

SCRIPT TITLE

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ACT ONE

EXT. VACANT APARTMENT BUILDING STOOP. DAY. SEPT. 1914.

A warm September breeze rustles the leaves as the stoop group congregates on the stoop of a vacant apartment building in New York City's Greenwich Village. A diverse group of individuals, the long-time friends, who have been through a lot together, share laughter, camaraderie, and a carefree attitude as they enjoy their idyllic lives.

They are--

Billy, a good looking and intelligent man in his 30's. He exudes a natural charisma and sits at the center of the group, the de facto leader, he occasionally takes a puff on a marijuana cigarette before passing it on.

Michael "Shamrock". Kelly, a tough man. In his 30's who speaks with a very slight brogue and sips from a brown bottle labeled "Laudonum" and displaying a skull & cross bones insignia. . Laudanum, an alcohol and opium mixture from a bottle on the step beside him. He is Billy's best friend, and along with Billy, fiercely protective of the group.

Ruth, a wealthy dowager, with a penchant for opium-laced patent medicines. She pulls her mink stole tight and sips from a bottle embossed "Dr. McMunn's Elicer of Opium"

Jive, a black hipster musician, 40's, pulls on the shared joint, as he bops in the rhythm of life.

Sam, a Union Civil War veteran in his 60's with one leg, relies on crutches and morphine for pain. He still proudly wears his Union blue cap.

"Cocaine" Katy, a street-smart prostitute in her 20's, is pretty but hardened.

The group pass the joint around, as they engage in banter and laughter. Only Ruth refuses the smoke, with a wrinkle of her nose.

BILLY

Alright my friends, another day on the stoop. Anything new?

KATY

I'm a little nervous. I keep hearing whispers about this new dope law. The Harrison thing. They say it might be a problem. It's got teeth.

The atmosphere immediately changes from jovial to concern.

SHAMROCK

Teeth, huh? Well I've got my own
and no law is gonna chew us up.

Nervous laughter echoes through the group, but there is an undercurrent of uncertainty.

Ruth, openly takes a bottle of "Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup" from the pocket of her mink. Uncorks it and brazenly takes a large sip before putting it away.

RUTH

I'm going to get a few gross of
these little rascals and stick them
in the cellar. Just in case. You
never know.

Sam raises his cane, and shakes it. He looks grim.

SAM

Me too. With my luck, this damn new
law won't be a false alarm. I know
my leg ain't there anymore, but
tell that to my brain. It hurts
like hell sometimes. I'm going to
do like Ruth. I'll see the croakers
and stock up on my medicine and
spikes, too.

Everyone looks hopefully at Billy, their acknowledged leader. Although Kat looks worried too as she speaks to him,

KATY

What do you think, Billy? Will we
have any trouble getting our
stuff?

Billy looks confident as he tries to ease the worries of the group,

BILLY

Don't you worry, Katy. We'll figure
it out. We always do.

Shamrock lets out a laugh before speaking.

SHAMROCK

Billy's right. It'll be ok. We
can't have anyone from the stoop
being too cranky after all. We're
all cranky enough, ain't we?

The group all laugh. But Then, they fall into a thoughtful silence The carefree ambiance dims as the looming specter of this Harrison Narcotics Act.

Katy speaks softly.

KATY

It's just that it's so easy to get what we need now. I'd hate to see it change. I can't imagine what it would be like.

The group all murmur in agreement.

EXT. THE STOOP- EVENING.

The group are all lounging peacefully on the stoop . It is a pleasant, warm, fall evening. A friendly Beat cop, Officer O'Malley walks up to the group. They are all on a first name basis with the neighborhood cop.

OFFICER O'MALLEY

Well, the merry band of Greenwich Village. How's The world treating you lot today?

The group give warm affirmations and smiles to the cop. O'Malley looks at Shmrock

O'MALLEY

I've been meanin' to ask you countryman, where in the ol'Sod are you from?

SHAMROCK

County Waterford. You, officer?

O'malley smiles expansively.

OFFICER O'MALLEY

Waterford? Beautiful. Simply beautiful place. I hail from Kerry myself.

SHAMROCK

I know Kerry well. You miss it?

OFFICER O'MALLEY

Yes, I do and I should have known Waterford. I recognize the brogue. Keep your spirits high, Shamrock.

RUTH, THE REGAL DOWAGER OF THE GROUP,
CATCHES O'MALLEY'S EYE.

OFFICER O'MALLEY

Now, Ruth, a lady of your stature shouldn't be seen lounging on a stoop like this.

Ruth titters.

RUTH

Oh, Officer, these are my dearest friends. Where they are, I am.

OFFICER O'MALLEY

Just don't let them get you in any troublr.

The group all snicker good naturedly. Then O'Malley turns to look at Katy.

OFFICER O'MALLEY (CONT'D)

And you. Lass you remind me so much of my daughter. Take care of yourself. This is still a big city.

KATY BLUSHES AND GIVES A SHY SMILE.

KATY

Thank you, officer. That is very nice to say.

As the friendly banter continues, Officer O'Malley's expression turns serious.

OFFICER O'MALLEY

Nowlisten, folks. I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but I've been hearing scuttlebutt from the brass at headquarters, That Harrison Law goin in effect in the spring, they say it might be different than past laws. A lot different. The politicians are looking for blood cause the papers got the citixens all stirred up this time.

(MORE)

OFFICER O'MALLEY (CONT'D)

The federal boys are supposedly gonna throw a lot of money which they got and men at the trade to try an wipe it out. And a lot of people may go to jail. Uou all better be careful. Things might not be as easy as they have been once this goes into effect. Watch out for them. Billy.

Billy nods as the group exchange concerned glances.

BILLY

We watch out for each other, Officer. We always do. And thanks for the tip.

They all murmer in agreement.

With a final nod, O'Malley tips his cap and continues on his beat, leaving the stoop group to ponder the uncertain future that lies ahead.

Bill

MONTAGE OF GROUP MEMBERS ACQUIRING THEIR DRUG OF CHOICE.

INT. DRY GOODS STORE-DAY.

Ruth strolls into a quaint grocery store. The bell above the door jingles gently. There is the hustle and bustle of commerce inside. Ruth, adorned in expensive attire, walks confidently to a center aisle and heading down it, She stops, knowingly and eyes a location on an upper self There are six small glass bottles with "Dr. McMunn's Elixer of Opium" embossed on the side. Ruth gathers them all carefully into her large handbag. She speaks quietly to a young stockboy walking by.

RUTH

It seems doctor Mc Munn's has been quite popular today. Is there more?

He boy looks at her warily.

STOCKBOY

No, Msam, We sold out today. I think Mrs. Winslow's is similar.

The boy punts to an adjacent slot with similar boyyles all labeled, "Mrs. Winslow's soothing Syrup.

Ruth lifts one of the bottles to read it and shakes her head disapprovingly. To the boy she speaks in a warning tone.

RUTH

Too much alchol. Very bad for you, young man. Remember that.

STOCKBOY

Yes maaam, I will.

Ruth turns and heads to the rear of the store. At the counter, A middle-aged woman , known well to Ruth greets her.

Clerk

Mrs. Simpson, Can I help you?

Ruth removes her half dozen bottle gingerely from her bag and sets on the counter in a single file. The clerk makes a calculation on paper and tells Ruth her total. Then,

CLERK

Would you like to charge this, Mrs. Simpson?

Ruth smiles and speaks in a low voice to the clerk.

RUTH

Yes, and make sure this goes on my private account, not my husband's. He needn't know about my womanly comforts. He can be so picky.

They share a conspira torial chuckle, as the clerk helps Ruth plsce the bottles in her handbag.

INT. PHARMACY-DAY.

Sam, on his crutches, propels himself up to the pharmacy at the back of the shop. The Pharmacist acknowledges Sam as a regular with a friendly greeting.

SAM

Mornin,' Tom. Ten and two boxes
needlese, if you please.

The pharmacist looks concerned.

PHARMACIST

You sure you need that much, Sam?
Please be careful. There were a
couple of overdoses over on Blecker
yesterday.

Sam shakes his head in disgust and raises his stump,

SAM

Hop heads usin' for kichs, Tom. For
Me it's medicine for this invisible
leg that hurts like hell without
it.

TOM

Just watching out for my good
patrons, Sam . And you been picking
up more often and more grains each
visit. You aren;t getting
soldier's disease are you?

Sam looks shocked.

SAM

Me? I use it sparingly and only
when the pains bad.

Tom looks thoughtful.

TOM

Worried about the new Harrison law?

Sam's furrowed brow reveals he is.

SAM

Good to be prepared. You never
know. What do you think, Tom?

Tom leans across the counter and speaks in a low
conspiratorial voice.

TOM

I'm hearing scuttlebutt that this damn fed law may be serious this time. I know the boss is shook. He's ordering extra opium, morphine and cocaine from our wholesalers.

Sam furrowed eyes relaxed

SAM

No problem then. You'll have plenty for a long time. Right?

Tom looked perplexed.

TOM

Who knows. If there's a big scarcity. Everyone'll be squirrelling it away, like you. So who knows. The boss says nothing like this new law has happened before.

Sam looked worried and rubbed his stump

SAM

Great just what I need. I'll have to go back on the juice to quiet my damn ghost leg. And I get mean on that shit.

Tom looked sympathetic.

TOM

I heard there coming after that next.

Sam harrumphs in disgust.

SAM

What the beejesus is this country coming too? What did I lose a pin so I can inject or drink rain water?

Tom gives a sympathetic look.

TOM

Well, maybe it'll be a false alarm like the others they've made a big trumpet about in the past. From Albany and Washington.

Sam adjusted his crutches and winced.

SAM

Let's hope. Those politicians'd
mess up a wet dream. Let's see if
they do the same with this. I'll
see ya later .Tom. Have a good day.

Tom gives a farewell and watches, concern on his face as Sam
turns and crutches himself toward the front exit door. He
lightly shakes his head.

INT. OBACCONIST SHOP-DAY.

Katy ,dressed very sexily is the lone female in a shop filled
with cigars and pipe smoke of all kinds, She sashays
confidently near the register. up to a small counter display
near the register. Men's eyes follow her closely.

An elderly clerk asks if he can help her.

Katy responds confidently.

KATY

Any Ryno's Hay Fever Remedy?

He clerk shakes his head and points to an empty space on the
shelf in front of Katy.

CLERK

I can't keep it stocked out here.
The minute I put a box out, it'
seems all the tins are gobbled
right up. I don't know if the whole
village has come down with hay
fever, or it's got something to do
with the ingrediants.

Katy feigned ignorance

KATY

Oh, what's that?

CLERK

It's 98 percent pure cocaine. And
with that new law starting soon, I
think people ate syalking up.

Katy smiled innocently.

KATY

Do you have anymore?

The clerk looked quizzically at Katy.

CLERK

Sure let me go out back and get a new box.

On his return the clerk asked Katy how many tins would she like.

KATY)COYLY)

I might as well take the whole box. I think this is going to be a bad season for the hay fever. And I don't want to get caught short.

The clerk looks suspiciously at Katy but completes the order.

KATY)INNOCENTLY)

Do you have a ladies room where i can freshen up?

The clerk points toward a door at the back of the store. He watches, as do other men who have observed Katy's purchase, as she walks directly to "The Ladies Room."

INT. LSDIES ROOM. DAY.

Katy takes one of the tims from the box she has in a brown bag. She opens the tin. It is full with a sparkly powder. In front of a sink mirror, shedips her long index finger nail into the poder like a sovel and takes a generous amoubt up to her nostril and inhales the poeder. She repeats the procedure with her other nostril. Her eyelids open wide to reveal a sparkle on her eyes. As Katy walks from the store men gaze after hewr, some amazed and some aroused.

Katy walks through the village, removing a list from her pocket, she slaps her forehead and turns making a beeline for a store with thfacade marked druggist.

INT. DRUG STORE. DAY.

Katy walks about to the counter, The obvious druggist asks Katy if he can help her;

KATY (CALMLY)

The new Bayer Heroin formulation I've heard about?

The druggist speaks warily.

DRUGGIST

Yes maam, how much can I get you?

Katy tell him her desired amount after the druggest returns with her purchase, he speaks with genuine concern.

DRUGGIST (CONT'D)

Please be careful with this maam.

The new formula is quite strong.

Katy assures the man she will be cautious and leaves the shop,

ACT TWO

EXT. GREENWICH VILLAGE STOOP-DAY, A WEEK LATER..

The stoop group lounges on their usual spot, enjoying the warm sunlight and easy banter. The atmosphere is interrupted by the approach of a half-dozen street toughs. They strut up to the stoop. Led by an ominous looking character dressed in shirt and pants , both ragged and with holes. He is tough looking and has two cauliflower ears and a longb ugly cheek scar.

Jive speaks ominously to his friends.

JIVE

?Oh, Boy, this ain't good. It's Monk Eastman and his Five Points gang.

MONK

Well, well, well what have we got here? And resting your asses on my turf.

The group exchange nervous glances.

SHAMROCK

Greenwich Village ain't your playground, Eastman.

Monk grubs one of his deformed ears.

MONK

My territory is anything I say it is, Potato breath. And right now I say this is my territory. So hand over any drugs and dough youse got on ya. And to his motley companions, collect whst they got, boys, and don't let any of 'em hold out.

Eastman's gang members start to collect. Afew of the group like Ruth, Katy and Sam hand over the little in drugs and money that they have. Shamrock and Billy hesitate and they are slapped around. by the thugs.

Eastman sees Jive hesitate and runs up to him, pushing him backwards hard by his face.

MONK (CONT'D)

Give it up Eggplant. It ain't worth
gettin' strung up over.

Jive brings out a small matchbox. Eastman grabs it and looks
disgusted.

MONK (CONT'D)

Figures, can't afford the good
stuff, huh? But we'll take it .
Soon the junkies 'll pay good dough
for tea, just to take the edge off.
Remember, creeps, we'll be back
every week and have rent for my
stoop ready or you'll all need some
a that new heroin dope to dull the
pain I'm gonna give yas all. And
women too. I don'r discriminate.

Eastman and his gang snicker and laugh as they all begin to
walk away. The stoop group all watch, with varying degrees of
dread.

EXT.THE STOOP- A FEW DAYS LATER- DAY.

The group lounges nonchalantly, on the stoop swapping stories
and tales of their failed drug searches. Quiet like cats, two
men come up to them. Both wear overcoats in the warm weather.
One is large, the other quite small.They Are out of place in
the village.

JIVE WHISPERS) (

Coppers for sure.

The cops walk up and flash badges.

TALL AGENT

Treasury. I'm agent Jenkins. This
is my partner Spencer. We're your
new best friends.

The group snicker.

Okay,, Boys and Girls.

The group look nervously at each other.

SMALL AGENT

Listen, you lot! We know what's
going on here and you been
gettin'away with it for a long
time. That's all coming to an end.

(MORE)

SMALL AGENT (CONT'D)

You heard about the new law and we're gonna come down on you hard.

TALL AGENT

Come on ,I want to talk to you each one at a time.

HE GRABS JIVE BY HIS SHIRT AND PULLS HIM INTO AN ADJACENT VESTIBULE. THE SMALL AGENT JOINS THEM. THE LARGE AGENT GIVES JIVE A BACKHAND. JIVE PROTESTS AND STARTS TO RETURN THE BLOW, BUT THEN THINKS BETTER OF IT. SMALL AGENT PUFFS OUT HIS CHEST AND TRIES TO RAISE HIS HEIGHT. HE LESNS INTO JIVE, TRYING TO INTIMADATE HIM AND FAILS.

JENKINS

Look Sambo, here's the story. This is our jurisdiction now and if you want to stay out of Leavenworth, you're gonna work with us and tell us everyone in the village who is pushing or using, and that includes your buddies. And I know you been around, so you know you better give them up, before they give you up. They ain't tough like you Harlem boys. They can't take jail. They'll flip on you faster than a pancake.

JIVE (CONFIDENTLY)

My friends. I don't think so.

TALL AGENT

Don't be stupid boy, they'll drop a dime on you, faster than a rat up a drainpipe.

The feds pull the other members of stoop group into doorway, one at a time and give them each the same spiel, with just minor adjustments, they gave Jive.

Back on the stoop, the group all look from one to another, realizing that all of them have been given the same ultimatum from the feds. They all wonder, to varying degrees, if their friends will remain tight lipped. Billy senses the feelings of doubt and his determined to hold his small groip firmly together.

BILLY

Don't worry. We'll be alright.
We're going to stand together as we
always have. And if we do, we can't
be hurt.

EXT. BEECKER ST. DAY-COLLAGE OF HARASSMENT

The once friendly streets of the Villsgge turn hostile as the feds make good on their threat to give the stoop group no peace, in an attempt to charge them with a crime.

Ruth's encounter--The middle-aged dowager, is approached on her way to the market. The senior federal agent looms over her, demanding information, threatening to arrest her and expose her secret life to all of New York society and her family. Her Face shows the weight of this possibility.

Billy's Confrontation--Billy, the charismatic leader of the group, finds himself cornered in an alley as he takes a shortcut home. The Two feds manhandle him and let him know worse is to come unless he cooperates with the. He is defiant but still, visibly worried.

Katy's interaction--Ksty, the tough yet compassionate prostitute, is working her corner when the younger of the feds approaches her with insuls threats of jail, where he reminds her she will face withdrawal and advances from guards and other prisoners of both sexes. and lewd remarks. Shespunkily rails back but is visibly shaken.
Jive's intimidation: Jive, the jaded, philosophical musician encounters the feds waiting near Webster Hall, where he plays. Jive is not intimidated but knows what the law is capable of, especially to a cat of his color.

Sam's, Threat-- When the two feds confront Sam, the bitter Civil War veteran, and threaten him with arrest and exposure of his addiction to his war veteran friends, He threatens them with his crutch but is oushed to the ground, where he yells expletives at them as they leave, The amputee has faced death many times but he is still spooked.

INT. KATY'S APARTMENT--NIGHT

The group are sitting around the kitchen table in Katy's small, drab three-room apartment. Ruth, Teary-eyed speaks first.

RUTH

They are trying to destroy us and our friendship.

The others, around the table look either sad, angry, or frightened. Billy, Apparently an angry one, bangs the table with his fist.

BILLY (ANGRY)

We can't let them push us around. We need a plan. Something to give us some leverage. Get them off our back.

Sam puffs rapidly on his pipe.

SAM

I'm not as sharp as I was before the war. I seem to come up with my best ideas back at my room after a few puffs on my long, Chink pipe. Whattaya say Billy? We dream on it.

JIVE

I can dig that.

Billy

Ok, then .Let's Give it a day or two and see what we can come up with.

We can't let them push us around like this.

The group all nod, some confidently, others not so much.

KATY
Exasperated)

But whatta we do? The laws got the power . We got nothin'

The group ponder their predicament. They all wonder.

JIVE
For starters... We all stick
together. Noone talks. We'll find
a way otta this. Right ,Billy.

Everyone nods in agreement and turn to hear Billy's response.

BILLY
Yes, Let's think about it for a few
days and try and come up with
something. We'll meet back here,
if it's ok with Katy. We can't talk
on the stop anymore. I'm hinky
about what Muldoon said about them
having all new snooping stuff.

Sam tugs at his Union cap and harrumphs. He looksbewildered.

SAM
I don't know what you'r talkin
about.I've Just barely figured out
how to use my new -fangled horn
they put in. Only trouble is, I
ain't got anyone to talk to. Most
Of my buddies are pushin' up
daisies in Vicksburg.

This turns the mood somber, before Billy jumps up and heads
for the door.

BILLY
Okay, let's get out of here before
we all decide to check into a local
nut house. Everyone do your best
to come up with a way to scuttle
these feds and their strong-
arms.We'll Get back here when
someone comes up with something.

KATY'S APARTMENT, DAYS LATER--NIGHT

The group is back at Katy's ,seated again around the kitchen
table. Billy has gotten everyone together to discuss a plan
he has come up with.

BILLY (LEANING IN)
 Alright, listen up ,everyone. We
 Have to put an end to this
 harrasment and I've come up with a
 plan.

They are all excited to hear Billy's plan.

JIVE (ANIMATED)
 Come on,man, give. Let's hear it.

BILLY
 Okay. It's going to center around
 someone I think you all know. Bill
 Lee.

There are expressions of surprise around the table.

RUTH
 The old croaker? Doctor Bill?

BILLY
 That's him. He owes us some favors
 for tipping him off every time we
 saw or got word the blue boys were
 eyeballin' his office. he's gonna
 make good on his debts now.

The group are all ears now.

KATY
 What's the plan, Billy?

BILLY (QUIETLY)
 We are going to convince the good
 doctor sprinkle his files with fake
 records. Visits he's had with a
 certain fed detailing treatment
 for gonorhea and a deviated septum
 from cocaine abuse.

RUTH
 That would finish his career and
 reputation, that is for sure.But
 That's what he was going to do to
 me... Ahhh... us, so let's do it.

BILLY
 Yes. We'll tell the fed what we've
 done. Of course not mentioning Dr
 Bill's name and with thousands of
 doctors in the apple he won't stand
 a chance of finding which one has
 the damning information on him.

(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)

Then, back of us all or we'll make
sure his records are revealed one
way or another.

JIVE

I LOVE IT, MAN SO COOL IT SHIVERS.

Laughing, nods and words of agreement around the table.

VILLAGE STREET TWO DAYS LATER--DAY.

The group are standing on a side street in the Village, They
are all looking up at a dilapated building. The Shake off a
few lingering doubts and follow Billy up the front stairs,
through the door and up a rickety flight of stairs to the 2nd
floor. They stop in front of a door with cracked glass
embossed--WILLIAM LEE PHYSICIAN. ALL AILMENTS

THE GROUP LINGER only a moment before Jive opens the door and
steps inside. The others follow him in.

Int. Dr. Lee's waiting room.-Day

INSIDE IS A SHABBY WAITING ROOM, ODD CHAIRS SCATTERED AROUND.
HALF OF THE CHAIRS ARE OCCUPIED BY A MOTLEY GROUP OF OBVIOUS
DRUG ADDICTS. THE STOOD GROUP FAN OUT AND TAKE AVAILABLE
SEATS. THE SEATED ADDICTS LOOK UP DEFENSIVELY, ALMOST DARING THE
NEWCOMERS TO TRY TO SEE THE DOCTOR BEFORE THEM. IT ISN'T LONG
BEFORE A MAN IN A DIRTY, WRINKLED TORN, WHITE MEDICAL COAT
OPENS A FAR DOOR AND STEPS INTO THE ROOM. IT IS OBVIOUSLY DR.
BILL LEE. HE GLANCES AROUND, AND RECOGNIZES BILLY AND A
COUPLE OTHERS OF THE GROUP. HE LOOKS WARY.
Close up on Dr. Bill. He is old, in need of a shave and bent
over. Just as he begins to speak to the group, he starts to
cough, a hacking, deep bone-shaking spell that only stops
when he holds himself around his stomach. A Few of the addicts,
closest to the doctor turn away from him.

DR. BILL (SPEAKING TO THE GROUP)

Well, well, if it isn't my long
lost patients. What brings you here
today? Billy?

BILLY (CRYPTICALLY AND NODDING TOWARD
THE DOOR THE DOCTOR HAD JUST EMERGED
FROM.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Can we talk inside, doc?

DR.BILL

Of course.

He opens the door farther and motions for the group to come in. The others waiting , stop sniffing and scratching and look daggers at the group, who are all now walking to the door. The doctor tries to mollify them.

DR. BILL

Relax everyone. I forgot about the urgent appointment these folks have. I will make it up to all of you as I see you in a few minutes. The last of the fidgeting stops and the addicts all smile, very happy and now content.

The stoop group trail into an adjoining room behind the doctor.

INT. Dr. Bill's office. As shabby as the waiting room and the rest of the property. Dr. Bill sits behind an old wooden desk, marked and defaced to a shocking level He doesn't look much better. After another coughing fit, he adjusts papers with gnarled , nicotine-stained fingers. The group cluster around the desk facing the doctor , who sitting behind it, eyes over spectacles hung low on his thin nose, A long rope of snot hangs from his nose. The only two chairs in front of the desk have been ceded to Ruth and Katy. Katy declines and insists that Sam take it.

DR. BILL (CONT'D)

I'm not sure I should ask, but what do I owe this visit to, and from the entire stoop group all at once, that's a first.

BILLY (SMILING)

Doc, we need a favor.

Dr. Bill raises an eyebrow. He is wary.

DR. BILL

Favor? Last Time i checked, favors usually involve a fair exchange. Preferably in greenbacks.

The group all get up and huddle around the desk and Billy, whispering, begins to tell the doctor.

BILLY

Doc, we've got two feds, Jenkins and Waisnor breathing down our necks. We need something to make him back off.

Katy flashes a sexy smile at the doc, which he seems to enjoy.

JIVE

You know how many times we've tipped you off to yje blue boys watching you, doc.

Doc relaxes, smiles wickedly at Katy and talks to the group softly.

DR. BILL

And I appreciate it, but you don't have to call in old debts. I got nothing to lose, anyway. I already lost my license. Thanks to an agent named Jenkins by the way. So they can't take what I haven't got. And I like to get revenge. Nothing sweeterAnd.... Coughing uncontrollably... and I've only got a few more months left with this Cancer. nces and shock come from the group.

UTH SPEAKS BETWEEN SOBS.

RUTH

Can't they cut it out with surgery, doctor?

The doctor looks resigned and shakes his head.

DR. BILL

Too big. They'd have to gut me like a fish. I'll be a blessing really. Pain's getting worse and the Laudanum isn't doing the trick anymore. So...I've Got no reasons not to help you. You caught me at a goof time.

BILLY

We were thinking. Maybe you could salt your files with records of him being treated for a blown out septum from snow and gonorrhoea frommm... ahhh... you know.

Amurmer of condolenses fill the room.

(CONT'D)

EXT. STOOP DAYS LATER. DAY

The group is congregated on the stoop. The air is filled with apprehension.

SAM

So you told him, Billy? He buy
it?

Everyone looks anxiously at Billy, waiting for his response.

BILLY

I gave him just a hint but it was
enough to make his voice crack He
buttonholed me the minute I stepped
out of my place this morning, just
like every day. Got very handsy,
even for him. But when I told him
to drop by the stoop for a visit,
we'd have some interesting
information for him he kept his
hands to himself.

JIVE

I hope you're right because I smell
bacon!

The two feds walk right up to the stoop.

JENKINS (ANGRY TO BILLY)
 Okay, asshole, what's this shit
 about records in a doctor's office?

Jive jumps to his feet.

Jive

Let me tell this cracker, Billy.

BILLY
 Be my guest, Jive.

Jive becomes animated and speaks to Jenkins as if he is reading him a story.

JIVE
 You hear the one about the fed cop
 whose been going for a long time to
 a certain doctor.

Jenkins looks angrily at Jive and bellows , spit coming from his moth as he talks.

JENKINS
 Come on, cotton picker, get to the
 point or I'll split your nappy head
 open.

The group look daggers at Jenkins, but Jive shows a satisfied smile.

JIVE.
 Boy, am I gonna enjoy this. Like I
 was saying ,this certain fed cop
 been going to this doctor for a
 couple things. Seems he was a real
 bad boy. Burned a hole in his
 nose doing more snow than a
 January blizzard. And he also had
 a raging case of the clap.

JENKINS
 So what ? Tough shit for him and
 so what?

Sam waves his crutch over his head angrily.

SAM
 So what? So what if these medical
 files got into his boss's and
 wife's hands. That's so what.
 (MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

You know maybe the doc turns them in or maybe his office gets raided by New /york's finest and they find the records. How you like them apples?

Jenkins and Spencer glance at each other, as it dawns on them what is being sprung. Jenkins Makes a threatening move on Billy, then stops as he realizes what the consequences might be.

(JENKINS To Billy)

You'r bluffin, hophead.

BILLY (DARING)

Try me jenkins. Those medical records get in the hands of your wife, and Washington, you're cooked. Not to mention the NYPD who aren't fans of you feds. Ditto for our fine newspapers. Wonder what they'd do with documents like that?.

Ruth laughs from her seat and calmly takes a swig from a Dr. McMunn's bottle.

KATY

I KNOW. EXTRA! EXTRA!

Sam shakes hands with Jive, both laughing heartily.

SAM

I can see the headline now--" Fed plays too hard! WillL lose Peter and SCHNOZ

KATY

They might not be able to fit it all, but don't forget his job,wife and pension.They'd Be gone too.

JIVE

?Yeah ,that' right. The only thing he might have left is the business end of a Colt to put in his dirty mouth.. Spencer looks alarmed . Jenkins to, but with terror mixed in.

Jenkins voice quivers in fear and desperation. He Realizes he's caught in a trap.

Jenkins(to Billy)
What do you want?

The group all look toward Billy.

BILLY
Simple, Jenkins.You Leave all of us
alone. And I mean ALL of us.

Billy looks toward Jive. Jenkins isn't happy but resignation shows on his face.

Jenkins, face red, talks with hatred in his words.

JENKINS
All right ,assholes but I'm telling
you now, you haven't seen the last
of me. You can take that to the
bank. I'll be damned if a bunch of
hop heads are going to fuck with
me.

A chorus of light boos go up from the group.

BILLY
Just remember what we got, Jenkins
and keep your end of the deal and
you'll have nothing to worry about.

JENKINS (TO SPENCER)
Come on, let's get outta here. I
can't stand the stink.

The two feds turn and walk away from the stoop. Sam blows a loud raspberry in their direction. Jenkins holds up two middle fingers as the feds disappear down Bleecker Street.

The members nod and murmur agreement, except 2 two or three who still aren't convinced that none of them will break.

ACT THREE

The stoop group huddles together in the dimly lit living room of a vacant apartment of their stoop building, that they often make use of for various reasons. They are scattered on an old worn couch and a couple of easy chairs. Billy is pacing back and forth in front of them. His brow is furrowed. and they are all watching him intently.

BILLY

Ok, we've got those two feds off our backs but we still got one more pressing peoblem. what everyone has said and it's all the same. Suppliers, druggists, and stores all say they expect to be out of all drugs shortly because everyone has gone bonkers with thhis new law comin' along, and there buying up everything they can get their grubby hands on. Soon there won't be anything left in the village.

SHAMROCK (OMINOUSLY)

And worse, i've seen this movie before, when

I lived in London town. It won't be long before every junkie and sddict in the Apple, not to mention the gangs, will start maurauding out of their own neighborhoods and strong arm everyone they ca for dough or dope And that means us, too. It can be very violrnt when violent people can't get their medicine.

Ruth clutches her mink closer to her and speaks nervously.

Ruth

We can't let them take what little we have left. I need my medicine too or I'll get sick. What can we do, Billy?

BILLY

There's only one thing we can do. We're gonna have to risk it and see if we can find some dope somewhere else that may hold us until this panic is over. And just in case, we should look for sources we can use while it is still ongoing.

Jive adjusts his beret and speaks.

JIVE

This ain't gonna be any easy pickins'. Every gang and lowlife in the city will be out trying to score, one way or another. And plenty will kill as soon as look at ya.

Katy looks up from the couch. Her voice trembles.

KATY

I don't want to be lifted of everything I got, or worse, end up in some ally with a blade in my belly.

Billy sounds determined as he looks from face to face.

BILLY

We won't let that happen, Katy. We're going to stick together just like always. We'll find a source and safely, too. No matter what we've had thrown at us through the years, we've always come out the other side in one piece. And that's cause we stick together in tough times and we will this time, too.

The group all nod in agreement, their determination palpable in the air.

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CUT TO:

EXT. Greenwich Village Streets-Day. Billy Leads the way as the stoop group weave their way through the bustling Village streets. No smiles or laughter now, their faces reflect seriousness and determination.

BILLY (V.O.)

(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)

We're entering unchartered territory. A city at was always risky when you entered unfamiliar areas. Now multiply that danger by a hundred fold, with the worst of the worst driven to desperation by this damn new drug law. But I'll do whatever it takes to make sure my friends are safe from both the animals out here and the harm that could come if we don't replenish their medicine.

As the group disappear around a corner the screen turns to black as the group heads to traverse the even more than usual, dangerous streets of New York City.