

FADE IN:

INT. SITTING ROOM - MORNING

SUPERIMPOSE: "Bayonne, New Jersey, 1902"

In a shabby apartment, windows open to dingy sunlight, ROXY HUSTON (22, red hair, nice figure) is leaning over a battered tin bathtub. She is wearing a thin cotton shawl that barely covers her body. She dips her toe into the water- and stops, dropping her head.

ROXY

Cold as ice...

And our view opens to reveal that two men are watching her get into the bathtub. On the left, CARLO GENETTI (27, Italian, swarthy) tips back his hat and leans in to say:

CARLO

You want to get paid? You make that water look nice and warm.

To his right, his brother, PRIMO (32, plump, soft eyes) is leaning down to look through a wooden box. Primo cranks a handle on the side of the box and a whitting sound can be heard from the box. It is painted black, except for the words 'PROPERTY OF EDISON MOVING PICTURES CO.' In white on the side. A gleaming lens sticks out the far side; it's a camera and the brothers are making a movie.

Primo is counting to himself, he stops to mutter in Italian to Carlo, then goes back to counting.

CARLO (CONT'D)

Don't show your bubbies this time.

Roxy steels herself and slides into the water, keeping the shawl over her intimate areas. She does it gracefully and relaxes back against the tub. You'd swear the water was just right from the look of bliss on her face.

Carlo looks at Primo, who nods: they can use this one.

Carlo looks to the door to Roxy's right.

CARLO (CONT'D)

Okay, Jamie- come in and find her.

They wait. The whirring of the film in the camera takes on a higher pitch.

Carlo calls again, a little louder.

CARLO (CONT'D)

Jamie, where are you? I need the  
horny landlord!

Primo curses to himself and keeps cranking.

CARLO (CONT'D)

Jamie, Goddammit!

And the door flies open and JAMIE CARMICHEAL (30, thick  
mustache) steps in. Wearing a waistcoat, he points down at  
Roxy in the tub and shouts:

JAMIE

Two weeks late with the rent? You're  
in hot water now, you little tramp!

And the whirring turns to clattering and Primo roars a curse:  
the film in the camera has run out.

EXT. STREET - MORNING

Horses pull a long wagon down a quiet street of brownstone  
townhouses. In the wagon sit a dozen muscular, burly thugs,  
all holding baseball bats and axes.

As the wagon clip-clops along, the man next to the driver  
stands. He is Irish, he is strongly-built and he is very  
displeased. He is EUGENE CORTLAND (40, Irish and proud of  
it and fuck you if you aren't). He steadies himself and  
addresses the men.

CORTLAND

Gentlemen. What do I hate?

A few men offer answers all at once:

THUGS

The British...Protestants...niggers!

Cortland shakes his head.

CORTLAND

Thieves. These  
thieving...vulgar...Dagos.

He is at a loss, silent as the wagon rolls along.

CORTLAND (CONT'D)

Mister Edison. Do you know what he  
said to me? He looked at me and he  
said: 'You've missed them twice  
already. Why?'

He looks up at the men, meeting their eyes, one by one.

CORTLAND (CONT'D)  
 He said... 'Is it your men?'

The thugs look at each other, ashamed.

CORTLAND (CONT'D)  
 And do you know what I told him? I told him: no, sir. I told him that my men, Eugene Cortland's men, have hearts like lions and fists of steel. I said there were no better men in the, in the world, for beating Dagos into dirt and getting back what they stole.

He sits down, his back to them.

CORTLAND (CONT'D)  
 I said that about you. Tonight, when I am buying the drinks and we're all singing the old songs...you'll know what we did today...and so will he.

INT. SITTING ROOM - DAY

Jamie and Carlo stand in the hallway as Primo rushes by, muttering as he carries the camera.

JAMIE  
 It's just that I had a lot of coffee. I was buttoning up and-

Primo glares back at him and slams the door.

Carlo nods and puffs his cigar.

CARLO  
 Jamie. We've got, what, two reels left? We've got to shoot Roxy and her shawl falling off, you chasing her, then us dressed as cops chasing you- and if we don't finish, Laubacher won't buy it, we don't get paid, you don't get paid.

Roxy comes by; with the camera off, she isn't so worried about her 'bubbies' showing. She stops in front of Carlo.

ROXY  
 How was I?

CARLO  
 Good; maybe more with the eyes? When you yell? And more splashing.