

Till the morning comes...
By
Marc Gatschner

FADE IN:

INT. LEPITO PER ROLL OFFICES - FRONT DESK - EARLY MORNING

SAM LEPITO, early fifties, balding and heavy set, sits behind an oversized wooden desk. His eyes bulge behind a pair of horned rim glasses as he scans over an open dossier.

LEPITO

So, how you liking construction?

Across from Lepito. CODY, mid twenties, picture book good looking, sits uneasy in a small plastic chair.

CODY

It is.

LEPTIO

Sanchez tells me you're a good worker. Says you keep your head down...nose clean.

CODY

I do my job.

Lepito glances up. He senses Cody's disinterest.

LEPITO

Tough work construction. Breaks you down from the inside out.

CODY

It's a living.

LEPITO

For some, sure.

He is gauging him. Cody senses it.

CODY

I'm fine with what I do.

LEPITO

Yeah. So why you driving a bus on the side?

No response. Cody is shaken. Lepito smiles.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

Don't worry kid, you're not breaking probation. You're just throwing away a hell of an opportunity.

CODY
Construction ain't an opportunity.

LEPITO
For the right people it can be.

Lepito leans back in his chair and begins to nurse a coffee.

LEPITO (CONT'D)
I have a guy coming in later today,
used to fence. Works for a roofing
company now. Says it's the hardest
thing he's ever done. Even harder
than the time he put in at
Coxsackie.

He turns the dossier around for Cody to sign.

LEPITO (CONT'D)
Says he'd rather go back in than
continue busting balls on those God
damn roofs.

Cody ignores the paper and focuses on Lepito.

CODY
Why are you telling me this?

LEPITO
Cause we're having a conversation.

CODY
About?

LEPITO
You want me to spell it out for
you?

CODY
I want you to get to the point.

Lepito cocks his head.

LEPITO
Was that your tough guy voice?

Cody glares across the table at Lepito.

LEPITO (CONT'D)
You wanna hear a tough guy voice,
than I suggest you hang around for
my two o'clock.

Another drawn out sip.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

Billy Patterson, did fifteen years up in Pennyville for slicing up his fourteen year old girlfriend. Half way through his sentence one of his fellow inmates decided to take a set of nail clippers to his throat. Poor bastard talks like he's been possessed by the devil himself now.

Lepito takes a moment to stir another package of sugar into his coffee.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

Don't bother me none though.

He sips at it. A nod of approval.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

I know who you are Cody. You're just an over protective brother who busted up his kid sisters ass hole boyfriend.

Slowly he leans in.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

Valiant, but hardly the dangerous type.

An embarrassed Cody slinks into his chair. It empowers Sam.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

You know what the difference between the two is?

Cody continues to look down.

CODY

No.

LEPITO

That is.

Lepito smiles and leans back.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

You don't like this situation, to bad. You jammed yourself. You were to chicken shit to do your six months so now you're stuck with me for the next two years.

A brow beaten Cody slowly raises his eyes to meet Lepito's.

CODY

What do you want Sam?

LEPITO

I have a guy. Says he's got solid connections to a few of the local construction companies.

CODY

Since when do per roll officers have "guys".

LEPITO

Hey, you wanted me to tell you what's going on, so I'm telling you!

Lepito tempers himself.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

Now, do you want to be in the know or not?

Cody takes a moment. He is unsure.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

Listen kid, I'm giving you a chance to stop breaking your back for some spick foreman and start bringing in some real fucking cash.

CODY

How.

LEPITO

First, you put an end to that bus driving bull shit and you start focusing back on the job your supposed to be working.

He takes another sip while Cody digests what has just been said.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

Second, you cut yourself to 14 hours a week, tell them you've got a back injury. Then, on the side you move through my man...

CODY

Move what?

LEPITO

Tools, heavy equipment, that sort of thing. Says there's big money in them. Easy to move, no way of tracing back.

The conversation makes Cody uneasy.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

Cut's fair. I take twenty. You and Tony split the rest.

He is scared. Lepito senses it.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

They're a million dollar company Cody. Skimming a few tools off of them is like taking a quarter from a wishing well. Ain't no one gonna notice.

Cody shakes his head in disbelief.

CODY

You're some piece of work Sam.

LEPITO

One of a kind I hope. Bad for business other wise.

The front bell rings. Another patron enters.

Lepito looks over Cody's shoulder and see's JERSEY, late forties, tall and thin, forgettable face, forgettable black suit, standing in the doorway.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

I'll be with you in a minute.

Jersey nods and steps into a well shadowed corner of the room. He focuses his attention on Cody and Sam, but says nothing.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

Listen kid, how about you take the night and think this through. Then when your mind has settled, come back to me with an answer.

CODY

I got an answer.

LEPITO

Yeah.

CODY
Yeah. Go fuck yourself.

An aggressive Lepito leans forward.

LEPITO
Watch your fucking mouth.

Every inch of Cody's body begins to shake. Desperately he tries to hold his ground.

LEPITO (CONT'D)
Right now your life is nothing more than a God damn file. A file I own. I write one word in here and you're going in, no questions asked. So before you start acting like some fucking cowboy, I suggest you think of the consequences.

Completely powerless to the situation, Cody shakes with frustration.

LEPITO (CONT'D)
I'm giving you the night...I suggest you take it.

An emotional Cody slowly pulls himself to his feet.

CODY
You walk a thin line my friend.

LEPITO
With hundred dollar shoes.

There is nothing Cody can do. He is beat. Slowly he turns to exit the building. He pauses as he passes by Jersey. The two make eye contact but say nothing.

LEPITO (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You looking for someone?

Jersey watches Cody exit the building. There is an interest.

JERSEY
No.

LEPITO
Then what brings you in here?

Slowly, he turns towards Lepito.

JERSEY

My friend forgot his briefcase here
yesterday. Asked if I could pick
it up for him.

Lepito smiles. He knows the score.

LEPITO

Sure. I got it right here.

He reaches under his desk and pulls out a black leather
briefcase.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

Some go to UPS, other's come to me.
At least the one's in the know do.

Jersey locks his eyes on the briefcase then makes a move for
it. Suddenly Lepito covers it with his hand.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

You got something for me?

With a slight hesitance, Jersey raises his eyes off the case
and onto Lepito. They are cold and calculated.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

Just watching my end.

Jersey reaches inside his coat pocket and pulls out a small
manila envelope. He hands it to a smiling Lepito.

LEPTIO

Thanks pally.

With no hesitation, Lepito rips open the envelope and looks
inside. Fresh bills.

Deal complete, Jersey grabs the briefcase and turns to exit.

LEPITO

Pleasure doing business with you.
You ever need a helping hand
again...just let me know.

Suddenly Jersey stops and glances down at the briefcases
metal locking system. Fresh scratches.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

There a problem.

He turns back towards Lepito.

JERSEY

Was your payment not enough?

LEPITO

What are you talking about?

JERSEY

You entered a deal. Did you feel it not to be fair?

LEPITO

Nothing wrong with the deal. I just got a little curious.

No answer. Lepito shifts nervously.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

Listen, I know Alex. Been under my supervision for almost a year now.

JERSEY

How does this matter?

LEPITO

Cause when I say I know him...I mean I really know him.

Lepito waits, tries to read Jersey. Still nothing.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

Cat worked for TALID SECURITIES, got busted for insider trading. Pleaded out after dropping a few names then got sent back into the real world with some bull shit story about being put away for a DUI.

A suddenly calm Lepito leans back in his chair and sips at his coffee.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

TALID SECURITIES, that's big money. That's military money. So when he comes in here and offers me a grand to do nothing more than hold this case for a night, you don't think, that knowing what I know, that my interest in the contents of that case would be nothing more than substantial.

JERSEY

You weren't paid to know what's inside.

LEPITO

Listen pal. I was paid one grand to do this. For all I know what's in that case could be worth a thousand times more than that.

Jersey responds with a cold glare.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

Hey, I just wanted a little piece of the action, alright. If I could get a stock tip out of this, who was it really going to hurt, TALID. Fuck that. Those bastards make billions off of wiping out entire cities. A penny out of there pocket ain't going to hurt 'em.

Lepito sets his coffee down and leans forward.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

Truth is, I saw a cookie in the cookie jar and I tried to take it. You would of done the same thing.

JERSEY

No. I would've of done what I was paid to do.

LEPITO

Well, I guess that's where you and I differ, huh pal.

JERSEY

Among other things.

The cold response unsettles Lepito.

LEPITO

What the hell does it matter anyway's. That God damn brief case is like fort Knox. Couldn't get into that thing if my fucking life depended on it.

JERSEY

Interesting choice of words.

LEPITO

Excuse me.

From inside his coat pocket, Jersey pulls out a pair of handcuffs. He checks them over then attaches one end onto his wrist and the other onto the briefcase.

LEPITO (CONT'D)

What the hell's going on here?

JERSEY

I'm doing what I was paid to do.
The same thing you should of done.

LEPITO

Hey come on man.

JERSEY

Do you mind if I take five minutes
of your time...

Jersey straightens his jacket and begins to walk towards a now cowering Lepito.

JERSEY (CONT'D)

...I have a question I'd like to
ask you.

LEPITO

Come on man, I told you I couldn't
get in. No harm done right.
Hey...did you hear me...I didn't
get in...

A slight grin sneaks across Jersey's face.

EXT. LEPITO PER ROLL OFFICES - FRONT SIDEWALK - SAME TIME

Lepito's office goes dark. Suddenly, Jersey appears at the front glass door. He flips the OPEN sign over to CLOSED then steps out onto the street.

A slight drizzle begins to fall. Jersey pulls out an umbrella and pops it open. He takes a quick look around then makes his way to a nearby bus stop.

Suddenly the sky opens up and the drizzle turns into a downpour. Unfazed, Jersey waits.