

# AMERICAN BUFFALO

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experience."—*NEW YORK POST*



NOW A  
MAJOR MOTION  
PICTURE

DAVID  
MAMMET



**AmericanBuffalo**



# ***THE CHARACTERS***

DON DUBROW

A man in his late forties, the owner of  
Don's Resale Shop

W... G...

WALTER COLE,  
called TEACH

A friend and associate of Don

BOB

Don's gopher

## ***THE SCENE***

*Don's Resale Shop. A junkshop.*

## ***THE TIME***

One Friday. Act One takes place in the morning; Act Two starts around 11:00 that night.



# ***ACT I***





*Don's Resale Shop. Morning. DON and BOB are sitting.*

DON: So?

*Pause.*

So what, Bob?

*Pause.*

BOB: I'm sorry, Donny.

*Pause.*

DON: All right.

BOB: I'm sorry, Donny.

*Pause.*

DON: Yeah.

BOB: Maybe he's still in there.

DON: If you think that, Bob, how come you're here?

BOB: I came in.

*Pause.*

DON: You don't come in, Bob. You don't come in until you do  
something.

a thing.

BOB: He didn't come out.

DON: What do I care, Bob, if he came out or not? You're s'posed to watch the guy, you watch him. Am I wrong?

BOB: I just went to the back.

DON: Why?

*Pause.*

Why did you do that?

BOB: 'Cause he wasn't coming out the front.

DON: Well, Bob, I'm sorry, but this isn't good enough. If you want to do business if we got a business deal, it isn't good enough. I want you to remember this.

BOB: I do.

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DON: Yeah, *now* but later, what?

*Pause.*

Just one thing, Bob. Action counts.

*Pause.*

Action talks and bullshit walks.

BOB: I only went around to see he's coming out the back.

DON: No, don't go fuck yourself around with these excuses.

*Pause.*

BOB: I'm sorry.

DON: Don't tell me that you're sorry. I'm not mad at you.

BOB: You're not?

DON (*Pause*): Let's clean up here.

*BOB starts to clean up the debris around the poker table.*

The only thing I'm trying to teach you something here.

BOB: Okay.

DON: Now lookit Fletcher.

BOB: Fletch?

DON: Now, Fletcher is a standup guy.

BOB: Yeah.

DON: I don't give a shit. He is a fellow stands for something—

BOB: Yeah.

DON: You take him and you put him down in some strange town with just a nickel in his pocket, and by nightfall he'll have that town by the balls. This is not talk, Bob, this is action.

*Pause.*

BOB: He's a real good card player.

DON: You're fucking A he is, Bob, and this is what I'm getting at. Skill. Skill and talent and the balls to arrive at your own conclusions.

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The fucker won four hundred bucks last night.

BOB: Yeah?

DON: Oh yeah.

BOB: And who was playing?

DON: *Me*

BOB: Uh-huh

DON: *And Teach*

BOB: (How'd Teach do?)\*

DON: (Not too good.)

BOB: (No, huh?)

DON: (No.) and Earl was here

BOB: Uh-huh

DON: And Fletcher.

BOB: *How'd* he do?

DON: He won four hundred bucks.

BOB: And who else won?

DON: Ruthie, she won.

BOB: She won, huh?

DON: Yeah.

BOB: She does okay.

DON: *Oh* yeah

BOB: She's an okay card player.

DON: Yes, she is.

BOB: I like her.

DON: Fuck, I like her, too. (There's nothing wrong in that.)

\* Some portions of the dialogue appear in parentheses, which serve to mark a slight change of outlook on the part of the speaker—perhaps a momentary change to a more introspective regard.—D.M.

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BOB: (No.)

DON: I mean she treats you right

DON: I mean, she treats you right.

BOB: Uh-huh. How'd she do?

DON: She did okay.

*Pause.*

BOB: You win?

DON: I did all right.

BOB: Yeah?

DON: Yeah. I did okay. Not like *Fletch*

BOB: No, huh?

DON: I mean, Fletcher, he plays *cards*.

BOB: He's real sharp.

DON: You're goddamn right he is.

BOB: I know it.

DON: Was he born that way?

BOB: Huh?

DON: I'm saying was he born that way or do you think he had to learn it?

BOB: Learn it.

DON: Goddamn right he did, and don't forget it.

Everything, Bobby: it's going to happen to you, it's *not* going to happen to you, the important thing is can you deal with it, and can you *learn* from it.

*Pause.*

And this is why I'm telling you to stand up. It's no different with you than with anyone else. Everything that I or Fletcher know we picked up on the street. That's all business is common sense, experience, and talent.

BOB: Like when he jewed Ruthie out that pig iron.

DON: What pig iron?

BOB: That he got off her that time.

DON: When was this?

BOB: On the back of her truck.

DON: That wasn't, I don't think, her pig iron.

BOB: No?

DON: That was *his* pig iron, Bob.

BOB: Yeah?

DON: Yeah. He bought it off her.

*Pause.*

BOB: Well, she was real mad at him.

DON: She was.

BOB: Yup.

DON: She was mad at him?

BOB: Yeah. That he stole her pig iron.

DON: He didn't steal it, Bob.

BOB: No?

DON: No.

BOB: She was *mad* at him

DON: Well, that very well may be, Bob, but the fact remains that it was *business*. That's what business is.

BOB: What?

DON: People taking care of themselves. Huh?

BOB: No.

DON: 'Cause there's business and there's friendship, Bobby there are many things, and when you walk around you hear a lot of things, and what you got to do is keep clear who your friends are, and who treated you like what. Or

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else the rest is garbage, Bob, because I want to tell you something.

BOB: Okay.

DON: Things are not always what they seem to be.

BOB: I know.

*Pause.*

DON: There's lotsa people on this street, Bob, they want this and they want that. Do anything to get it. You don't have friends this life. You want some breakfast?

BOB: I'm not hungry.

*Pause.*

DON: *Never* skip breakfast, Bob.

BOB: Why?

DON: Breakfast is the most important meal of the day.

BOB: I'm not hungry.

DON: It makes no earthly difference in the world. You know how much nutritive benefits they got in coffee? Zero. Not one thing. The stuff eats you up. You can't live on coffee, Bobby. (And I've told you this before.) You cannot live on



cigarettes. You may feel good, you may feel *fine*, but something's getting overworked, and you are going to pay for it.

Now: What do you see me eat when I come in here every day?

BOB: Coffee.

DON: Come on, Bob, don't fuck with me. I *drink* a little coffee but what do I *eat*?

BOB: Yogurt.

DON: Why?

BOB: Because it's good for you.

DON: You're goddamn right. And it wouldn't kill you to take a vitamin.

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BOB: They're too expensive.

DON: Don't worry about it. You should just take 'em.

BOB: I can't afford 'em.

DON: Don't worry about it.

BOB: You'll buy some for me?

DON: Do you need 'em?

BOB: *Yeah*.

DON: Well, then, I'll get you some. What do you *think*?

BOB: Thanks, Donny.

DON: It's for your own good. Don't thank *me*

BOB: Okay.

DON: I just can't use you in here like a zombie.

BOB: I just went around the back.

DON: I don't care. Do you see? Do you see what I'm getting at?

*Pause.*

BOB: Yeah.

*Pause.*

DON: Well, we'll see.

BOB: I'm sorry, Donny.

DON: Well, we'll see.

TEACH (*appears in the doorway and enters the store*): Good morning.

BOB: Morning, Teach.

TEACH (*walks around the store a bit in silence*): Fuckin' Ruthie, fuckin' Ruthie, fuckin' Ruthie, fuckin' Ruthie, fuckin' Ruthie.

DON: What?

TEACH: Fuckin' Ruthie . . .

DON: . . . yeah?

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TEACH: I come into the Riverside to get a cup of coffee, right? I sit down at the table Grace and Ruthie.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: I'm gonna order just a cup of coffee.

DON: Right.

TEACH: So Grace and Ruthie's having breakfast, and they're done. *Plates* crusts of stuff all over So we'll shoot the shit.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: Talk about the *game*

DON: yeah.

TEACH: so on. Down I sit. "Hi, hi." I take a piece of toast off Grace's plate

DON: uh-huh

TEACH: and she goes "Help yourself."

Help myself.

I should help myself to half a piece of toast it's four slices for a quarter. I should have a nickel every time we're over at the game, I pop for coffee cigarettes a *sweet roll*, never say word.

"Bobby, see who wants what." Huh? A fucking *roast-beef* sandwich. (To BOB) Am I right? (To DON) Ahh, shit. We're sitting down, how many times do I pick up the check? But (No!) because I never go and make a big *thing* out of it—it's no big thing—and flaunt like "This one's on me" like some bust-out asshole, but I naturally assume that I'm with friends, and don't forget who's who when someone gets *behind* a half a yard or needs some help with (huh?) some fucking rent, or drops enormous piles of money at the track, or someone's sick or something

DON (to BOB): This is what I'm talking about.

TEACH: Only (and I tell you this, Don). Only, and I'm not, I don't think, casting anything on anyone: from the mouth of

a Southern bulldyke asshole ingrate of a vicious nowhere cunt can this trash come. (To BOB) And I take nothing back, and I know you're close with them.

BOB: With Grace and Ruthie?

TEACH: Yes.

BOB: (I like 'em.)

TEACH: I have always treated everybody more than fair, and never gone around complaining. Is this true, Don?

DON: Yup.

TEACH: Someone is *against* me, that's their problem . I can look out for myself, and I don't got to fuck around behind somebody's back, I don't like the way they're treating me. (Or pray some brick *safe* falls and hits them on the head, they're walking down the street.)

But to have that shithead turn, in one breath, every fucking sweet roll that I ever ate with them into *ground glass* (I'm wondering were they eating it and thinking "This guy's an idiot to blow a fucking *quarter* on his friends" )

this hurts me, Don.

This hurts me in a way I don't know what the fuck to do.

*Pause.*

DON: You're probably just upset.

TEACH: You're fuckin' A I'm upset. I am *very* upset, Don.

DON: They got their problems, too, Teach.

TEACH: *I* would like to have their problems.

DON: All I'm saying, nothing *personal* they were probably, uh, *talking* about something.

TEACH: Then let them talk about it, then. No, I am sorry, Don, I cannot brush this off. They treat me like an asshole, they are an asshole.

*Pause.*

The only way to teach these people is to kill them.

*Pause.*

DON: You want some coffee?

TEACH: I'm not hungry.

DON: Come on, I'm sending Bobby to the Riverside.

TEACH: (Fuckin' joint )

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: (They harbor *assholes* in there )

DON: Yeah. Come on, Teach, what do you want? Bob?

BOB: Yeah?

DON (to TEACH): Come on, he's going anyway. (To BOB, handing him a bill) Get me a Boston, and go for the yogurt.

BOB: What kind?

DON: You know, plain, and, if they don't got it, uh, something else. And get something for yourself.

BOB: What?

DON: Whatever you want. But get something to eat, and whatever you want to drink, and get Teacher a coffee.

BOB: Boston, Teach?

TEACH: No.

BOB: What?

TEACH: Black.

BOB: Right.

DON: And something for yourself to eat. (To TEACH) He doesn't want to eat.

TEACH (to BOB): You got to eat. (And this is what I'm saying at

The Riverside.)

*Pause.*

BOB: (Black coffee.)

DON: And get something for yourself to eat. (To TEACH) What

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do you want to eat? An English muffin? (To BOB) Get Teach an English muffin.

TEACH: I don't want an English muffin.

DON: Get him an English muffin, and make sure they give you jelly.

TEACH: I don't want an English muffin.

DON: What do you want?

TEACH: I don't want anything.

BOB: Come on, Teach, eat something.

*Pause.*

DON: You'll feel better you eat something, Teach.

*Pause.*

TEACH (to BOB): Tell 'em to give you an order of bacon, real dry, real crisp.

BOB: Okay.

TEACH: And tell the broad if it's for me she'll give you more.

BOB: Okay.

DON: Anything else you want?

TEACH: No.

DON: A cantaloupe?

TEACH: I never eat cantaloupe.

DON: No?

TEACH: It gives me the runs.

DON: Yeah?

TEACH: And tell him he shouldn't say anything to Ruthie.

DON: He wouldn't.

TEACH: No? No, you're right. I'm sorry, Bob.

BOB: It's okay.

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TEACH: I'm upset.

BOB: It's okay, Teach.

*Pause.*

TEACH: Thank you.

BOB: You're welcome.

*BOB starts to exit.*

DON: And the plain if they got it.

BOB: I will. *(Exits.)*

DON: He wouldn't say anything.

TEACH: What the fuck do I care

*Pause.*

Cunt.

*Pause.*

There is not one loyal bone in that bitch's body.

DON: How'd you finally do last night?

TEACH: This has nothing to do with that.

DON: No, I know. I'm just saying for *talk*

TEACH: Last night? You were here, Don.

*Pause.*

How'd you do?

DON: Not well.

TEACH: Mmm.

DON: The only one won any money, Fletch and Ruthie.

TEACH (*Pause*): Cunt had to win two hundred dollars.

DON: She's a good card player.

TEACH: She is *not* a good card player, Don. She is a mooch and she is a locksmith and she plays like a woman.

*Pause.*

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*Fletcher's* a card player, I'll give him that. But *Ruthie* I mean, you see how she fucking plays

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: And always with that cunt on her shoulder.

DON: Grace?

TEACH: Yes.

DON: Grace is her partner.

TEACH: Then let her *be* her partner, then. (You see what I'm talking about?) Everyone, they're sitting at the table and then Grace is going to walk around. fetch an *ashtray* go for *coffee* this and everybody's all they aren't



going to hide their cards, and they're going to make a show how they don't hunch *over*, and like that. I don't give a shit. I say the broad's her fucking partner, and she walks in back of me I'm going to hide my hand.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: And I say anybody doesn't's out of their mind.

*Pause.*

We're talking about money for chrissake, huh? We're talking about cards. Friendship is friendship, and a wonderful thing, and I am all for it. I have never said different, and you know me on this point.

Okay.

But let's just keep it *separate* huh, let's just keep the two apart, and maybe we can deal with each other like some human beings.

*Pause.*

This is all I'm saying, Don. I know you got a soft spot in your heart for Ruthie

DON: yeah?

TEACH: I know you like the broad and Grace and, Bob, I know he likes 'em too.

DON: (He likes 'em.)

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TEACH: And I like 'em too. (I know, I know.) I'm not averse to this. I'm not averse to sitting down. (I know we *will* sit down.) These things happen, I'm not saying that they don't and yeah, yeah, yeah, I know I lost a bundle at the game and blah blah blah.

*Pause.*

But all I ever ask (and I would say this to her face) is only she remembers who is who and not to go around with *her* or Gracie either with this attitude. "The Past is Past, and this is Now, and so Fuck You."

You see?

DON: Yes.

*Long pause.*

TEACH: So what's new?

DON: Nothing.

TEACH: Same old shit, huh?

DON: Yup.

TEACH: You seen my hat?

DON: No. Did you leave it here?

TEACH: Yeah.

*Pause.*

DON: You ask them over at The Riv?

TEACH: I left it here.

*Pause.*

DON: Well, you left it here, it's here.

TEACH: You seen it?

DON: No.

*Pause.*

TEACH: Fletch been in?

DON: No.

TEACH: Prolly drop in one or so, huh?

DON: Yeah, You know. You never know with Fletcher.

TEACH: No.

DON: He might drop in the *morning*

TEACH: Yeah.

DON: And then he might, he's gone for ten or fifteen days you never know he's gone.

TEACH: Yeah.

DON: Why?

TEACH: I want to talk to him.

DON (*Pause*): Ruth would know.

TEACH: You sure you didn't seen my hat?

DON: I didn't see it. No.

*Pause.*

Ruthie might know.

TEACH: (*Vicious dyke.*)

DON: Look in the john.

TEACH: It isn't in the john. I wouldn't leave it there.

DON: Do you got something up with Fletch?

TEACH: No. Just I have to talk to him.

DON: He'll probably show up.

TEACH: Oh yeah (*Pause. Indicating objects on the counter*)  
What're *these*?

DON: Those?

TEACH: Yeah.

DON: They're from 1933.

TEACH: From the thing?

DON: Yeah.

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*Pause.*

TEACH: Nice.

DON: They had a whole market in 'em. Just like anything. They license out the shit and everybody makes it.

TEACH: Yeah? (I knew that.)

DON: Just like now. They had *combs*, and *brushes* you know, brushes with the thing on 'em

TEACH: Yeah. I know. They had . uh what? Clothing too, huh?

DON: I think. Sure. Everything. And there're guys they just collect the stuff.

TEACH: They got that much of it around?

DON: *Shit* yes. (It's not that long ago.) The thing, it ran two years, and they had (*I don't know*) all kinds of people every year they're buying everything that they can lay their hands on that they're going to take it back to Buffalo to give it, you know, to their aunt, and it mounts up.

TEACH: What does it go for?

DON: The compact?

TEACH: Yeah.

DON: Aah (You want it?)

TEACH: No.

DON: Oh. I'm just asking. I mean, you want it

TEACH: No. I mean somebody walks in here

DON: Oh. Somebody walks in here (This shit's fashionable )

TEACH: (I don't doubt it.)

DON: and they're gonna have to go like fifteen bucks.

TEACH: You're fulla shit.

DON: My word of honor.

TEACH: No shit.

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DON: Everything like that.

TEACH: (A bunch of fucking thieves.)

DON: Yeah. Everything.

TEACH (*snorts*): What a bunch of crap, huh?

DON: Oh yeah.

TEACH: Every goddamn thing.

DON: Yes.

TEACH: If I kept the stuff that I threw out

DON: yes.

TEACH: I would be a wealthy man today. I would be cruising on some European yacht.

DON: Uh-huh.

TEACH: (Shit my father used to keep in his *desk* drawer.)

DON: (My father, too.)

TEACH: (The *basement* )

DON: (Uh-huh.)

TEACH: (Fuckin' toys in the backyard, for chrissake )

DON: (Don't even talk about it.)

TEACH: It's I don't know.

*Pause.*

You want to play some gin?

DON: Maybe later.

TEACH: Okay.

*Pause.*

*I dunno.*

*Pause.*

Fucking day

*Pause.*

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Fucking *weather*

*Pause.*

DON: You think it's going to rain?

TEACH: Yeah. I do. Later.

DON: Yeah?

TEACH: Well, *look* at it.

*BOB appears, carrying a paper bag with coffee and foodstuffs in it.*

Bobby, Bobby, Bobby, Bobby, Bobby.

BOB: Ruthie isn't mad at you.

TEACH: She isn't?

BOB: No.

TEACH: How do you know?

BOB: I found out.

TEACH: How?

BOB: I talked to her.

TEACH: You talked to her.

BOB: Yes.

TEACH: I asked you you weren't going to.

BOB: Well, she asked me.

TEACH: What?

BOB: That were you over here.

TEACH: What did you tell her?

BOB: You were here.

TEACH: Oh. (*He looks at DON.*)

DON: What did you say to her, Bob?

BOB: Just Teach was here.

DON: And is she coming over here?

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BOB: I don't think so. (They had the plain.)

DON (*to TEACH*): So? (This is all right.)

(*To BOB*) All right, Bob.

*He looks at TEACH.*

TEACH: That's all right, Bob. (*To self*) (Everything's all right to someone )

DON *takes bag and distributes contents to appropriate*

*recipients.*

(To DON) You shouldn't eat that shit.

DON: Why?

TEACH: It's just I have a feeling about health foods.

DON: It's not health foods, Teach. It's only yogurt.

TEACH: That's not health foods?

DON: No. They've had it forever.

TEACH: Yogurt?

DON: Yeah. They used to joke about it on "My Little Margie."  
(To BOB) (Way before your time.)

TEACH: Yeah?

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: What the fuck. A little bit can't hurt you.

DON: It's good for you.

TEACH: Okay, okay. Each one his own opinion. (Pause. To BOB) Was Fletcher over there?

BOB: No.

DON: Where's my coffee?

BOB: It's not there?

DON: No.

*Pause.*

BOB: I told 'em specially to put it in.

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DON: Where is it?

BOB: They forgot it.



*Pause.*

I'll go back and get it.

DON: Would you mind?

BOB: No.

*Pause.*

DON: You gonna get it?

BOB: Yeah.

*Pause.*

DON: What, Bob?

BOB: Can I talk to you?

*Pause. DON goes to BOB.*

DON: What is it?

BOB: I saw him.

DON: Who?

BOB: The guy.

DON: You saw the guy?

BOB: Yes.

DON: That I'm talking about?

BOB: Yes.

DON: Just now?

BOB: Yeah. He's going somewhere.

DON: He is.

BOB: Yeah. He's puttin' a suitcase in the car.

DON: The guy, or both of 'em?

BOB: Just him.

DON: He got in the car he drove off??

BOB: He's coming down the stairs

DON: Yeah.

BOB: And he's got the suitcase

DON *nods.*

He gets in the car

DON: Uh-huh

BOB: He drives away.

DON: So where is she?

BOB: He's goin' to pick her up.

DON: What was he wearing?

BOB: Stuff. Traveling clothes.

DON: Okay.

*Pause.*

Now you're talking. You see what I mean?

BOB: Yeah.

DON: All right.

BOB: And he had a coat, too.

DON: Now you're talking.

BOB: Like a raincoat.

DON: Yeah.

*Pause.*

Good.

*Pause.*

BOB: Yeah, he's gone.

DON: Bob, go get me that coffee, do you mind?

BOB: No.

DON: What did you get yourself to eat?

BOB: I didn't get anything.

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DON: Well, get me my coffee, and get yourself something to eat, okay?

BOB: Okay. (Good.) (Exits.)

*Pause.*

DON: How's your bacon?

TEACH: Aaaahh, they always fuck it up.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: This time they fucked it up too burnt.

DON: Mmmm.

TEACH: You got to be breathing on their neck.

DON: Mmmm.

TEACH: Like a lot of things.

DON: Uh-huh.

TEACH: Any business

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: You want it run right, *be* there.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: Just like you

TEACH: Just like you.

DON: What?

TEACH: Like the shop.

DON: Well, no one's going to run it, I'm not here.

*Pause.*

TEACH: No.

*Pause.*

You have to be here.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: It's a one-man show.

DON: Uh-huh.

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*Pause.*

TEACH: So what is this thing with the kid?

*Pause.*

I mean, is it anything, uh

DON: It's nothing      you know

TEACH: Yeah.

*Pause.*

It's *what*      ?

DON: You know, it's just some guy we spotted.

TEACH: Yeah. Some *guy*.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: (Some *guy*      )

DON: Yeah.

*Pause.*

What time is it?

TEACH: Noon.

DON: (Noon.) (Fuck.)

TEACH: What?

*Pause.*

DON: You parked outside?

TEACH: Yeah.

DON: Are you okay on the meter?

TEACH: Yeah. The broad came by already.

*Pause.*

DON: Good.

*Pause.*

TEACH: Oh, yeah, she came by.

DON: Good.

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TEACH: You want to tell me what this thing is?

DON (*Pause*): The thing?

TEACH: Yeah.

*Pause.*

What is it?

DON: Nothing.

TEACH: No? What is it, jewelry?

DON: No. It's nothing.

TEACH: Oh.

DON: You know?

TEACH: Yeah.

*Pause.*

Yeah. No. I don't know.

*Pause.*

Who am I, a *policeman* . I'm making conversation, huh?

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: Huh?

*Pause.*

'Cause you know I'm just asking for talk.

DON: Yeah. I know. Yeah, okay.

TEACH: And I can live without this.

DON (*reaches for phone*): Yeah. I know. Hold on. I'll tell you.

TEACH: Tell me if you *want* to, Don.

DON: I want to, Teach.

TEACH: Yeah?

DON: Yeah.

*Pause.*

TEACH: Well, I'd fucking *hope* so. Am I wrong?

DON: No. No. You're right.

TEACH: I *hope* so.

DON: No, hold on; I gotta make this call.

TEACH: Well, all right. So what is it, jewelry?

DON: No.

TEACH: What?

DON: Coins.

TEACH: (Coins.)

DON: Yeah. Hold on, I gotta make this call.

*DON hunts for a card, dials telephone.*

*(Into phone)* Hello? This is Donny Dubrow. We were talking the other day. Lookit, sir, if I could get ahold of some of that stuff you were interested in, would you be interested in some of it?

*Pause.*

Those things      *Old, yeah.*

*Pause.*

Various pieces of various types.

*Pause.*

Tonight. Sometime late. Are they *what*      !!?? Yes, but I don't see what kind of a question is that (at the prices we're talking about      )

*Pause.*

No, hey, no, I understand you

*Pause.*

Sometime late.

*Pause.*

One hundred percent.

*Pause.*

I feel the same. All right. Good-bye. (*Hangs up.*) Fucking asshole.

TEACH: Guys like that, I like to fuck their wives.

DON: I don't blame you.

TEACH: Fucking *jerk*

DON: (I swear to God .)

TEACH: That guy's a collector?

DON: Who?

TEACH: The phone guy.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: And the other guy?

DON: We spotted?

TEACH: Yeah.

DON: Him, too.

TEACH: So you hit him for his coins.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: —And you got a buyer in the phone guy.

DON: (Asshole.)

TEACH: The thing is you're not sitting with the shit.

DON: No.

TEACH: The guy's an asshole or he's not, what do you care? It's business.

*Pause.*

DON: You're right.



TEACH: The guy with the suitcase, he's the mark.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: How'd you find him?

DON: In here.

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TEACH: Came in here, huh?

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: (No shit.)

*Pause.*

DON: He comes in here one day, like a week ago.

TEACH: For what?

DON: Just browsing. So he's looking in the case, he comes up and with this *buffalo-head* nickel

TEACH: Yeah

DON: From *nineteen*-something. (I don't know. I didn't even know it's there )

TEACH: Uh-huh

DON: and he goes, "How much would that be?"

TEACH: Uh-huh

DON: So I'm about to go, "Two bits," jerk that I am, but something tells me to shut up, so I go, "You tell me."

TEACH: Always good business.

DON: Oh yeah.

TEACH: How wrong can you go?

DON: That's what I mean, so then he thinks a minute, and he

tells me he'll just *shop* a bit.

TEACH: Uh-huh (Stares out of window.)

DON: And so he's *shopping* What?

TEACH: Some cops.

DON: Where?

TEACH: At the corner.

DON: What are they doing?

TEACH: Cruising.

*Pause.*

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DON: They turn the corner?

TEACH (*waits*): *Yeah.*

*Pause.*

DON: And so he's shopping. And he's picking up a beat-up  
*mirror* an old *kid's* toy a *shaving* mug

TEACH: right

DON: Maybe five, six things, comes to eight bucks. I get 'em  
and I put 'em in a box and then he tells me he'll go fifty  
dollars for the nickel.

TEACH: No.

DON: Yeah. So I tell him (get this), "Not a chance."

TEACH: (Took balls.)

DON: (Well, what-the-fuck .)

TEACH: (No, I mean it.)

DON: (I took a chance.)

TEACH: (You're goddamn right.)

*Pause.*

DON (*shrugs*): So I say, "Not a chance," he tells me eighty is his highest offer.

TEACH: (I knew it.)

DON: Wait. So I go, "Ninety-five."

TEACH: Uh-huh.

DON: We settle down on ninety, *takes the nickel*, leaves the box of shit.

TEACH: He pay for it?

DON: The box of shit?

TEACH: Yeah.

DON: No.

*Pause.*

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TEACH: And so what was the nickel?

DON: *I don't know* some rarity.

TEACH: Ninety dollars for a nickel.

DON: Are you kidding, Teach? I bet it's worth five *times* that.

TEACH: Yeah, huh?

DON: Are you kidding me, the guy is going to come in here, he plunks down ninety bucks like nothing. *Shit* yeah.

*Pause.*

TEACH: Well, what the fuck, it didn't cost you anything.

DON: That's not the point. The next day back he comes and he

DON: That's not the point. The next day back he comes and he goes through the whole bit again. He looks at *this*, he looks at *that*, it's a nice day

TEACH: Yeah

DON: And he tells me he's the guy was in here yesterday and bought the buffalo off me and do I maybe have some other articles of interest.

TEACH: Yeah.

DON: And so I tell him, "Not offhand." He says that could I get in touch with him, I get some in, so I say "sure," he leaves his card, I'm s'posed to call him anything crops up.

TEACH: Uh-huh.

DON: He comes in here like I'm his fucking doorman.

TEACH: Mmmm.

DON: He takes me off my coin and will I call him if I find another one.

TEACH: Yeah.

DON: Doing me this favor by just coming in my shop.

TEACH: Yeah.

*Pause.*

Some people never change.

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DON: Like he has done me this big favor by just coming in my shop.

TEACH: Uh-huh. (You're going to get him now.)

DON: (You know I am.) So Bob, we kept a lookout on his place, and that's the shot.

TEACH: And who's the chick?

TEACH: And who's the chick?

DON: What chick?

TEACH: You're asking Bob about.

DON: Oh yeah. The guy, he's married. I mean (*I don't know.*)  
We think he's married. They got two names on the bell.  
Anyway, he's living with this chick, you know

TEACH: What the hell.

DON: and you should see this chick.

TEACH: Yeah, huh?

DON: She is a knockout. I mean, she is *real* nice-lookin', Teach.

TEACH: (*Fuck him .*)

DON: The other day, last Friday like a week ago, Bob runs in,  
lugs me out to look at 'em, they're going out on bicycles.  
The ass on this broad, un-be-fucking-lievable in these  
bicycling shorts sticking up in the air with these short han-  
dlebars.

TEACH: (*Fuckin' fruits .*)

*Pause.*

DON: So that's it. We keep an eye on 'em. They both work.  
(Yesterday he rode his bicycle to work.)

TEACH: He didn't.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH (*snorts*): (*With the three-piece suit, huh?*)

DON: I didn't see 'em. Bobby saw 'em.

*Pause.*

And that's the shot. Earl gets me in touch the phone guy, he's this coin collector, and that's it.

TEACH: It fell in your lap.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: You're going in tonight.

DON: It looks that way.

TEACH: And who's going in?

*Pause.*

DON: Bobby.

*Pause.*

He's a good kid, Teach.

TEACH: He's a great kid, Don. You know how I feel about the kid.

*Pause.*

*I like him.*

DON: He's doing good.

TEACH: I can see that.

*Pause.*

But I gotta say something here.

DON: What?

TEACH: Only this—and I don't think I'm *getting* at anything—

DON: What?

TEACH (*Pause*): Don't send the kid in.

DON: I shouldn't send Bobby in?

TEACH: No. (Now, just wait a second.) Let's sit down on this. What are we saying here? Loyalty.

*Pause.*

You know how I am on this. This is great. This is admirable.

DON: What?

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TEACH: This loyalty. This is swell. It turns my heart the things that you do for the kid.

DON: What do I do for him, Walt?

TEACH: Things. Things, you know what I mean.

DON: No. I don't do anything for him.

TEACH: In your mind you don't, but the things, I'm saying, that you actually go *do* for him. This is fantastic. All I mean, a guy can be too loyal, Don. Don't be dense on this. What are we saying here? Business.

I mean, the guy's got you're taking his high-speed blender and a Magnavox, you send the kid in. You're talking about a real *job* they don't come in right away and know they been *had*

You're talking maybe a safe, certainly a good lock or two, and you need a guy's looking for valuable shit, he's not going to mess with the stainless steel silverware, huh, or some digital clock.

*Pause.*

We both know what we're saying here. We both know we're talking about some job needs more than the kid's gonna skin-pop go in there with a *crowbar*

DON: I don't want you mentioning that.

TEACH: It slipped out.

DON: You know how I feel on that.

TEACH: Yes. And I'm sorry, Don. I admiring that. All that I'm

TEACH: Yes. And I'm sorry, Don. I admire that. All that I'm saying, don't confuse business with pleasure.

DON: But I don't want that talk, only, Teach.

*Pause.*

You understand?

TEACH: I more than understand, and I apologize.

*Pause.*

I'm sorry.

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DON: That's the only thing.

TEACH: All right. But I tell you. I'm glad I said it.

DON: Why?

TEACH: 'Cause it's best for these things to be out in the open.

DON: But I don't want it in the open.

TEACH: Which is why I apologized.

*Pause.*

DON: You know the fucking kid's clean. He's trying hard, he's working hard, and you leave him alone.

TEACH: Oh yeah, he's trying *real* hard.

DON: And he's no dummy, Teach.

TEACH: Far from it. All I'm saying, the job is beyond him. Where's the shame in this? This is not jacks, we get up to go home we give everything back. Huh? You want this fucked up?

*Pause.*

All that I'm saying, there's the least *chance* something



might fuck up, you'd get the law down, you would take the shot, and couldn't find the coins *whatever*: if you see the least chance, you cannot afford to take that chance! Don? I want to go in there and gut this motherfucker. Don? Where is the shame in this? You take care of him, *fine*. (Now this is loyalty.) But Bobby's got his own best interests, too. And you cannot afford (and simply as a *business proposition*) you cannot afford to take the chance.

(*Pause. TEACH picks up a strange object.*) What is this?

DON: That?

TEACH: Yes.

DON: It's a thing that they stick in dead pigs keep their legs apart all the blood runs out.

TEACH *nods. Pause.*

TEACH: Mmmm.

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*Pause.*

DON: I set it up with him.

TEACH: "You set it up with him."      You set it up and then you told him.

*Long pause.*

DON: I gave Earl ten percent.

TEACH: Yeah? for what?

DON: The connection.

TEACH: So ten off the top: forty-five, forty-five.

*Pause.*

DON: And Bobby?

TEACH: A hundred. A hundred fifty.      we hit big      whatever

TEACH: A hundred. A hundred fifty. . . we hit big. . . whatever.  
DON: And you what?  
TEACH: The shot. I go, I go in . . . I bring the stuff back (or  
wherever . . . )

*Pause.*

DON: And what do I do?

TEACH: You mind the fort.

*Pause.*

DON: Here?

TEACH: Well, yeah . . . this is the fort.

*Pause.*

DON: (You know, this is real classical money we're talking  
about.)

TEACH: I know it. You think I'm going to fuck with Chump  
Change?

*Pause.*

So tell me.

DON: Well, hold on a second. I mean, we're still talking.

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TEACH: I'm sorry. I thought we were done talking.

DON: No.

TEACH: Well, then, let's talk some more. You want to bargain?  
You want to mess with the points?

DON: No. I just want to think for a second.

TEACH: Well, you think, but here's a helpful hint. Fifty percent  
of some money is better than ninety percent of some bro-

ken toaster that you're gonna have, you send the kid in. (Which is providing he don't trip the alarm in the first place ) Don? You don't even know what the *thing* is on this. Where he lives. They got alarms? What kind of alarms? What kind of *this* ? And what if (God forbid) the *guy* walks in? Somebody's nervous, whacks him with a table lamp—you wanna get touchy—and you can take your ninety dollars from the nickel shove it up your ass—the good it did you—and you wanna know *why*? (And I'm not saying anything ) because you didn't take the time to go first-class.

*BOB re-enters with a bag.*

Hi, Bob.

BOB: Hi, Teach.

*Pause.*

DON: You get yourself something to eat?

BOB: I got a piece of pie and a Pepsi.

*BOB and DON extract foodstuffs and eat.*

DON: Did they charge you again for the coffee?

BOB: For your coffee?

DON: Yes.

BOB: They charged me this time. I don't know if they charged me last time, Donny.

DON: It's okay.

*Pause.*

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TEACH (to BOB): How is it out there?

BOB: It's okay.

TEACH: Is it going to rain?

BOB: Today?

TEACH: Yeah.

BOB: I don't know.

*Pause.*

TEACH: Well, what do you think?

BOB: It might.

TEACH: You think so, huh?

DON: Teach

TEACH: What? I'm not saying anything.

BOB: What?

TEACH: I don't think I'm saying anything here.

*Pause.*

BOB: It *might* rain.

*Pause.*

I think *later*.

TEACH: How's your pie?

BOB: Real good.

TEACH (*holds up the dead-pig leg-spreader*): You know what this is?

*Pause.*

BOB: Yeah.

TEACH: What is it?

BOB: I know what it is.

TEACH: What?

BOB: I know.

*Pause.*

TEACH: Huh?

BOB: What?

TEACH: Things are what they are.

DON: Teach

TEACH: What?

DON: We'll do this later.

BOB: I got to ask you something.

TEACH: Sure, that makes a difference.

DON: We'll just do it later.

TEACH: Sure.

BOB: Uh, Don?

DON: What?

*Pause.*

BOB: I got to talk to you.

DON: Yeah? What?

BOB: I'm wondering on the thing that maybe I could have a little bit up front.

*Pause.*

DON: Do you *need* it?

BOB: I don't *need* it

DON: How much?

BOB: I was thinking that maybe you might let me have like fifty or something.

*Pause.*

To sort of *have*

TEACH: You got any cuff links?

DON: Look in the case. (To BOB) What do you need it for?

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BOB: Nothing.

DON: Bob

BOB: You can trust me.

DON: It's not a question of that. It's not a question I go around trusting you, Bob

BOB: What's the question?

TEACH: Procedure.

DON: Hold on, Teach.

BOB: I got him all spotted.

*Pause.*

TEACH: Who?

BOB: Some guy.

TEACH: Yeah?

BOB: Yeah.

TEACH: Where's he live?

BOB: Around.

TEACH: Where? Near here?

BOB: No.

BOB: NO.

TEACH: No?

BOB: He lives like on Lake Shore Drive.

TEACH: He does.

BOB: Yeah.

TEACH (*Pause*): What have you got, a job cased?

BOB: I just went for coffee.

TEACH: But you didn't get the coffee.

*Pause.*

Now, did you?

BOB: No.

TEACH: Why?

DON: Hold on, Teach. Bob

BOB: What?

DON: You know what?

BOB: No.

DON: I was thinking, you know, we might hold off on this thing.

*Pause.*

BOB: You wanna hold off on it?

DON: I was thinking that we might.

BOB: Oh.

DON: And, on the money, I'll give you . . . forty, you owe me twenty, and, for now, keep twenty for spotting the guy.

*Pause.*

Okay?

BOB: Yeah.

*Pause.*

You don't want me to do the job?

DON: That's what I *told* you. What am I telling you?

BOB: I'm not going to do it.

DON: Not *now*. We aren't going to do it now.

BOB: We'll do it later on?

DON (*shrugs*): But I'm giving you twenty just for spotting the guy.

BOB: I need fifty, Donny.

DON: Well, I'm giving you forty.

BOB: You said you were giving me twenty.

DON: No, Bob, I did not. I said I was giving you forty, of *which* you were going to owe me twenty.

*Pause.*

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And you go *keep* twenty.

BOB: I got to give back twenty.

DON: That's the deal.

BOB: When?

DON: Soon. When you got it.

*Pause.*

BOB: If I don't get it soon?

DON: Well, what do you call "soon"?



BOB: I don't know.

DON: Could you get it in a day, or a couple of days or so?

BOB: Maybe. I don't *think* so. Could you let me have fifty?

DON: And you'll give me back thirty?

BOB: I could just give back the twenty.

DON: That's not the deal.

BOB: We could *make* it the deal.

*Pause.*

Donny? We could *make* it the deal. Huh?

DON: Bob, lookit. Here it is: I give you fifty, next week you pay me back twenty-five.

*Pause.*

You get to keep twenty-five, you pay me back twenty-five.

BOB: And what about the thing?

DON: Forget about it.

BOB: You tell me when you want me to do it.

DON: I don't know *that* I want you to do it. At this point.

*Pause.*

You know what I mean?

*Pause.*

BOB: No.

DON: I mean, I'm *giving* you twenty-five, and I'm saying forget the thing.

BOB: Forget it for me

BOB: I forget it for me.

DON: Yes.

BOB: Oh.

*Pause.*

Okay. Okay.

DON: You see what I'm talking about?

BOB: Yes.

DON: Like it never happened.

BOB: I know.

DON: So you see what I'm saying.

BOB: Yes.

*Pause.*

I'm gonna go.

*Pause.*

I'll see you later. (*Pause. He looks at DON.*)

DON: Oh. (*Reaches in pocket and hands bills to BOB. To TEACH*)  
You got two fives?

TEACH: No.

DON (*to BOB*): I got to give you thirty, you owe me back  
thirty.

BOB: You said you were giving me fifty.

DON: I'm sorry, I'm sorry, Bob, you're absolutely right. (*He gives BOB remainder of money.*)

*Pause.*

BOB: Thank you.

*Pause.*

I'll see you later, huh, Teach?

TEACH: I'll see you later, Bobby.

BOB: I'll see you, Donny.

DON: I'll see you later, Bob.

BOB: I'll come back later.

DON: Okay.

*BOB starts to exit.*

TEACH: *See you.*

*Pause. BOB is gone.*

You're only doing the right thing by him, Don.

*Pause.*

Believe me.

*Pause.*

It's best for everybody.

*Pause.*

What's done is done.

*Pause.*

So let's get started. On the thing. Tell me everything.

DON: Like what?

TEACH:     *the guy        where does he live*

DON: Around the corner.

TEACH: Okay, and he's gone for the weekend.

DON: We don't know.

TEACH: Of course we know. Bob saw him coming out the door.  
The kid's not going to lie to you.

DON: Well, Bob just saw him coming out

TEACH: He had a suitcase, Don, he wasn't going to the A&P . . .  
He's going for the weekend . . .

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*Pause.*

Don, (Can you cooperate?) Can we get started? Do you want to tell me something about coins?

*Pause.*

DON: What about 'em?

TEACH: A crash course. What to look for. What to take. What to not take ( this they can trace) (that isn't worth nothing )

*Pause.*

What looks like what but it's more *valuable* so on

DON: First off, I want that nickel back.

TEACH: Donny

DON: No, I know, it's only a fuckin' nickel . I mean big deal, huh? But what I'm saying is I only want it back.

TEACH: You're going to get it back. I'm going in there for his coins, what am I going to take 'em all except your nickel? Wake up. Don, let's plan this out. The *spirit* of the thing?

*Pause.*

Let's not be loose on this. People are *loose*, people pay the price

DON: You're right.

TEACH: (And I like you like a brother, Don.) So let's wake up on this.

*Pause.*

All right? A man, he walks in here, well-dressed (With a briefcase?)

DON: (No.)

TEACH: All right. comes into a junkshop looking for coins.

*Pause.*

He spots a valuable nickel hidden in a pile of shit. He farts around, he picks up this, he farts around, he picks up that.

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DON: (He wants the nickel.)

TEACH: No shit. He goes to check out, he goes ninety on the nick.

DON: (He would of gone five times that.)

TEACH: (Look, don't kick yourself.) All right, we got a guy knows coins. Where does he keep his coin collection?

DON: Hidden.

TEACH: The man hides his coin collection, we're probably looking the guy has a *study* I mean, he's not the kind of guy to keep it in the *basement*

DON: No.

TEACH: So we're looking for a study.

DON: (A den.)

TEACH: And we're looking, for, he hasn't got a *safe*

DON: Yeah ?

TEACH: he's probably going to keep 'em where?

TEACH: he's probably going to keep 'em where?

*Pause.*

DON: I don't know. His desk drawer.

TEACH: (You open the middle, the rest of 'em pop out?)

DON: (Yeah.)

TEACH: (Maybe.) Which brings up a point.

DON: What?

TEACH: As we're moving the stuff tonight, we can go in like Gangbusters, huh? We don't care we wreck the joint up. So what else? We *take* it, or leave it?

DON: well

TEACH: I'm not talking *cash*, all I mean, what other stuff do we take for our *trouble* . . .

*Pause.*

DON: I don't know.

TEACH: It's hard to make up rules about this stuff.

DON: (You'll be in there under lots of pressure.)

TEACH: (Not so much.)

DON: (Come on, a little, anyway.)

TEACH: (That's only natural.)

DON: (Yeah.)

TEACH: (It would be unnatural I wasn't tense. A guy who isn't tense, I don't want him on my side.)

DON: (No.)

TEACH: (You know *why*?)

TEACH: (You know why?)

DON: (Yeah.)

TEACH: (Okay, then.) It's good to talk this stuff out.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: You *have* to talk it out. Bad feelings, misunderstandings happen on a job. You can't get away from 'em, you have to deal with 'em. You want to quiz me on some coins? You want to show some coins to me? *List prices* the blue book ?

DON: You want to see the book?

TEACH: Sure.

DON (*hands large coin-book to TEACH*): I just picked it up last week.

TEACH: Uh-hum.

DON: All the values aren't *current*

TEACH: Uh-huh

DON: *Silver*

TEACH (*looking at book*): Uh-huh

DON: What's *rarity*

TEACH: Well, that's got to be fairly steady, huh?

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DON: I'm saying against what *isn't*.

TEACH: Oh.

DON: But the book gives you a general idea.

TEACH: You've been looking at it?

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: You got to have a feeling for your subject.

DON: The book can give you that.

TEACH: This is what I'm saying to you. One thing. Makes all the difference in the world.

DON: What?

TEACH: Knowing what the fuck you're talking about. And it's so rare, Don. So rare.

What do you think a 1929 S Lincoln-head penny with the wheat on the back is worth?

DON *starts to speak.*

Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! We got to know what condition we're talking about.

DON (*Pause*): Okay. What condition?

TEACH: Any of 'em. You tell me.

DON: Well, pick one.

TEACH: Okay, I'm going to pick an easy one. Excellent condition 1929 S.

DON: It's worth *about* thirty-six dollars.

TEACH: No.

DON: (*More?*)

TEACH: Well, guess.

DON: Just tell me is it more or less.

TEACH: What do you think?

DON: More.



TEACH: No.

DON: Okay, it's worth, I gotta say      eighteen-sixty.

TEACH: No.

DON: Then I give up.

TEACH: Twenty fucking cents.

DON: You're fulla shit.

TEACH: My mother's grave.

DON: Give me that fucking book. (*Business.*) Go beat that.

TEACH: This is what I'm saying, Don, you got to know what you're talking about.

DON: You wanna take the book?

TEACH: Naaa, *fuck* the book. What am I going to do, leaf through the book for hours on end? The important thing is to have the *idea*

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: What was the other one?

DON: What other one?

TEACH: He stole off you.

DON: What do you mean what was it?

TEACH: The *date*, so on.

DON: How the fuck do *I* know?

TEACH (*Pause*): When you looked it up.

DON: How are you getting in the house?

TEACH: The house?

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: Aah, you go in through a *window* they left open, some-  
thing

thing.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: There's always something.

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DON: Yeah. What else, if not the window.

TEACH: How the fuck do *I* know?

*Pause.*

If not the window, something else.

DON: What?

TEACH: We'll see when we get there.

DON: Okay, all I'm asking, what it *might* be.

TEACH: Hey, you didn't warn us we were going to have a  
*quiz*

DON: It's just a question.

TEACH: I know it.

*Pause.*

DON: What is the answer?

TEACH: We're seeing when we get there.

DON: Oh. You can't answer me, Teach?

TEACH: You have your job, I have my job, Don. I am not here  
to smother you in theory. Think about it.

DON: I am thinking about it. I'd like you to answer my question.

TEACH: Don't push me, Don. Don't front off with me here. I am  
not other people.

DON: And just what does that mean?

TEACH: Just that nobody's perfect

DON: They aren't.

TEACH: No.

*Pause.*

DON: I'm going to have Fletch come with us.

TEACH: Fletch.

DON: Yes.

TEACH: You're having him *come* with us.

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DON: Yes.

TEACH: Now you're kidding me.

DON: No.

TEACH: No? Then why do you say this?

DON: With Fletch.

TEACH: Yes.

DON: I want some depth.

TEACH: You want depth on the team.

DON: Yes, I do.

TEACH: So you bring in Fletch.

DON: Yes.

TEACH: 'Cause I don't play your games with you.

DON: We just might need him.

TEACH: We won't.

DON: We might, Teach.

TEACH: We don't need him, Don. We do not need this guy.

DON *picks up phone.*

What? Are you calling him?

DON *nods.*

DON: It's busy. (*Hangs up.*)

TEACH: He's probably talking on the phone.

DON: Yeah. He probably is.

TEACH: We don't need this guy, Don. We don't need him. I see your point here, I do. So you're thinking I'm out there alone, and you're worried I'll rattle, so you ask me how I go in. I understand. I see this, I do. I could go in the second floor, climb up a drainpipe, I could *this . . .*

DON *dials phone again.*

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He's talking, he's talking, for chrissake, give him a minute, huh?

DON *hangs up phone.*

I am hurt, Don.

DON: I'm sorry, Teach.

TEACH: I'm not hurt for me.

DON: Who are you hurt for?

TEACH: Think about it.

DON: We can use somebody watch our rear.

TEACH: You keep your numbers down, you don't *have* a rear. You know what has rears? Armies

DON: I'm just saying, something goes *wrong*

TEACH: Wrong, wrong, you make your own right and wrong.  
Hey Biiig fucking deal. The shot is yours, no one's disputing that. We're talking business, let's *talk* business: you think it's good business call Fletch in? To help us.

DON: Yes.

TEACH: Well then okay.

*Pause.*

Are you sure?

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: All right, if you're *sure*

DON: I'm sure, Teach.

TEACH: Then, all right, then. That's all I worry about.

*Pause.*

And you're probably right, we could use three of us on the job.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: Somebody watch for the cops . . . work out a *signal* . . .

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: Safety in numbers.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: Three-men jobs.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: You, me, Fletcher.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: A division of labor

*Pause.*

(Security. Muscle. Intelligence.) Huh?

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: This means, what, a traditional split. Am I right? We get ten off the top goes to Earl, and the rest, three-way split. Huh? That's what we got? Huh?

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: Well, that's what's right.

*Pause.*

All right. Lay the shot out for me.

DON: For tonight?

TEACH: Yes.

DON: Okay.

*Pause.*

I stay here on the phone

TEACH:       yeah

DON:       for Fletcher

TEACH: Yeah.

DON: We meet, ten-thirty, 'leven, back here.

TEACH: (Back here, the three . . . )

DON: Yeah. And go in.

*Pause.*

Huh?

TEACH: Yeah. Where?

DON: Around the corner.

TEACH: Yeah.

*Pause.*

Are you mad at me?

DON: No.

TEACH: Do you want to play gin?

DON: Naaa.

TEACH: Then I guess I'll go home, take a nap, and rest up.  
Come back here tonight and we'll take off this fucking fruit's  
coins.

DON: Right.

TEACH: I feel like I'm trying to stay *up* to death

DON: You ain't been to sleep since the game?

TEACH: *Shit* no (then that dyke cocksucker )

DON: So go take a nap. You trying to kill yourself?

TEACH: You're right, and you do what you think is right, Don.

DON: I got to, Teach.

TEACH: You got to trust your instincts, right or wrong.

DON: I got to.

TEACH: I know it. I know you do.

*Pause.*

Anybody wants to get in touch with me, I'm over the hotel.

DON: Okay.

TEACH: I'm not the *hotel*, I stepped out for coffee, I'll be back  
one minute.

DON: Okay.

TEACH: And I'll see you around eleven.

DON: O'clock.

TEACH: *Here.*

DON: Right.

TEACH: And don't worry about anything.

DON: I won't.

TEACH: I don't want to hear you're worrying about a god-damned thing.

DON: You won't, Teach.

TEACH: You're sure you want Fletch coming with us?

DON: Yes.

TEACH: All right, then, so long as you're sure.

DON: I'm sure, Teach.

TEACH: Then I'm going to see you tonight.

DON: Goddamn right you are.

TEACH: I am seeing you later.

DON: I know.

TEACH: Good-bye.

DON: Good-bye.

TEACH: I want to make one thing plain before I go, Don. I am not mad at you.

DON: I know.

TEACH: All right, then



TEACH: All right, then.

DON: You have a good nap.

TEACH: I will.

TEACH *exits.*

DON: Fuckin' *business*

*Lights dim to black.*



# ***ACT II***

*Don's Resale Shop. 11:15 that evening. The shop is darkened. DON is alone. He is holding the telephone to his ear.*

DON: Great. Great great great great great.

*Pause.*

(Cocksucking fuckhead )

*Pause.*

This is greatness.

DON hangs up phone. BOB appears in the door to the shop.

What are you doing here?

BOB: I came here.

DON: For what?

BOB: I got to talk to you.

DON: Why?

BOB: Business.

DON: Yeah?

BOB: I need some money.

DON: What for?

BOB: Nothing. I can pay for it.

DON: For what?

BOB: This guy. I found a coin.

DON: A coin?

BOB: A buffalo-head.

DON: Nickel?

BOB: Yeah. You want it?

*Pause.*

DON: What are you doing here, Bob?

BOB: I need money.

DON picks up phone and dials. He lets it ring as he talks to BOB.

You want it?

DON: What?

BOB: My buffalo.

DON: Lemme look at it.

*Pause.*

I got to look at it to know do I want it.

BOB: You don't know if you want it?

DON: I probably want it . . . what I'm saying, if it's worth anything.

BOB: It's a buffalo, it's worth something.

DON: The question is but what. It's just like everything else, Bob. Like every other fucking thing. (*Pause. He hangs up phone.*) Were you at The Riv?

BOB: Before.

DON: Is Fletch over there?

BOB: No.

DON: Teach?

BOB: No. Ruth and Gracie was there for a minute.

DON: What the fuck does that mean?

*Pause.*

BOB: Nothing.

*Pause.*

Only they were there

Only they were there.

*Pause.*

I didn't *mean* anything . . . my nickel . . . I can tell you what it is.

*Pause.*

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I can tell you what it is.

DON: What? What *date* it is? That don't mean shit.

BOB: No?

DON: Come *on*, Bobby? What's important in a coin

BOB: *yeah?*

DON: What *condition* it's in

BOB: (Great.)

DON: *if you can (I don't know . . . ) count the hair on the Indian, something. You got to look it up.*

BOB: In the book?

DON: Yes.

BOB: Okay. And then you know.

DON: Well, no. What I'm saying, the book is like you use it like an *indicator* (I mean, right off with *silver prices* so on . . . ) (*He hangs up phone.*) Shit.

BOB: What?

DON: What do you want for the coin?

BOB: What it's worth only.

DON: Okay, we'll look it up.

BOB: But you still don't know.

DON: But you got an idea, Bob. You got an idea you can *deviate* from.

*Pause.*

BOB: The other guy went ninety bucks.

DON: He was a fuckin' sucker, Bob.

*Pause.*

Am I a sucker? (Bob, I'm busy here. You see?)

BOB: Some coins are worth that.

DON: Oddities, Bob. Freak oddities of nature. What are we

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talking about here? The silver? The silver's maybe three times face. You want fifteen cents for it?

BOB: No.

DON: So, okay. So what do you want for it?

BOB: What it's worth.

DON: Let me see it.

BOB: Why?

DON: To look in the goddamn . . . Forget it. Forget it. *Don't* let me see it.

BOB: But the book don't *mean* shit.

DON: The book gives us *ideas*, Bob. The book gives us a basis for *comparison*.

Look, we're human beings. We can *talk*, we can negotiate, we can *this* . . . you need money? What do you need?

*Pause.*

BOB: I came here



BOB: I came here

*Pause.*

DON: What do you need, Bob?

*Pause.*

BOB: How come you're in here so late?

DON: We're gonna play cards.

BOB: Who?

DON: Teach and me and Fletcher.

TEACH *enters the store.*

What time is it?

TEACH: Fuck is *he* doing here?

DON: What fucking time is it?

TEACH: Where's Fletcher?

*Pause.*

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Where's Fletcher?

BOB: Hi, Teach.

TEACH (*to DON*): What is he doing here?

BOB: I came in.

DON: Do you know what time it is?

TEACH: What? I'm late?

DON: Damn right you're late.

TEACH: I'm fucked up since my watch broke.

DON: Your watch broke?

TEACH: I just told you that

TEACH: I just told you that.

DON: When did your watch break?

TEACH: The fuck do *I* know?

DON: Well, you look at it. You want to know your watch broke, all you got to do is look at it.

*Pause.*

TEACH: I don't have it.

DON: Why not?

TEACH: I took it off when it broke. (What do you *want* here?)

DON: You're going around without a watch.

TEACH: Yes. I am, Donny. What am I, you're my *keeper* all a sudden?

DON: I'm paying you to do a thing, Teach, I expect to know where you are when.

TEACH: Donny. You aren't paying me to do a thing. We are doing something together. I know we are. My watch broke, that is my concern. The *thing* is your and my concern. And the concern of Fletcher. You want to find a reason we should jump all over each other all of a sudden like we work in a *bloodbank*, fine. But it's not good business.

*Pause.*

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And so who knows what time it is offhand? Jerks on the radio? The phone broad?

*Pause.*

Now, I understand nerves.

DON: There's no fuckin' nerves involved in this. Teach.

TEACH: No, huh?

TEACH: NO, huh?

DON: No.

TEACH: Well, great. That's great, then. So what are we talking about? A little lateness? Some excusable fucking lateness? And a couple of guys they're understandably a bit excited?

*Pause.*

DON: I don't like it.

TEACH: Then *don't* like it, then. Let's do this. Let's everybody get a writ. I got a case. You got a case. Bobby—I don't know what the fuck *he's* doing here

DON: Leave him alone.

TEACH: Now I'm picking on him.

DON: Leave him alone.

TEACH: What's he doing here?

DON: He came in.

BOB: I found a nickel.

TEACH: Hey, that's fantastic.

BOB: You want to see it?

TEACH: Yes, please let me see it.

BOB (*hands nickel, wrapped in cloth, to TEACH*): I like 'em because of the art on it.

TEACH: Uh-huh.

BOB: Because it *looks* like something.

TEACH (*to DON*): Is this worth anything?

BOB: We don't know yet.

TEACH: Oh.

BOB: We're going to look it up.

TEACH: Oh, what? Tonight?

BOB: I think so.

DON (*hangs up phone*): Fuck.

TEACH: So where is he?

DON: How the fuck do I know?

TEACH: He said he'd be here?

DON: Yes, he did, Teach.

BOB: Fletcher?

TEACH: So where is he, then? And what's *he* doing here?

DON: Leave him alone. He'll leave.

TEACH: He's going to leave, huh?

DON: Yes.

TEACH: You're sure it isn't like the bowling league, Fletch doesn't show up, we just suit up Bobby, give him a shot, and *he* goes in?

*Pause.*

Aaah, fuck. I'm sorry. I spoke in anger. I'm sorry, I'm sorry. (Everybody can make mistakes around here but me.) I'm sorry, Bob, I'm very sorry.

BOB: That's okay, Teach.

TEACH: All I meant to say, we'd give you a fuckin' suit, like in football

*Pause.*

and you'd (You know, like, whatever ) and you'd go in. (*Pause. To DON*) So what do you want me to do? Dress up and lick him all over? I said I was sorry, what's going on

and lick him all over. I said I was sorry, what's going on here. Huh? In the *first* place. I come in, I'm *late* . . . he's here

*Pause.*

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DON: Bobby, I'll see you tomorrow, okay? (*He picks phone up and dials.*)

BOB: I need some money.

TEACH (*digging in pockets*): What do you need?

BOB: I want to sell the *buffalo* nickel.

TEACH: I'll buy it myself.

BOB: We don't know what it's worth.

TEACH: What do you want for it?

BOB: Fifty dollars.

TEACH: You're outta your fuckin' mind.

*Pause.*

Look. Here's a fin. Get lost. Okay?

*Pause.*

BOB: It's worth more than that.

TEACH: How the fuck do you know that?

BOB: I think it is.

*Pause.*

TEACH: Okay. You keep the fin like a loan. You *keep* the fuckin' nickel, and we'll call it a loan. Now go on. (*He hands nickel back to BOB.*)

DON (*hangs up phone*): Fuck.

BOB: I need more

BOB: I need more.

TEACH (to DON): Give the kid a couple of bucks.

DON: What?

TEACH: Give him some money.

DON: What for?

TEACH: The nickel.

*Pause.*

BOB: We can look in the book tomorrow.

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DON (to TEACH): You bought the nickel?

TEACH: Don't worry about it. Give him some money. Get him out of here.

DON: How much?

TEACH: What? I don't care

DON (to BOB): How much giving him money for? (To TEACH) What the fuck am I

TEACH: Just give it to him.

DON: What? Ten? (*Pause. Digs in pocket, hands bill to BOB.*)  
How is that, Bob? (*Pause. Hands additional bill to BOB.*)  
Okay?

BOB: We'll look it up.

DON: Okay. Huh? We'll see you tomorrow.

BOB: And we'll look it up.

DON: Yes.

BOB (to TEACH): You should talk to Ruthie.

TEACH: Oh, I should, huh?

BOB: Yes.

TEACH: Why?

BOB: Because.

*Pause.*

TEACH: I'll see you tomorrow, Bobby.

BOB: Good-bye, Teach.

TEACH: Good-bye.

DON: Good-bye, Bob.

BOB: Good-bye.

*Pause. BOB exits.*

DON: Fuckin' kid

TEACH: So where is Fletcher?

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DON: Don't worry. He'll be here.

TEACH: The question is but when. Maybe his watch broke.

DON: Maybe it just did, Teach. Maybe his actual watch broke.

TEACH: And maybe mine didn't, you're saying? You wanna bet? You wanna place a little fucking wager on it? How much money you got in your pockets? I bet you all the money in your pockets against all the money in my pockets, I walk out that door right now, I come back with a broken watch.

*Pause.*

DON: Calm down.

TEACH: I am calm. I'm just upset.

DON: I know.

TEACH: So where is he when I'm here?

DON: Don't worry about it.

TEACH: So who's going to worry about it then?

DON: (Shit.)

TEACH: This should go to prove you something.

DON: It doesn't prove anything. The guy's just late.

TEACH: Oh. And I wasn't?

DON: You were late, too.

TEACH: You're fuckin' A I was, and I got bawled out for it.

DON: He's late for a reason.

TEACH: I don't accept it.

DON: That's your privilege.

TEACH: And what was Bob doing here?

DON: He told you. He wanted to sell me the nickel.

TEACH: That's why he came here?

DON: Yes.

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TEACH: To sell you the buffalo?

DON: Yes.

TEACH: Where did he get it?

DON: I think from some guy.

TEACH: Who?

*Pause.*



DON: I don't know.

*Pause.*

TEACH: Where's Fletcher?

DON: I don't know. He'll show up. (*Picks up phone and dials.*)

TEACH: He'll show up.

DON: Yes.

TEACH: He's not here now.

DON: No.

TEACH: You scout the guy's house?

DON: The guy? No.

TEACH: Well, let's do that, then. (*He's not home. Hang up.*)

DON (*hangs up phone*): You wanna scout his house.

TEACH: Yeah.

DON: Why? Bob already saw him when he went off with the suitcase.

TEACH: Just to be sure, huh?

DON: Yeah. Okay.

TEACH: You bet. Now we call him up.

DON: We call the guy up.

TEACH: Yeah.

*Pause.*

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DON: Good idea. (*He picks up phone. Hunts guy's number. Dials. To himself*) We can do this.

TEACH: This is planning. This is preparation. If he anguere

TEACH: This is planning. This is preparation. If he answers

DON *shhhs* TEACH

I'm telling you what to do if he answers.

DON: What?

TEACH: Hang up. (DON *starts to hang up phone.*) No. *Don't* hang up. Hang up now. Hang up now!

DON *hangs up phone.*

Now look: If he *answers*

DON: yeah?

TEACH: *Don't* arouse his fucking suspicions.

DON: All right.

TEACH: And the odds are he's not there, so when he answers just say you're calling for a wrong fucking *number*, something. Be simple.

*Pause.*

Give me the phone.

DON *hands* TEACH *the phone.*

Gimme the card.

DON *hands* TEACH *card.*

This is his number? 221—7834?

DON: Yeah.

TEACH (*snorts*): All right. I dial, I'm calling for somebody named June, and we go interchange on number.

*Pause.*

We're gonna say like, "Is this 221—7834?"

DON: yeah?

TEACH: And they go, "No." (I mean "—7843." It is —7834.)

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So we go, very simply, "Is this 221—7843?" and they go "No," and right away the guy is home, we still haven't blown the shot.

DON: Okay.

TEACH *picks up the phone and dials.*

TEACH (*into phone*): Hi. Yeah. I'm calling uh is June there?

*Pause.*

Well, is this 221—7843?

*Pause.*

It is? Well, look I must of got the number wrong. I'm sorry.

*He hangs up phone.*

(This is bizarre.) Read me that number.

DON: 221—7834.

TEACH: Right. (*Dials phone. Listens.*) Nobody home. See, this is careful operation (*Pause. Hangs up.*) You wanna try it?

DON: No.

TEACH: I don't mind that you're careful, Don. This doesn't piss me off. What gets me mad, when you get loose.

DON: What do you mean?

TEACH: You know what I mean.

DON: No, I don't.

TEACH: Yes you do. I come in here. The kid's here.

DON: He doesn't know anything.

TEACH: He doesn't.

DON: No.

TEACH: What was he here for, then?

DON: Sell me the buffalo.

TEACH: Sell it tonight.

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DON: Yeah.

TEACH: A valuable nickel.

DON: We don't know.

*Pause.*

TEACH: Where is Fletch?

DON: I don't know. *(Picks up phone and dials.)*

TEACH: He's not home. He's not home, Don. He's out.

DON *(into phone)*: Hello?

TEACH: He's in?

DON: This is Donny Dubrow.

TEACH: The Riv?

DON: I'm looking for Fletcher.

*Pause.*

Okay. Thank you. *(He hangs up.)*

TEACH: Cocksucker should be horsewhipped with a horsewhip.

DON: He'll show up.

TEACH: Fucking Riverside, too. (Thirty-seven cents for take-out coffee.)

DON: Yeah. (*Picks up phone.*)

TEACH: A lot of nerve you come in there for sixteen years. This is not free enterprise.

DON: No.

TEACH: You know what is free enterprise?

DON: No. What?

TEACH: The freedom

DON: yeah?

TEACH: Of the *Individual* . . .

DON: . . . yeah?

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TEACH: To Embark on Any Fucking Course that he sees fit.

DON: Uh-huh

TEACH: In order to secure his honest chance to make a profit.  
Am I so out of line on this?

DON: No.

TEACH: Does this make me a Commie?

DON: No.

TEACH: The country's *founded* on this, Don. You know this.

DON: Did you get a chance to take a nap?

TEACH: Nap nap nap nap nap. Big deal.

DON (*Pause*): Yeah.

TEACH: Without this we're just savage shitheads in the wilderness.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: Sitting around some vicious campfire. That's why *Ruthie* bums me up.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: (Nowhere dyke ) And take those fuckers in the concentration camps. You think they went in there by *choice*?

DON: No.

TEACH: They were *dragged* in there, Don

DON: yeah.

TEACH: Kicking and screaming. *Gimme* that fucking phone.

TEACH *grabs phone. Listens. Hangs up.*

He's not home. I say *fuck* the cocksucker.

DON: He'll show up.

TEACH: You believe that?

DON: Yes.

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TEACH: Then you are full of shit.

DON: Don't tell me that, Teach. Don't tell me I'm full of shit.

TEACH: I'm sorry. You want me to hold your hand? This is how you keep score. I mean, *we're* all here

DON: Just, I don't want that talk.

TEACH: Don I talk straight to you 'cause I respect you. It's kickass or kissass, Don, and I'd be lying if I told you any different.

DON: And what makes you such an authority on life all of a

sudden?

TEACH: My life, Jim. And the way I've lived it.

*Pause.*

DON: Now what does that mean, Teach?

TEACH: What does that mean?

DON: Yes.

TEACH: What does that *mean*?

DON: Yes.

TEACH: Nothing. Not a thing. All that I'm telling you, the shot is yours. It's one night only. Too many guys know. All I'm saying. Take your shot.

DON: Who knows?

TEACH: You and me.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: Bob and Fletcher. Earl, the phone guy, Grace and Ruthie, maybe.

DON: Grace and Ruth don't know.

TEACH: Who *knows* they know or not, all that I'm telling you, it's not always so clear what's going on. Like Fletcher and the pig iron, that time.

DON: What was the shot on that?

TEACH: He stole some pig iron off Ruth.

DON: (I heard that )

TEACH: That's a fact. A fact stands by itself. And we must face the facts and act on them. You better wake up, Don, right

now, or things are going to fall around your *head*, and you are going to turn around to find he's took the joint off by himself.

DON: He would not do that.

TEACH: He would. He is an animal.

DON: He don't have the address.

TEACH: He doesn't know it.

DON: No.

TEACH: Now, that is wise. Then let us go and take what's ours.

DON: We have a deal with the man.

TEACH: With Fletcher.

DON: Yes.

TEACH: We had a deal with Bobby.

DON: What does that mean?

TEACH: Nothing.

DON: It don't.

TEACH: No.

DON: What did you mean by that?

TEACH: I didn't mean a thing.

DON: You didn't.

TEACH: No.

DON: You're full of shit, Teach.

TEACH: I am.

DON: Yes.

TEACH: Because I got the balls to face some facts?



*Pause.*

You scare me sometimes, Don.

DON: Oh, yeah?

TEACH: Yes. I don't want to go around with you here, things go down, we'll settle when we're done. We have a job to do here. Huh? Forget it. Let's go, come on.

DON: We're waiting for him.

TEACH: Fletcher.

DON: Yes.

TEACH: Why?

DON: Many reasons.

TEACH: Tell me one. You give me one good reason, why we're sitting here, and I'll sit down and never say a word. One reason. One. Go on. I'm listening.

DON: He knows how to get in.

*Pause.*

TEACH: Good night, Don. *(He starts to go for door.)*

DON: Where are you going?

TEACH: Home.

DON: You're going home.

TEACH: Yes.

DON: Why?

TEACH: You're fucking with me. It's all right.

DON: Hold on. You tell me how I'm fucking with you.

TEACH: *Come on, Don.*

DON: You asked me the one reason.

TEACH: You make yourself ridiculous.

DON: Yeah?

TEACH: Yeah.

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DON: Then answer it.

TEACH: What is the question?

DON: Fletch knows how to get in.

TEACH: "Get in." That's your reason?

DON: Yes.

*Pause.*

TEACH: What the fuck they live in Fort Knox? ("Get in.")  
(*Snorts.*) You break in a *window*, worse comes to worse  
you kick the fucking *back door* in. (What do you think this  
is, the Middle Ages?)

DON: What about he's got a safe?

TEACH: Biiiiig fucking deal.

DON: How is that?

TEACH: You want to know about a safe?

DON: Yes.

TEACH: What you do, a *safe* you find the combination.

DON: Where he wrote it down.

TEACH: Yes.

DON: What if he didn't write it down?

TEACH: He wrote it down. He's *gotta* write it down. What hap-

pens he forgets it?

DON: What happens he doesn't forget it?

TEACH: He's gotta forget it, Don. Human nature. The point being, even he *doesn't* forget it, *why* does he not forget it?

DON: Why?

TEACH: 'Cause he's got it *wrote down*.

*Pause.*

That's why he *writes* it down.

*Pause.*

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Huh? Not because he's some fucking turkey can't even remember the combination to his own *safe* but only in the event that (God forbid) he somehow *forgets* it. he's got it wrote down.

*Pause.*

This is common sense.

*Pause.*

What's the good keep the stuff in the safe, every time he wants to get at it he's got to write away to the manufacturer?

DON: Where does he write it?

TEACH: What difference? *Here* We go in, I find the combination fifteen minutes, tops.

*Pause.*

There are only just so many places it could be. Man is a creature of habits. Man does not change his habits overnight. This is not like him. (And if he does, he has a very good reason.) Look, Don: You want to remember some-

thing (you write it down). Where do you put it?

*Pause.*

DON: In my wallet.

*Pause.*

TEACH: *Exactly!*

*Pause.*

Okay?

DON: What if he didn't write it down?

TEACH: He wrote it down.

DON: I know he did. But just, I'm saying, from *another* instance. Some made-up guy from my imagination.

TEACH: You're saying in the instance of some guy . . .

DON: (Some *other* guy )

TEACH: . . . he didn't write it down?

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*Pause.*

DON: Yes.

TEACH: Well, this is another thing.

*Pause.*

You see what I'm saying?

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: It's another matter. The guy, he's got the shit in the safe, he didn't write it *down*

*Pause.*

Don ?

DON: Yes?

TEACH: How do you know he didn't write it down?

DON: (I'm, you know, making it up.)

*Pause.*

TEACH: Well, then, this is not based on *fact*.

*Pause.*

You see what I'm saying?

I can sit here and tell you *this*, I can tell you *that*, I can tell you any fucking thing you care to mention, but what is the point?

You aren't telling me he didn't write it down. All that you're saying, you can't *find* it. Which is only natural, as you don't know where to look. All I'm asking for a little trust here.

DON: I don't know.

TEACH: Then you know what? Fuck you. (All day long. Grace and Ruthie Christ) What am I standing here convincing you? What am I doing demeaning myself standing here pleading with you to protect your best interests? I can't believe this, Don. Somebody told me I'd do this for you (For *anybody*) I'd call him a liar. (I'm coming in here to efface myself.) I am not Fletch, Don, no, and you should

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thank God and fall *down* I'm not. (You're coming in here all the time that "He's so good at cards . . .") The man is a cheat, Don. He *cheats* at cards—Fletcher, the guy that you're waiting for.

DON: He cheats.

TEACH: Fucking A right, he does.

DON: Where do you get this?

*Pause.*

You're full of shit, Walt. You're saying Fletch cheats at cards.

*Pause.*

You've seen him. You've seen him he cheats.

*Pause.*

You're telling me this?

TEACH: (The whatchamacallit is always the last to know.)

DON: Come on, Walt, I mean, forget with the job and all.

TEACH: You live in a world of your own, Don.

DON: Fletch cheats at cards.

TEACH: Yes.

DON: I don't believe you.

TEACH: Ah. You can't take the truth.

DON: No. I am sorry. I play in this fucking game.

TEACH: And you don't know what goes on.

DON: I leave Fletcher alone in my store. He could take me off any time, day and night.

What are you telling me, Walt? This is nothing but poison, I don't want to hear it. (*Pause.*)

TEACH: And that is what you say.

DON: Yes. It is.

*Pause.*

TEACH: Think back, Donny. Last night. On one hand. You lost two hundred bucks.

*Pause.*

You got the straight, you stand pat. I go down before the draw.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: He's got what?

DON: A flush.

TEACH: That is correct. How many did he take?

DON: What?

TEACH: How many did he take?

*Pause.*

DON: One?

TEACH: No. Two, Don. He took two.

*Pause.*

DON: Yeah. He took two on that hand.

TEACH: He takes two on your standing pat, you kicked him thirty bucks? He draws two, comes out with a *flush*?

DON (*Pause*): Yeah?

TEACH: And spills his fucking Fresca?

DON: Yeah?

TEACH: Oh. You remember that?

DON (*Pause*): Yeah.

TEACH: And we look down.

DON: Yeah.

TEACH: When we look back, he has come up with a king-high flush.

*Pause.*

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After he has drawn two.

*Pause.*

You're better than that, Don. You *knew* you had him beat, and you were right.

*Pause.*

DON: It could happen.

TEACH: Donny

DON: Yeah?

TEACH: He laid down five red cards. A heart flush to the king.

*Pause.*

DON: Yeah?

TEACH: I swear to God as I am standing here that when I threw my hand in when you raised me out, that I folded the king of hearts.

*Pause.*

DON: You never called him out.

TEACH: No.

DON: How come?

TEACH: (He don't got the address the guy?)

DON: I told you he didn't.

*Pause.*

He's cheating, you couldn't say anything?



He's cheating, you couldn't say anything:

TEACH: It's not my responsibility, to cause bloodshed. I am not your keeper. You want to face facts, okay.

DON: I can't believe this, Teach.

TEACH: (Friendship is marvelous.)

DON: You couldn't say a word?

TEACH: I tell you now.

DON: He was cheating, you couldn't say anything?

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TEACH: Don. Don, I see you're put out, you find out this guy is a cheat.

DON: According to you.

TEACH: According to me, yes. I am the person it's usually according to when I'm talking. Have you noticed this? And I'm not crazed about it you're coming out I would lie to you on this. *Fuck* this. On anything. Wake up, Jim. I'm not the cheat. I know you're not mad at me, who are you mad at? Who fucked you up here, Don? Who's not here? Who?

DON: Ruth knows he cheats?

TEACH: Who is the bitch in league with?

DON: Him?

TEACH (*Pause*): You know how much money they took from this game?

DON: Yeah?

TEACH: Well, I could be wrong.

DON: Don't fuck with me here, Teach.

TEACH: I don't fuck with my friends, Don. I don't fuck with my

business associates. I am a businessman, I am here to do business, I am here to face facts.

(Will you open your eyes ?) The kid comes in here, he has got a certain coin, it's like the one you used to have . the guy you brought in doesn't show, we don't know where *he* is.

*Pause.*

Something comes down, some guy gets his house took off.

*Pause.*

Fletcher, he's not showing up. All right. Let's say I don't know why. Let's say you don't know why. But I know that we're both better off. We are better off, Don.

*Pause.*

What time is it?

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DON: It's midnight.

*Pause.*

TEACH: I'm going out there now. I'll need the address.

*TEACH takes out revolver and begins to load it.*

DON: What's that?

TEACH: What?

DON: That.

TEACH: This "gun"?

DON: Yes.

TEACH: What does it look like?

DON: A gun.

TEACH: It is a gun.

DON (*rises and crosses to center*): I don't like it.

TEACH: Don't look at it.

DON: I'm serious.

TEACH: So am I.

DON: We don't need a gun, Teach.

TEACH: I pray that we don't, Don.

DON: We don't, tell me why we need a gun.

TEACH: It's not a question do we *need* it. . . *Need* . . . Only that it makes me comfortable, okay? It helps me to relax.

So, God forbid, something inevitable occurs and the choice is (And I'm saying "God forbid") it's either him or us.

DON: Who?

TEACH: The guy. I'm saying God forbid the *guy* (or somebody) comes in, he's got a knife a cleaver from one of those magnetic boards ?

DON: Yeah?

TEACH: . . . with the two *strips* . . . ?

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DON: Yeah?

TEACH: And *whack*, and somebody is bleeding to death. This is all. Merely as a deterrent.

*Pause.*

All the preparation in the world does not mean *shit*, the path of some crazed lunatic sees you as an invasion of his personal domain. Guys go nuts, Don, you know this. Public officials Ax murderers all I'm saying, look out for

your own.

DON: I don't like the gun.

TEACH: It's a personal thing, Don. A personal thing of mine. A silly personal thing. I just like to have it along. Is this so unreasonable?

DON: I don't want it.

TEACH: I'm not going without it.

DON: Why do you want it?

TEACH: Protection of me and my partner. Protection, deterrence. (We're only going around the fucking corner for chrissake .)

DON: I don't want it with.

TEACH: I can't step down on this, Don. I got to have it with. The light of things as they are.

DON: Why?

TEACH: Because of the way things are. (*He looks out window.*)  
Hold on a second.

DON: Fletcher?

TEACH: Cops.

DON: What are they doing?

TEACH: Cruising.

*Pause.*

DON: They turn the corner?

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TEACH: Hold on.

*Pause.*

Yes.

They have the right idea. Armed to the hilt. Sticks, Mace, knives . who knows *what* the fuck they got. They have the right idea. Social customs break down, next thing *everybody's* lying in the gutter.

*A knocking is heard at the door.*

(Get down.) (Douse the light.)

DON: (Lemme see who it is )

TEACH: Don't answer it.

BOB (*from behind door*): Donny?

TEACH: (Great.)

DON: (It's Bobby.)

TEACH: (I know.)

BOB: Donny?

*Pause.*

TEACH: (Don't let him in.)

DON: (He knows we're in here.)

TEACH: (So let him go away, then.)

BOB: I got to talk to you.

DON *looks at* TEACH.

DON (*to* BOB): What is it?

BOB: I can't come in?

TEACH: (Get him outta here.)

*Pause.*

DON: Bob

BOB: Yeah?

DON: We're busy here.

BOB: I got to talk to you.

DON *looks at* TEACH.

TEACH: (Is he alone?)

DON: (I think.)

TEACH (*Pause*): (Hold on.)

TEACH *opens door and pulls* BOB *in*.

What, Bob? What do you want? You know we got work to do here, we don't need you to do it, so what are you doing here and what do you want?

BOB: To talk to Don.

TEACH: Well, Don does not want to talk to you.

BOB: I got to talk to him.

TEACH: You do not have to do anything, Bob. You do not have to do anything that we tell you that you have to do.

BOB: I got to talk to Donny. (*To* DON) Can I talk to you? (*Pause. To* DON.) I came here

DON: yeah?

BOB: The Riverside?

DON: Yeah?

BOB: Grace and Ruthie he's in the hospital. Fletch.

*Pause.*

I only wanted to, like, *come* here. I know you guys are only playing *cards* this now. I didn't want to disturb you like *up*, but they just I found out he was in the hospital and I

came over here to tell you.

*Pause.*

TEACH: With what?

BOB: He got mugged.

TEACH: You're so full of shit.

BOB: I think some Mexicans.

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TEACH *snorts*.

He did. He's in the hospital.

TEACH: You see this, Don?

DON: He's mugged?

BOB: Yeah, Grace, they just got back. They broke his jaw.

TEACH: They broke his jaw.

BOB: Yeah. Broke.

TEACH: And now he's in the hospital. Grace and Ruthie just got back. You thought that you'd come over.

BOB: Yeah.

TEACH: Well, how about this, Don? Here Fletch is in Masonic Hospital a needle in his arm, huh. How about this?

DON: How bad is he?

BOB: They broke his jaw.

DON: What else?

BOB: I don't know.

TEACH: Would you believe this if I told you this this afternoon?

DON: When did it happen, Bob?

BOB: Like before.

DON: Before, huh?

BOB: Yeah.

TEACH: How about this, Don?

BOB: We're going to see him tomorrow.

DON: When?

BOB: I don't know. In the morning.

DON: They got hours in the morning?

BOB: I guess so.

TEACH: Hey, thanks for coming here. You did real good in coming here.

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BOB: Yeah?

TEACH (to DON): He did real good in coming here, huh, Donny?  
(To BOB) We really owe you something.

BOB: What for?

TEACH: Coming here.

BOB: What?

TEACH: Something.

BOB: Like what?

DON: He don't know. He's saying that he thinks we owe you something, but right now he can't think what it is.

BOB: Thanks, Teach.

TEACH: It's okay, Bob.

*Pause. BOB starts to exit.*

Stick around



BOB: Okay. For a minute.

TEACH: What? You're busy?

BOB: I got, like, some things to do.

TEACH: Whaddaya got, a "date"?

BOB: No.

TEACH: What, then?

BOB: Business.

*Pause.*

DON: Where did they take him, Bob?

*Pause.*

BOB: Uh, Masonic.

DON: I don't think that they got hours start til after lunch.

BOB: Then we'll go then. I'm gonna go now.

TEACH: Hold on a second, Bob. I feel we should take care of you for coming here.

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BOB: That's okay. I'll see you guys.

DON: Come here a minute, Bobby.

BOB: What, Donny?

DON: What's going on here?

BOB: Here?

DON: Yes.

*Pause.*

BOB: Nothing.