomposed corpse.
- Lab technicians run DNA tests.
- A police officer hands Sullivan a report.

NICK (V.O.)

For the next two weeks, a dozen eggheads combed through all the evidence. The late chauffeur's char-broiled corpse was also exhumed. Meanwhile, scientists were running tests on something called DNA. I don't know what it is. But, they seem to swear by it. The final report was delivered to Captain Sullivan on a Friday night. That's when my phone rang at the Sahara.

BACK TO SCENE

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Nick sits in bed, sipping a bourbon and watching the news. The phone rings. Nick answers.

NICK  
McGraw...

SULLIVAN (V.O.)  
It's Sullivan. You need to get down to the station.

NICK  
Good news?

SULLIVAN (V.O.)  
It's all you ever wanted. I'll send a black and white to pick you up.

Nick hangs up. He smiles.

INT. SULLIVAN'S OFFICE - LATER

Nick sits in front of Sullivan's desk. He pours Nick a glass of bourbon and one for himself. He sits down and opens a report.

SULLIVAN  
I'll make it short and sweet.

NICK  
Shoot.

SULLIVAN  
Ballistics matched the bullet fragments in Davis and Neville to Grant's Luger.

Nick nods.

NICK  
Fingerprints?

SULLIVAN  
Too old. We couldn't make heads or tails of them, even with our technology. But, we found Grant's DNA on a couple fragments that were in Davis' torso.

Nick looks at him curiously.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)  
Here's the best part though. We were able to pull some small bullet fragments from Eddie DeRose's skull. They matched right up with the Luger as well.

Nick whistles.

NICK

Damn! That smug bastard didn't even use a different piece. He must've known DeRose saw him plant the gun. Grant couldn't keep him around. He knew too much. So, he capped him in the head a couple times, doused the car with gas and rolled it off the cliff. Instant Chinese New Year.

SULLIVAN

He would've been convicted for all three homicides if you hadn't disappeared. He spent his whole life thinking he had gotten away with the crime of the century; and he had, until you appeared out of nowhere.

NICK

(smiles) You got an arrest warrant yet?

Sullivan pulls it out of his drawer and looks at it.

SULLIVAN

Right here my friend. You want in on the collar?

NICK

What do you think? I got unfinished business to take care of.

SULLIVAN

Meet me here tomorrow morning at six.

NICK

You got it. You know, this calls for a celebration. Finn McCool's?

SULLIVAN

Just one round. I got a wife to go home to.

NICK

(very softly to himself) So do I...

They exit the office and Sullivan shuts off the light.

MATCH CUT:

EXT. LOS ANGELES - DAWN

A very dark L.A. metamorphoses into a brilliantly incandescent crimson dawn.

EXT. BEL AIR - MORNING

Three police cars race through Bel Air streets and pull into the driveway of a huge mansion. Nick, Sullivan and two other detectives jump out of their cars. Nick and Sullivan walk to the door and ring the bell. No answer. Sullivan knocks hard on the door several times.

SULLIVAN

Randolph Grant, this is Captain Sullivan, LAPD. I have a warrant for your arrest. Open up!

No answer. Sullivan looks at Nick and the other two cops.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

You guys check around the back.

Nick and the others nod, split up and move toward the rear of the house. Nick pulls out his .38 Special.

THE BACK YARD

Nick probes around the yard slowly. He approaches a window and looks inside the house carefully. The house looks dark and quiet.

NICK

(to himself) He flew the coop.

Nick jogs back around the house and meets Sullivan who's still at the door and talking to a Hispanic maid.

SULLIVAN

(to the maid) Gracias. (to Nick) Maid said Grant left with a suitcase an hour ago.

NICK

Someone must've tipped him off.

Sullivan's cell phone rings.

SULLIVAN

Captain Sullivan. Yeah, I'll put him on. Hold on. (to Nick) It's some guy named Luther. Says he works with you.

Sullivan hands Nick the cell phone. Nick doesn't know how to use it. Sullivan shows him.

NICK

Hello?

INTERCUT: NICK/LUTHER

INT. MILO ROBINSON'S OFFICE - SAME

Luther sits at a computer, eating a donut and sipping coffee.

LUTHER

I ran a check of all flight reservations out of LAX, Burbank and local airports.

NICK

And?

LUTHER

Brother Grant chartered a flight to Baja. It's leaving in one hour.

NICK

From where?

LUTHER

Van Nuys Airport.

NICK

Good job Luther.

Nick hands the phone to Sullivan.

NICK (CONT'D)

We got him.

EXT. VAN NUYS AIRPORT - DAY

Three police cars drive into Van Nuys Airport with their sirens blaring.

INT. POLICE CAR - SAME

Nick sits next to Sullivan, who's driving and talking on the phone.

SULLIVAN

Runway what?

A beat.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

Got it.

Sullivan hangs up and turns the car sharply off the road and on to a runway. He looks at Nick.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)

Grant's on that plane.

Nick spots the plane in the distance. Sullivan accelerates and grabs the radio.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)  
All units, suspect is on the white  
Gulfstream that's taxiing out  
there.

He puts the radio down.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)  
(to Nick) I'm gonna cut it off.

Sullivan guns the car. The plane gains speed. They're going to lose the race.

NICK  
We're never gonna catch it.

SULLIVAN  
There's a M-16 rifle under the  
seat.

Nick reaches under the seat and pulls out the M-16.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)  
Take the selector switch off safe.

Nick rolls down the window. Sullivan moves closer to the plane. Nick aims out the window.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)  
(yelling) Hit the tires!

Nick fires off several bursts. The first two bursts miss, but the third one hits one tire, causing it to blow and shred. The plane begins to fishtail violently. The plane begins to brake, and then spins around like an out of control top. It finally stops.

Two staircases are deployed and two pilots, three flight attendants and two passengers jump out. But, not Grant. Sullivan and Nick jump out of their car. Sullivan and Nick run toward the plane with guns drawn.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)  
I'll take the front staircase, you  
go through the rear.

NICK  
Got it.

Both of them climb up the stairs. The others from the plane are hustled away by other police officers.

INSIDE THE PLANE

Sullivan bursts into the plane first.

SULLIVAN

It's over Grant. You're surrounded.  
Come on out and make it easy on  
yourself.

Grant steps out of the shadows and fires three times at Sullivan. Two rounds miss, but one hits him in the shoulder, knocking him down the staircase. Nick hears the shots and rushes through the main cabin. He knows Grant is up front in the smaller cabin.

NICK

You're going down bub. How you do  
it, is your own choice.

GRANT

I'm not going to prison McGraw.

NICK

Then you're dying here.

A shot ricochets through the closed cabin door. Nick moves toward the door and opens it suddenly. He storms into the cabin. Grant is gone! The cockpit door flies open! Grant fires two shots at Nick. Nick dives for the floor and Grant misses. In a split second, Nick fires two shots at Grant. One hits him in the chest. Grant falls backward on the co-pilot's controls.

Nick walks toward the cockpit. Grant, attempts to aim his pistol at Nick.

NICK (CONT'D)

Don't do it...

Grant begins to level the pistol at Nick and is about to pull the trigger. Nick fires twice, finishing him off. He falls to the floor, dead.

INT. SANTA MONICA AIRPORT TERMINAL - LATER

LIEUTENANT RIBAUDO, of the Wilshire Precinct stands at a podium. Seated next to him to his left and right are Milo Robinson, Nick, Luther and three police officers who were involved in the incident. A large crowd of news reporters stand in front of the podium.

LIEUTENANT RIBAUDO

I'm Lieutenant Ribaud, of the  
LAPD. I'd like to begin this press  
conference by informing you that  
Captain Nate Sullivan is in stable  
condition. Randolph Grant was shot  
and killed when the aircraft was  
stormed by Captain Sullivan who was  
aided by Mr. McGraw.

Several reporters try and ask questions.

LIEUTENANT ORLANDO  
Please hold your questions until  
later.

Ribaudo looks at Nick.

LIEUTENANT ORLANDO (CONT'D)  
Mr. McGraw, would you care to speak  
to the press?

Nick is about to say something when Milo pipes in.

ROBINSON  
I'm Milo Robinson, Mr. McGraw's  
employer and owner of Milo  
Robinson, Private Investigators in  
Hollywood. I...

Nick rolls his eyes as Milo continues rambling on.

NICK (V.O.)  
Milo finally got his cheap  
notoriety he'd been always looking  
for. I was bombarded with a million  
questions that week by a thousand  
and one curious reporters. I even  
made the talk show circuit.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

- Nick comes out on the Tonight Show and greets Jay Leno. Jay gets a big kick out of his 1940's outfit.
- Nick jams with Jimmy Fallon and the band Roots. Nick plays sax.
- Surrounded by darkness, Nick is interviewed by Charlie Rose.
- A split screen - Nick is interviewed by Nancy Grace. She waves a paper in her hands.

NANCY GRACE  
Mr. McGraw, I have documented  
evidence that your real name is  
Harvey Lawrence. We ain't buyin'  
that snake oil you're sellin'.

NICK  
You know you're much better looking  
when you pout. I knew a dame just  
like you, back in '39.

BACK TO SCENE

INT. A PROFESSOR'S OFFICE, UCLA - SAME

Your typical office for a college physics professor. In a corner a TV plays. PROFESSOR CHRISTOPHER WASHBURN sits and watches Nick McGraw's appearance on the Nancy Grace Show.

He shuts off the TV and walks over to a safe. He unlocks it and extracts a file, marked "TOP SECRET - PROJECT FANTASIA." He takes the file and opens it. There's a picture of Nick's office building in 1947. He shuts the file and reaches for his cell phone.

INT. NICK'S OLD HOUSE - DAY

A car pulls into the driveway.

INT. A CAR - SAME

Nick looks at Cindy Nakamura.

NICK

What gives? I thought we were going to see a flick. Instead you pull up at Fred and Ginger's...

CINDY

Relax. They're not as bad you think. I've got a surprise for you. Come on.

They get out of the car and climb a staircase leading to an apartment. She opens the door and turns on the light. Harley and Charlie stand inside. The apartment is completely furnished in a 1940's motif, with the exception of a big screen TV on the wall.

NICK

This wasn't my idea. She dragged me up here.

Harley hands Nick a glass of bourbon.

HARLEY

Relax, Dick Tracy. You're standing in your new home.

NICK

MY WHAT?

CHARLIE

This apartment's all yours, if you want it.

Nick looks at Cindy. Then one hard look at Harley and Charlie.

NICK

You boys aren't pulling my leg are you? We haven't exactly hit it off.

CHARLIE

Consider this a fresh start.

NICK

Well, it sure beats the Sahara. (to Cindy) You know that place has gone downhill since the 40's.

A beat.

NICK (CONT'D)

What's the rent?

HARLEY

Don't worry about it. We'll work it out later.

NICK

If you say so.

Nick walks around, checking things out.

NICK (CONT'D)

You know this apartment wasn't here when I owned the house. You boys add it on?

HARLEY

No. It was built in '65.

CINDY

Well, Nick...What do you say?

NICK

Why not. I'm in. Thanks, thanks a whole lot. You're a couple grade A queens.

CHARLIE AND HARLEY

You're welcome. We think...

Nick extends his hand. They shake hands. They've crossed a barrier for good. Harley plays with the TV. He turns on the local news. Nick checks out the news, still fascinated by TV.

TV (V.O.)

The Santa Monica Public Library welcomed another guest speaker for its living history week. Ben "Buck" La Forge, an 86 year old veteran of the Battle of the Bulge in 1944, spoke for an hour about his service in World War II.

Nick drops his glass and faints.

HARLEY

Oh my God!

CHARLIE

Nick, Nick!

Charlie gets on his knees and looks at Nick. Nick is barely conscious. He looks at Charlie's blurred face.

NICK

BUCK...

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

Nick enters the retirement home and is greeted by a woman at the desk. She leads him down a hallway. Nick looks through a glass window. He sees Buck sitting in a wheelchair, watching a WW II documentary on TV. Nick enters the room quietly. Buck doesn't see him. He's lost in the program.

NICK

We could've held longer, but those  
bums in Fox Company fell apart like  
Humpty Dumpty.

BUCK

What do you expect? We had Tigers  
crawling up our --

Buck suddenly FREEZES, stops talking and slowly turns his head. He sees Nick and is speechless.

NICK

Buck, old buddy...

BUCK

Nick?

Buck climbs out of the wheelchair. Nick walks toward him. Buck falls into Nick. They hug and backslap each other.

EXT. A PORCH AT THE RETIREMENT HOME - LATER

As the sun goes down, Nick and Buck sit at a table, sipping beers and looking at an old photo album. They have the time of their lives; war buddies reunited after so many lost years.

FADE OUT:

THE END