

"ROCKY"

INT. ROCKY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

(A KNOCK is HEARD. Rocky opens the door. Mickey Goldmill, the gym owner, stands framed in the doorway.)

MICKEY

Hey kid, I seen the light. I figured you was home. Can I come in?

ROCKY

Hey, Mickey... whatta ya doin' here? Here, sit down.

(Rocky tosses soiled clothing off a mangled armchair.)

ROCKY

(Continuing) Best seat in the house -- Hey, Mick, this is too much.

MICKEY

What do you mean?

ROCKY

I'm usta seein' ya at the gym, but seein' ya here, in my house, it's kinda outta joint.

(By the manner in which Goldmill listens, it is obvious something important is preying on his mind. Rocky is slightly uncomfortable, almost embarrassed at having outsiders see how he lives.)

MICKEY

Listen, Rock, you're a very lucky guy.

ROCKY

Yeah.

MICKEY

What happened to you is freak luck.

ROCKY

Freak luck for sure.

MICKEY

Yeah, for sure! Look at all them other fighters. They're good fighters, right? Good records. Colorful. Fight their hearts out for peanuts -- But who cared? Nobody. But you! You get a shot at the title!

ROCKY

Freak luck is a strange thing.

(Mickey does not hear. His looking at is the turtles.)

MICKEY

What the hell are those?

ROCKY

Turtles -- domestic turtles. One on the top is Link, and the other one is Marbles.

MICKEY

Yeah, they'll make a good soup. *(pause)* I'm here to warn ya to be very careful about this shot at the title. Because like the Bible sez, ya don't get no second chance.

(Mickey looks hard into Rocky's eyes.)

MICKEY

(continuing) You thought of that, huh? What you need is a manager. A manager. Listen to me. I know, because I been in this racket for fifty years. I done it all, there ain't nothin' about the world of pugilism that ain't livin' right up here.

(He lights a half-smoked cigar.)

ROCKY

Fifty years, huh.

MICKEY

Fifty years. My rep is known around Philly, an' a good rep can't be bought, but I don't have to tell you that.

ROCKY

How 'bout a glass of water?

MICKEY

Rocky, d'ya know what I done?

ROCKY

What?

MICKEY

I done it all. Believe what I'm tellin' ya -- Ya shoulda seen me the night in Brooklyn when I knocked that guinea Russo outta the goddamn ring, I tell ya. September 14, 1923. And it was the same night Firpo knocked Dempsey outta the ring. But who got the publicity? Who? Who do you think?

ROCKY

Dempsey.

MICKEY

That right. But why?

ROCKY

Because he was the champ.

MICKEY

No, because he had a manager. I had nothing. September 14, 1923

ROCKY

Ya got a good mind for dates.

MICKEY

Look at this face! Now, let me show you something... twenty-one stitches over the left eye, thirty-four over the right -- my nose was busted seven times, the last was in the Sailor Mike fight New Year's Eve, 1940. I got the clipping here; it was a good fight. (*Pulls out clipping*) You wanna read about it? (*Rocky doesn't*) Well, it doesn't matter. I got the pain and the experience... and you got heart -- kinda remind me of Marciano, you do.

ROCKY

Nobody ever said that before.

MICKEY

Yeah, ya kinda remind me of the Rock. Ya move like 'im.

ROCKY

Really think so?

MICKEY

And you got heart like him.

ROCKY

Heart, but I ain't got no Locker.

MICKEY

Christ, I know this business. Rocky, when I started fightin', Pugs like me was treated like dogs -- throw ya in the pit an' for ten bucks ya try to kill each other. But we had no management! One time I fought a son-of-a-bitch who put a nail in the thumb of his glove an' punched so many holes in my face I had spit shootin' outta my cheeks -- I never had no manager watchin' out for me. You know that picture outside the gym -- 'Mighty Mick,' that's me in my prime. I had all the tools. I coulda beat the crap outta any lightweight on the East Coast - But I had no management.

MICKEY CONT.

Nobody ever got to know how slick I was, but I had a head for business an' stashed a few bucks an' opened the gym -- It's a dirt hole, I know it, but that an' all the scars is all I got to show for fifty years in the business, kid. And now you come along with this shot and... And now I got all this knowledge, I got it in here! I wanna give you this knowledge. I wanna protect you. I wanna take care of ya. I wanna make sure that all the shit that happened to me doesn't happen to you. I wanna make sure ya get the best deal ya can! (pause) Respect. I always gave ya respect.

ROCKY

... Ya gave Dipper my locker.

MICKEY

(almost begging) I'm sorry, I -- I made a mistake. Kid, I'm askin' man to man. I wanna be ya manager.

ROCKY

The fight's set -- I don't need a manager.

MICKEY

Look, you can't buy what I'm gonna give ya. Ya can't. I've seen it all! I got the pain an' I got experience.

ROCKY

I got pain an' experience too.

MICKEY

Please, kid.

ROCKY

Whatever I got, I always got on the slide. This shot's no different. I didn't earn nothin' -- I got it on the slide... I needed ya help about ten years ago when I was startin', but ya never helped me none.

MICKEY

Well, if ya was wantin' my help... why didn't ya just ask me, kid? Just ask me.

ROCKY

I asked, but ya never helped nothin'! -- Like the Bible sez, ya don't get no second chance.

MICKEY

Rocky, I'm seventy-six years old. Maybe you can be the winner I never was -- your shot is my last shot!

Rocky is choked and goes into the bathroom and closes the door. Mickey struggles to his feet and, like a beaten man, leaves. Moments later Rocky steps out. Springing up a second later, he runs outside.

ROCKY

In ten years you don't come to my house. I didn't ask for any favors from you. You talk about your prime, what about my prime Mick? At least you had a prime! A guy comes up and wants to offer me a fight, big deal, want to fight the fight? Yeah I'll fight the big fight. You know how? I'm gonna get that! And I'm gonna get that! You wanna be ringside and see it? You wanna help me get my face kicked in? Yeah, help me out. I'll fight the fight.

EXT. STREET OF ROCKY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Rocky races up the block toward the shadowy and hunched form of Mickey. Way in the distance, we SEE Rocky stop the old man beneath a street lamp. He places an arm around his shoulder.