

*synopsis & dialogue sample for*

## **After Ours**

a light noir

by

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# AFTER OURS

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Don't Touch That Dial!

Have we got a **SYNOPSIS** for you!

## A CRIMINAL COMEDY ABOUT MAIL ORDER AND UNRULY WOMEN...

**AFTER OURS** is a cockeyed tribute to classic gangster films that cracks wise about disorganized crime and late-night merchandising.

The seamy underworld of miraculous knives and hair-in-a-can may be the last chance to go legit for Sal DeRusso, a z-grade hood with the lousiest luck in this stinking burg. And his luck just got lousier.

### TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS INCREDIBLE OFFER:

After he's landed the gig, he finds out he's in business with his ex-wife. The one he never stopped loving. The one he ditched 23 years ago, when he went out for cigarettes and she went over the edge. Since then, she's been marrying losers and blaming him. That's no torch she's carrying, that's a flame-thrower. These days, she's settled down for good with fiancé number 13, living as a mail-order moll, sleeping days and snooping nights.

### ACT NOW AND RECEIVE THIS SPECIAL BONUS:

Her new sleazebag squeeze is looking after himself with her life savings. Sal's working late to look after her and stumbles onto a scam that could cost her everything. To win her back he has to lose her forever: he'll take the blame to save his dame, without her ever knowing...

### BUT WAIT THERE'S MORE!

It doesn't have to cost you a bundle. All this can be yours for just five (**5!**) actors (3 Fellas, 2 Fatal Femmes) in modern clothing on a single (beat-up, suspiciously stained office) set. In just under 2 hours.

**That's what we call value!**

No explosions, no strobes, no guns. Some assembly required.

(Assault-and-batteries not included.)

**AFTER OURS: A ROMANTIC COMEDY ABOUT PEDDLING SCHLOCK & BEATING THE CLOCK.**

## Characters

**Sal DeRusso:** The Loser. A Chump in a Slump. A very moral little guy who's always the guiltiest looking person in any room. Short and wiry and desperate. Late 30s.

**Emma:** The Dame. A Long Cool Drink of Gasoline. Sal's ex. A sharp, funny lady who's been crapped on plenty. 1940's beautiful: no matter where she is, she's from somewhere else. Early 40s.

**Gielli:** The Boss. The Big Sleazy. Emma's latest. A 300 pound wreck with no discernible neck and bacon strips of hair over his scalp. Tall and rotund and paranoidical. Late 50s.

**Kiki Luz:** The Secretary. A Cuban Zirconia. A spicy swindlerella looking to lose her past and find a future. Big hair, noisy jewelry & outfits that can be packed in a baggy. Mid to late 20s.

**Hank Gamble:** The Drifter. A Deep-Fried Free-Loader. (aka Kiki's boyfriend, Enríque) Smooth-beyond-smooth. A handsome prep-school loafer who looks well-dressed in any clothes. 30.

**Place:** The Boss's office in a mail-order company that sells miraculous knives, digital fish-detectors & one-size-fits-all toupees. On a forgotten floor in a building with fly-specked windows & a stinking lobby.

**Time:** Late. Or so late it's early. After working hours on several days over two months.

**ACT 2, SCENE 3:** Dark office. **EMMA'S** waiting by the door. Big silhouette on the glass. A **MAN** sneaks in. **SHE** trips **HIM** & beats the crap out of **HIM** with a big ugly umbrella until **HE'S** on the floor. **SHE** turns on the lamp: it's **GIELLI**, lumpy & filthy & bleeding.

EMMA

What is this?

GIELLI

The fuck are you doin'?! Jesus, Emma.

EMMA

You could have been some maniac?!? Where have you been for the last three weeks. Nobody knows where you are. You don't come by my place. No call, no telegram, no obit. What am I supposed to do?

GIELLI

Give me a hand.

EMMA

Give yourself a hand. You look like hell.

GIELLI

How did you get in here?

EMMA

I walked.

GIELLI

They changed the locks.

EMMA

-Up the side of the building. Fachrissake, Gielli, you think I can't get a set of keys to this place?

GIELLI

I been havin' a rough time, Emma.

EMMA

Jesus, did I do all that?

GIELLI

I been havin' some problems.

EMMA

Really.

GIELLI

Ah, Emma lay off already. Lookit, more grief I don't need.

EMMA

I've been getting weird phone calls. Somebody thinks you're camping out at my place.

GIELLI

What kinda calls?

EMMA

Breathers. Veiled threats. Long distance carriers with amazingly low rates. What are you doing? What's in there?

*GIELLI scrabbles in the petty cash box.*

GIELLI

I need some cash to live on.

EMMA

You're not talking to me.

GIELLI

I got some stuff needs taken care of by me personally.

EMMA

Looks like you're doin' a primo job.

GIELLI

I do what I gotta. Whatsa problem? Business is fine. You got dough. Kiki pays your card.

EMMA

A good thing, too. I'm shoppin' for a boat. A transatlantic cruiser. With artillery mountings and its own zipcode. I'm gonna start smuggling antique toilets out of Iceland. I always wanted to be a pirate.

GIELLI

What are you talking about, Emma?

EMMA

A piratess. With an adoring crew. And a cutlass banging at my knee.

GIELLI

I don't have time for this. Alla sudden I'm competin' with guys that play hardball.

EMMA

Baloney. No one cares what you do. Except me. And I'm not gonna dress up and go out and eat in public by myself. I need stability in my life.

GIELLI

Now is not the time. We can talk about this later.

EMMA

When? You suffer from delusions of significance. Imaginary crises and cutthroat competitors. I'm living a life here. I am a grown woman with expensive tastes and a borderline personality and I need to settle down. I think we should get married.

GIELLI

I don't wanna die, Emma.

EMMA

What are you talking about?

GIELLI

You got a lotta dead husbands. Like a trend. And now I'm hittin' my stride an' I needta get everything stabilized.

EMMA

Gielli, I have been locked alone in my apartment for two weeks. What I need is the open sea and a hold of bathroom fittings.

GIELLI

Lookit, somebody hammered my windshield last night. These guys mean serious fuckin' business.

EMMA

We need to settle some things. Now. I'm not waiting anymore.

GIELLI

Goin' inta TV makesya a public figure. One of the big bosses feels threatened by me. There's definitely a stragety behind alla this.

EMMA

All of what? What are you messed up in? You're in a legitimate-if-unsavory, business.

GIELLI

And now it's somebody else's business. Somebody's objectin' to somethin'. All over me; all over town.

EMMA

You're being paranoid.

GIELLI

Lookit, I'm not bein' paranoid if there's people really stompin' on me.

EMMA

Are you running out on me?

GIELLI

Jesus. I'm sayin' we gotta get outta here. Even paranoid people got enemies. You don't know.

EMMA

You wanna dump me, just dump me. I don't need this agita.

GIELLI

You ain't listenin'.

EMMA

Blah-Blah-Blah. I'm tired, Jellybean. I don't have many first dates left in me. I need to know about your intentions with regard to me.

GIELLI

It ain't safe. You go back home. I'll call you.

EMMA

Like hell.

GIELLI

I don't got time for this.

EMMA

Neither do I.

GIELLI

I don't want you to get hurt. These guys mean business.

EMMA

So do I.

GIELLI

Lemme get everything straightened out before we go rashing any decisions that could change the rest of my life. I gotta lot on my mind right now.

EMMA

Hey! You're not in the CIA. This isn't a high-powered commodities exchange. Most the people in the building think this floor is empty.

GIELLI

Maybe, but somebody wants me to get lost. It's important to somebody. We're talkin' big business. TV's gonna put me inna different league. I'm gettin' calls from sharps I never heard of. Now, they figure I owe 'em some respect. Like I crumbed in on their turf. For every buck DeRusso brings in, I gotta new enemy. We're talkin' war.

EMMA

You sell crap, Gielli.

GIELLI

Before me, where was the little guy supposed to buy wishes. Kids wanta get ridda zits but there's no soap strong enough, guys who keep losin' their hair don't want transplants and ermalogists, folks who want a new-smelling car but can't afford another setta payments. We're sellin' dreams here. Knives that can cut bricks. Cleaners that make things invisible. Digital fish detectors for the guy who wants to bring home moby dick for dinner. Big dreams for the little people. See. Nah. Nah. Lookit, I'm inna position to make a little guy feel a little bigger, a lot better about being a little guy. We're selling dreams to people who ain't got time to dream.

EMMA

You sell crap that falls apart the day after the warranty expires. That isn't magic. That's retail. I want something that's gonna last.

GIELLI

Me too, Emma. I'm building something strong enough to support us.

EMMA

No-no-no! You sell all this garbage to nobodies and it makes you into a nobody. I want to be somebody. I want to be married. I want to live in a house with coconut palms and three bathrooms. I don't even want kids. Just shag carpet and an oven I can use on holidays.

GIELLI

I am a somebody. I'm such a somebody I got goombahs waitin' for me around corners and hammerin' my windshield and torching my bed.

EMMA

You broke some promise to somebody. Stiffed one of the warehouse guys on a raise and for payback he's weedwhacking our social life.

GIELLI

No. Pretty soon I'm gonna start gettin' visible and maybe skim customers offa some big Chicago catalog firm, so they got threatenous people stalkin' me.

EMMA

Just pay him.

GIELLI

Who?

EMMA

Whoever you didn't pay.

GIELLI

I don't know who it is!! Lookit, I got somebody pissed off at me. For real. I could get deceased. You could get in the way. Jesus! I shouldn'ta been here this long. We gotta get movin'.

EMMA

Why don't you come back to mine? We'll order in Thai. Watch something in black and white: *The Bride came C.O.D.*

GIELLI

Lookit, I gotta worry 'bout me.

EMMA

What a tiny man you are. I just this second realized it.

GIELLI

I'll call you.

**GIELLI exits. EMMA watches him go. LIGHTS DOWN.**