

# **DAVID**

A ONE HOUR TELEVISION DRAMA PILOT

"MEET THE NEW BOSS. SAME AS THE OLD BOSS"

By

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FADE IN

EXT. LITTLE ITALY STREET - NIGHT

JOSEPH LUPARELLI (38, thin frame, sharp nosed) walks with purpose and ANGER, pulling drags from the cigarette, jacket hunched over his head, eyes focused ahead.

SUPER - APRIL 7, 1972. NEW YORK CITY.

EXT. GROTTA AZZURRA RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Joseph pounds on the door. Repeatedly.

INT. GROTTA AZZURRA RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

The OWNER walks out of the kitchen rubbing his hands on a dish cloth.

OWNER  
We're closed!

As he approaches the front door he sees who it is through the window and instantly picks up his pace. He unlocks the dead bolt and Joseph pushes himself in.

OWNER (CONT'D)  
Jesus...what is-

Joseph ignores the old man, heads to the bar, picks up the phone and uses the rotary dial. Number after number.

OWNER (CONT'D)  
Joseph, what's going on?

Joseph raises a finger to the old man as the ringing is interrupted by a VOICE on the receiver.

JOSEPH  
Signor Yacovelli, it's Luparelli.  
I've got him. Gallo. At Umberto's.

The owner's eyes go wide. He crosses himself and runs back to the kitchen.

INT. UMBERTO'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Mostly empty dishes of pasta, conch, mussels, and clams litter the busy table, as well as several empty bottles of champagne in the near empty restaurant.

"CRAZY" JOEY GALLO (43, heavy set but fit) head of the Colombo crime family lifts up his glass to the group.

JOEY  
Umberto! *Molto bene!*

His newlywed wife, SINA (30, in heavy make-up), her teenaged daughter, LISA, along with Joey's armed bodyguard, PETE "THE GREEK" DIAPOLOUS (36, built like a truck), applaud.

JOEY (CONT'D)  
Sina, you want some more? Pete?  
Everything was so good, let's have more, yes?

SINA  
Whatever you want, baby. It's your birthday.

JOEY  
It's my day! Matthew, have your dad bring out seconds.

MATTY "THE HORSE" IANNELLO (51, mousy son of the owner) smiles nervously from behind the register and snaps to attention hearing his name.

MATTY  
You got it.

He turns and heads to the kitchen.

INT. AUTOMOBILE - LATER

Joseph directs four men loading revolvers while he navigates the early morning streets of Little Italy. "Riders on the Storm" plays on the radio.

Joseph turns to JONATHON DIAMOND (42, could be a male model) in the passenger seat.

JOSEPH  
Cut through the back alley and come through the kitchen. I'll bust ass around the corner and pick you up in three minutes. Got it?

Jonathon finishes loading his revolver.

JONATHON

Three minutes.

Joseph pulls over at the desolate street corner as Jonathon, SONNY PINTO (30, stocky but fast), and two others quickly hustle out of the car and disappear around the corner.

INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

A five-piece rock band drives home the background rhythm of "Riders on the Storm", as the frontman and guitarist, DAVID STRAUSS (28, shoulder-length, wavy, red hair, rock-god handsome) channels the vibe.

DAVID

There's a killer on the road/ His  
brain is squirming like a toad/  
Take a long holiday/ let your  
children play/ If ya give this man  
a ride, sweet family will die/  
Killer on the road...yeah!

The guitar solo cuts in and David closes his eyes and smiles, lost in the spotlight.

INT. UMBERTO'S RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

The guitar solo continues as Umberto passes Matty at the cash register and heads back into the-

KITCHEN

- when suddenly the four gunmen BURST in through the back door and rush through the kitchen. Jonathon alerts the staff.

JONATHON

Get out if you don't want to die.

UMBERTO

MATTY!

Sonny strikes Umberto in the head, and he falls to the ground, while the kitchen staff rush out the back door. Jonathon, and the others rush into the -

DINING AREA

- and take aim at Joey.

BANG! BANG! BANG! Shots EXPLODE in the room and CHAOS erupts everywhere.

The first shots hit the plaster wall directly behind Sina and Lisa as they instinctively SHRIEK in fear and duck toward the table.

Startled and with his back to the gunshots, Joey stands and immediately takes a HIT in his elbow as he draws his handgun and tries to return fire.

JOEY  
MOTHERFUCKERS!

Joey grabs the heavy butcher block table and flips it over on it's side to protect the girls. Just as the table flips over, Joey takes another shot in the back and falls forward.

A bodyguard from the front entrance bolts into the room, gun drawn, and is immediately SHOT DOWN by Sonny. The bodyguard falls to the floor in a slump.

JONATHON  
Let's go! Get out!

Sonny and the others get another shot off each as they rush toward the front door.

EXT. UMBERTO'S RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

The car SCREECHES to a halt out front as Sonny and the others hurriedly pile in the back. Jonathon exits the restaurant last and jumps in the passenger seat.

Joey stumbles out of the restaurant, gun in hand, blood soaking his white shirt. He falls to one knee, fires a shot into the ground, and collapses.

The sedan peels out down Mulberry Street and disappears around the corner as "Riders on the Storm" fades away.

END TEASER

EXT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

We follow several inebriated couples stumbling along the cobble-stone just off Bourbon Street, tripping every so often and laughing as they catch each other.

Loud MUSIC streams out "Cheats and Lyres", a local watering hole bustling with activity, as the couples disappear through the door to join the festivities inside.

SUPER: NEW ORLEANS, TWO DAYS LATER

INT. CHEATS AND LYRES NIGHTCLUB - CONTINUOUS

The dimly lit room hosts two bars on opposite sides of the establishment and is packed from side to side with tables, people, and stale smoke.

The front of the bar showcases a stage where the BAND drives home the ending of the Rolling Stone's "Street Fighting Man", and the patrons eat it up.

David, with his long red hair brushing his shoulders, wails the lyrics into the microphone, while plucking the twangy guitar licks.

DAVID

Hey did I tell you that my name  
Was called disturbance/  
And I'll shout and scream  
And I'll kill the king and  
I'll rail at all his servants/  
What can a poor boy do  
Except to sing for a rock 'n' roll  
band/'Cause you see in New Orleans/  
There's just no place  
For a street fighting man...

He drives the guitar solo home as the bar explodes with applause. David smiles with approval and grabs a beer from the top of his amp to take a swig.

Out of the corner of his eye he is STRUCK by a beautiful woman, MICHELLE (24), sitting near the front with friends. He makes eye contact and STOPS as he puts down his beer.

He cups the mic and turns to the band, and they nod and start to exit off stage. He remains.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Band's going on break, but I'm  
gunna slow it down and play one  
more for someone special out there.

The crowd applauds as David slides a chair over and sits center stage, a single spotlight trained on him. He brings his acoustic guitar onto his lap, and looks straight into Michelle's eyes.

DAVID (CONT'D)

The first time ever I saw your  
face/ I thought the sun rose in  
your eyes/ And the moon and the  
stars were the gifts you gave/ To  
the dark and the endless skies my  
love/ To the dark and the endless  
skies.

To David, there is no one else in the room. His eyes are locked on Michelle's as he continues Roberta Flack's "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face". He is lovestruck.

She giggles out of embarrassment at first, as others at her table begin to notice his unyielding gaze. But then she's captivated by his attention and surrenders to the moment.

David finishes the heart-felt ballad strumming the final chords on his acoustic, and the bar erupts with applause. His gaze falls back on Michelle and grins.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Be right back.

David unclasps the guitar from its strap and places it in a stand, leaving the STRAP around his neck as he leaves the stage and walks toward the woman.

Two very LARGE men step in front of him stopping his progress, one being Sonny Pinto from the opening.

David glares, eyebrows raised, ready for the challenge. But Michelle disarms the situation.

MICHELLE

It's all right. He's fine. Give us  
a minute.

The two men look David up and down, the big one escorting two women away from the table. A REDHEAD whispers in Michelle's ear before leaving while Sonny chats up a SHADOWY FIGURE in the corner.

David pulls up a chair next to her and extends his hand.

DAVID

Nice friends. Thanks for coming to my place. I'm David. What's your name?

MICHELLE

Your place? So are you the cheat or the liar?

David chuckles.

DAVID

Neither. But most of the patrons here fit one or the other.

MICHELLE

Then are you calling me a cheat or a liar?

DAVID

Nope...nuh-uh. I'm not touching that one.

Now she's laughing too.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I haven't seen you in here before. You new in town?

MICHELLE

Leaving tomorrow.

DAVID

Not too far away, I hope.

MICHELLE

New York City.

DAVID

Oh man, not cool. Not cool at all.

MICHELLE

(smirks)

I bet you serenade all the women.

DAVID

You're the first.

She takes a sip of her drink.

MICHELLE

Now we know who's the liar.

David's eyes never leave hers. He signs over his heart.



DAVID  
Cross my heart.

MICHELLE  
Hope to die?

DAVID  
If I ever tell a lie.

She giggles. Sonny's back and whispers in her ear. She nods as he turns to walk off, David's eyes meeting his.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Your boyfriend's intense.

MICHELLE  
He's not my boyfriend.

DAVID  
That's encouraging.

She stands and readies to leave.

MICHELLE  
But he is intense.

DAVID  
Big, bossy brother? Believe me, I know about those.

Michelle extends her hand.

MICHELLE  
We need to go.

DAVID  
Yes, we do.

MICHELLE  
I mean, I need to be leaving. Thank you for my song.

DAVID  
Our song. My pleasure.

David takes her hand and kisses it gently. Michelle smiles, then walks off toward her group of friends, flanked by Sonny and the other bodyguard.

As they walk through the front door, David watches Sonny nod toward the man in the shadows, then pauses making direct eye contact with David. David blows him a kiss and Sonny disappears into the night.

David picks up a piece of paper from the table and smiles. He removes the guitar strap from around his neck, and folds it into a loop in his hand.

DAVID (CONT'D)

He shoots.

He picks up an empty bottle from the table, slides the bottle into the LOOP of the strap, then in one fluid motion WHIPS the bottle ACROSS the bar and INTO a trash can. Perfectly.

DAVID (CONT'D)

He scores.

He opens his hand to reveal her phone number on the paper.

INT. AIRPORT - AFTERNOON

SUPER: LA GUARDIA AIRPORT

The front page of the New York Times slams down on the table of the TWA first class lounge. The headline reads "BLOOD IN THE STREETS. GALLO GUNNED DOWN."

SAMMY "THE HAND" MEYER (70) shifts in his chair, unsettled and pissed off.

SAMMY

Those damn idiots. First Colombo,  
now Gallo.

His travel colleague and partner, VINCENT ALO (68), is used to it. But he's irritated.

VINCENT

Matty was there. Lucky to get out  
alive.

SAMMY

If he had a hand in this, it gets  
too close to me.

VINCENT

I'll talk to him.

SAMMY

Wait a while. Until this shit dies  
down.

He takes a sip of water and looks out the window.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

I told Lucky to keep a low profile. The highest nail gets the hammer, I said. It's how I've managed to keep all our clubs and casinos running all these years. But these hot heads in New York are gunna destroy everything we've built up.

VINCENT

You got enough to worry about.

Sammy waves him off.

SAMMY

With who? The Feds?

(chuckles)

You know me. They got nothing.

VINCENT

I thought Meir had your back. What happened with that?

SAMMY

I don't blame Golda. I was an easy chip to deal off the table. And if dealing me can help Israel get what they need during their conflict, so be it.

VINCENT

So what's next?

Sammy leans forward.

SAMMY

Stay under the radar is what's next. Reach out to the heads of the families. It's time for a meeting.

VINCENT

Everyone?

SAMMY

Hollywood, Vegas, Chicago, Minneapolis, New Orleans, the Tri-States. Make it soon. In Miami.

VINCENT

You got it.

SAMMY

Leave Diamond to me.

Vincent nods as he checks his watch.

VINCENT  
Flight's about to board.

Sammy takes another sip of water with a look of disgust on his face.

SAMMY  
Think the vultures are still  
hanging in the trees?

VINCENT  
I'll clear the way.

They get up from their table and leave the First Class lounge and out into the airport hallway.

They are immediately swarmed by REPORTERS and PHOTOGRAPHERS trying to get a scoop.

REPORTER #1  
Mr. Meyer, any comment on the  
execution of Colombo and Gallo?

A photographer's FLASHBULB blinds Sammy as Vincent puts his hand out and pushes through the crowd.

REPORTER #2  
Does your extradition from Israel  
make you concerned about your  
impending trial in Federal Court?

VINCENT  
Get outta the way, fellas. We gotta  
plane to catch.

Sammy plays with the press like a cat plays with a mouse.

SAMMY  
I've enjoyed my vacation in my host  
country, and I'm glad to be back  
home in America.

REPORTER #2  
Are you worried about the case  
against you with Fat Vinnie's  
testimony?

Sammy grins like a Cheshire cat.

SAMMY

I'm only worried about missing my  
flight to Miami, so if you'll  
excuse me.

Vincent pushes through the reporters and Sammy follows close behind as the press remains behind and they disappear down a jetway together.

EXT. PORT OF NEW ORLEANS - NIGHT

Forklifts scurry up and down by the docks, in and out of warehouses lining the bustling port.

A sedan drives down an array of shipping containers, then slows, turns, and backs up to another CAR parked between lanes. The headlights turn off.

The parked car's trunk POPS open, as Sonny gets out of the sedan and walks toward the back. He opens his trunk.

Sonny reaches into the open trunk, pulls out a suitcase and unclasps it. The light from the trunk reveals it's FULL OF HEROIN. He closes it and puts it in the sedan.

Then he transfers THREE suitcases from the sedan to the parked car. He closes both trunks then walks back to the passenger side of the sedan.

Both cars drive off in opposite directions on the docks and disappear in the darkness.

EXT. BROOKLYN BROWNSTONE - DAY

Black Sabbath's "Paranoid" BLASTS through an open window, as passersby walk down the sidewalk oblivious to the noise.

A car drives up to the outside of the brownstone and parks. Sonny steps out with a suitcase.

He turns toward the open window.

SONNY

Turn that shit down!

A voice calls out from inside the open window.

VOICE (O.S.)

Fuck you!

SONNY

I'll fuck you up, I find you.

He walks up the steep entry and lets himself into the residence.

INT. BROOKLYN BROWNSTONE - CONTINUOUS

Inside the ornate residence, he pauses at the front door, places the case on the floor and waits.

MARY DIAMOND (28), tall and graceful, walks through the grand living room on the first floor and sees Sonny. She lays down on the couch as she motions toward the stairway.

MARY  
He's upstairs. Office.

He picks up the case and climbs the stairway up to the second floor, turns the corner and knocks on a large oak door. A MAN inside BARKS through the door.

MAN (O.S.)  
WHO THE FUCK IS IT?

Sonny rolls his eyes. Not this again.

SONNY  
It's Pinto. I've got the delivery.

The door opens and he enters the -

OFFICE

- to see SAUL DIAMOND (62, very tall, chiseled chin), pacing behind his desk. Jonathon stands by the door and closes it behind Sonny as he enters.

SAUL  
Those goddamn neighbors with that god awful music.

Saul leans out the open window, as Black Sabbath plays on.

SAUL (CONT'D)  
GOD DAMMIT, TURN THAT SHIT OFF OR  
SO HELP ME I'LL TURN IT OFF FOR YA!

Jonathon walks over to his father.

JONATHON  
Come on, Pop. Let it go.

SAUL  
DON'T TELL ME WHAT TO DO, GOD  
DAMMIT!  
(to Sonny)  
Is that it?

Sonny's mood changes suddenly as he claps his hands and smiles, pointing to his desk.

SAUL (CONT'D)  
Over there. Let's take a look.

Sonny places the case on Saul's desk, unclasps the latch and opens it.

SONNY  
A good haul. Our partner in New Orleans was pleased with the news about Gallo.

Saul picks up a SOLID BRICK of brown powder.

SAUL  
I bet he was. Any trouble?

SONNY  
None. And with the Colombo's whackin' each other, Bonnanno's territory is ripe to bleed.

SAUL  
You're sure none of the Strauss kids saw you on the docks?

SONNY  
It's clean, I tell you.

Saul clasps Sonny's shoulder then slaps him on the back.

SAUL  
Great news. We'll have our own port of entry.

Jonathon steps forward.

JONATHON  
You sure we need to keep the Strauss family out of it? They could be quite helpful.

Sonny shoots a look at Jonathon, and Saul shakes him off.

SAUL

In time, perhaps. But for now, we needed to keep this quiet, for protection. Sonny's been doing a fine job with his connections and we know them docks are clean.

JONATHON

I'm not questioning you, Pop. You know that.

Saul playfully pats Jonathon's cheek.

SAUL

I know. You're just worried about your old man.

JONATHON

Gotta protect you, too.

SAUL

Want to protect me?  
(toward window)  
Turn that damn music off!

Sonny chuckles, and Saul LOSES HIS SHIT. He picks up a paperweight from his desk and HURLS it at him.

SAUL (CONT'D)

YOU THINK THIS IS FUNNY,  
MOTHERFUCKER?

He picks up a picture frame and THROWS it at him. Sonny dodges it as it SHATTERS against the wall.

SAUL (CONT'D)

SHUT THAT SHIT OFF!

Sonny knows his cue and leaves the room quickly.

Saul sits in the large leather chair behind his desk while Jonathon turns and looks out the window.

The phone rings and Saul shoots a look at Jonathon. He comes from the window and answers it.

JONATHON

Jonathon speaking...I see, yes.  
Yes, he's right here. Hold on.

Saul's eyes bug out for a moment then relax when Jonathon cups the receiver.