

THE SAX

Written by

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1. EXT. SHREVEPORT CUSTOMS DEPOT - NIGHT 1.

Six THIEVES, all dressed in black and wearing ski masks, hurry to load a van with stolen goods. Suddenly, we hear the blaring of a POLICE SIREN. In panic, the thieves drop their loot.

One of the thieves snaps up the visor of his ski mask to reveal a wrinkled face and a big white moustache. He quickly scribbles down a name and address on a long case, then pushes it into the customs office.

Police cars SCREECH to a halt, surrounding the van. Officers descend on the thieves, guns raised.

The thieves, hands in the air, offer no resistance. As they remove their ski masks, we see their faces - each of them in their sixties - marked with strain and disappointment.

SUPERIMPOSE: New Orleans, USA - Shreveport Customs Depot

2. EXT. ROOF OPPOSITE SHREVEPORT CUSTOMS DEPOT - NIGHT 2.

Standing in the gloom is BOLOS, a thirty-something African American man with a rough face, wearing a gold ring in his right nostril. He looks down on the thieves, smiling.

Then he turns to the customs office and his face hardens.

3. INT. SHREVEPORT CUSTOMS DEPOT - NIGHT 3.

The long crate is visible in the light of the reactivated alarms. On its side, a Chicago address and the name of the recipient: Mr. Broloks.

4. EXT. CHICAGO-HOOVERVILLE SHOP - DAY 4.

RUDOLPH CALAGLAND (40) walks lost in thought, listening to music on his headphones. Pale and clean-shaven, with well groomed hair, he wears a scarf and a suit emblazoned with the Chicago-Hooverville logo.

He wanders towards the entrance of the Chicago-Hooverville shop, removing his headphones with a sigh as he passes a hunched old woman, ANTOINETTE, who is sweeping dead leaves from the sidewalk.

Rudolph smiles and looks at her.

RUDOLPH
Hello, Antoinette.

Antoinette jumps, forgetting her work. Looking at Rudolph, she pushes her dentures back into place and points towards the shop.

ANTOINETTE

You slacker! Have you finally decided to take up the reins or are you going to vegetate for another year?

RUDOLPH

Hey! I live my life how I like and I'll run this store how I like.

ANTOINETTE

You might look like Marcel Calagland, but you're no worthy heir to him. He had guts. He wasn't afraid to face life!

RUDOLPH

What...?

ANTOINETTE

You heard me.

RUDOLPH

My life is complicated enough, thanks, so spare me the comparisons to Grandpa. Have a nice day.

ANTOINETTE

Sla...

RUDOLPH

Please.

ANTOINETTE

...cker.

RUDOLPH

Shut up!

ANTOINETTE

Slacker!

RUDOLPH

SHUT UP!

Rudolph runs into the shop, the sliding doors closing shut behind him.

Antoinette sticks out her tongue, pushes her dentures back into place, and goes back to sweeping dead leaves from the sidewalk.

SUPERIMPOSE: USA, Downtown Chicago, Two Days Later

5. EXT. ACROSS THE STREET - DAY 5.

Tall buildings, lined with trees in fall colors. Across from the shop runs FRANK (60), heavyset and wearing a sombre suit. Curly grey hair peeks out from under his hat and he sports a big, bushy beard. On his feet, crocodile-skin shoes.

6. INT. APARTMENT BUILDING, HALL - DAY 6.

Frank is sweating and breathing hard as he runs down the hall. He heads toward a door inscribed with the words: "Long Live the Prohibition and Long Live the Broloks."

He is reaching out towards the door when suddenly he twists his ankle. Letting out a YELP, he throws himself towards the door and SMASHES through it.

7. INT. BROLOKS GANG HEAD OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 7.

FRANK, red in the face, dusts off what's left of the door. Then he looks up at two men, their faces haggard, sitting at a table covered with BANKNOTES and GUNS.

One of the men, SALVATORE, stands up sharply, SLAMMING his empty glass down on the table next to a whiskey bottle. Small, stocky, with thinning black hair and a wrinkled face, he sports a small, well-groomed moustache.

The other man, JOHN - slim, with long white hair - stays put, twirling his moustache.

SALVATORE
(Italian accent)
Damn, whatsamatter, Frank ?

Frank, still on all fours among the wreckage of the door, shakes his head.

FRANK
The whole gang got caught,
Salvatore.

Frowning, John stands to his full, intimidating height. He takes a deep draw on a cigar and blows smoke.

JOHN
(Rolling his "r"s)
And the goods, Frank?

FRANK
Sorry, John.

SALVATORE tosses an ice cube into his glass.

SALVATORE
Damn... Those cops just won't give
up.

FRANK
We've lost a bundle on this one.

JOHN
Yeah! No kidding.

Salvatore pours himself another whiskey, raising it to his
lips with a nervous grimace.

SALVATORE
The saxophone was the most precious
thing of all.

Frank smiles.

FRANK
It wasn't among the seized goods.

SALVATORE
What? It wasn't taken?

John coughs smoke.

JOHN
So where is it ?

FRANK
A customs agent sent me a receipt
for it this morning.

SALVATORE
Damn... We gotta get it back, at
all costs!

FRANK
We can take a flight to Louisiana
and -

JOHN
You crazy, Frank? With all those
copes crawling all over the place?
(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)
There's gonna be a price on our heads!

SALVATORE
Hey! First, let's send a lawyer to free the gang. And then, let's sit down and figure out how to get back what's ours.

8. INT. BROLOKS GANG HEAD OFFICE - NIGHT

8.

Salvatore, Frank, and John, all exhausted, sit around the table, now covered with food leftovers. In the background, the radio plays old Italian music.

SALVATORE tosses ice cubes into three glasses and fills them with whisky.

The three men each take a glass, toast, and knock it back.

SALVATORE
So... We have a plan.

FRANK
And what if it fails ?

SALVATORE
We've got a backup. An old friend over there still owes me a favour.

JOHN
All the same, such a treasure in the hands of a moron!

Salvatore stares out the window at the garish lights of the Chicago-Hooverville store.

SALVATORE
I already told you, he's our best shot. Nobody knows him.

JOHN
You're right, we're too exposed.

FRANK
Well then. For the Broloks!

Salvatore turns with a smile.

SALVATORE AND JOHN
For the Broloks!

9. EXT. CHICAGO PARK - DAY

9.

TONI (30), a well-groomed Italian-American, stands next to a hot dog stand on a busy street. He greedily eats his purchase and watches people go by.

KOVAK (30s), lightly dressed and with a rough, unshaven face, pushes his way through the crowd and approaches Toni.

KOVAK
(Russian accent)
Eh, Toni! Da... I have info that
will please you.

TONI
Hi, Kovak.

KOVAK
Da... You really have to listen to
this.

Tony calmly throws the remains of his hot dog into a trash can.

TONI
I'm all ears.

Rubbing his hands together, Toni heads for the park. Kovak joins him, walking backwards.

KOVAK
Yesterday I was spying on those old
farts from the Broloks gang and
guess what I heard? They're looking
for a saxophone.

TONI
They're into music now? Wait, what?
A sax?

KOVAK
Da... And a good number of them got
caught down in Louisiana.

TOMI
Louisiana!

Toni and Kovak come to a stop.

KOVAK
Da... and with all their goods. The
saxophone is still at Shreveport
customs.

Toni slowly chews on his lip, deep in thought.

TONI

It must be pretty valuable to those old degenerates.

KOVAK

Da... And Salvatore is sending someone to retrieve it.

TONI

But why? What's special about this sax?

Toni suddenly pulls himself together and looks at Kovak.

TONI (CONT'D)

Wait, what did you say?

KOVAK

Nobody knows who he is. He's a new guy.

Toni sniggers.

TONI

Well then, we'll send a few experts of our own.

KOVAK

Who are you thinking of?

TONI

The Frenchmen!

KOVAK

What? The three French guys?

TONI

They always said they wanted to get noticed. And this'll be a good opportunity to prove the supremacy of the Jackals over the Broloks.

Toni and Kovak laugh.

10. EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

10.

A red Ford Mustang charges along at double the limit, overtaking three cars. Next to the road, a sign reading: "Welcome to Louisiana."

11. INT. FORD MUSTANG - DAY 11.

Rudolph tensely grips the wheel. As the radio plays "The Perfect Day" by Fischer-Z, he nods along to the beat for a moment before turning the music off.

RUDOLPH

A perfect day, that's for sure!

Rudolph gazes ahead, his face hardening as a distant look comes into his eyes.

12. EXT. CHICAGO PARK - EVENING (FLASHBACK) 12.

Rudolph, his face hidden by his hood, sits on a bench throwing seeds to the pigeons when he is cautiously approached by Frank.

Frank glances around. Seeing nothing suspicious, he sits down at the far end of the bench.

FRANK

Rudolph? Rudolph Calagland?

The pigeons suddenly SCATTER, flying up into the air. Frank grimaces and edges away.

RUDOLPH

Yes, that would be me.

Frank moves closer again.

FRANK

It's incredible how much you look like Marcel!

RUDOLPH

That's what a lot of people say.

Frank shakes his head and pulls himself together.

FRANK

Right, let's get to it. If you want to join the Broloks like your grandfather, you'll have to do something for us first. A mission. Incognito.

He smirks.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Marcel was merciless and loyal to us, never forget that.

Rudolph puts the bird seed away in his left pocket and pulls back his hood with a smile. Standing, he takes a candy from his right pocket and offers it to Frank.

Surprised, Frank jumps back from him. Rudolph pauses, then quickly puts the candy back in his pocket.

RUDOLPH
What's the mission?

FRANK
You're going to get a case for
us... more precisely a saxophone.
From Louisiana.

RUDOLPH
That's it? I don't want to be an
errand boy!

FRANK
That's your test before you can
join the gang.

RUDOLPH
It's not what I was expecting.

FRANK
We're not in kindergarten, kiddo.
You join the gang, there are
responsibilities.

RUDOLPH
Just a quick trip, then ?

Frank smirks and nods.

FRANK
You married? Children?

Rudolph tosses the last of the seeds from his pocket onto the ground.

RUDOLPH
Neither.

FRANK
Perfect.

Frank gets up, patting Rudolph on the back. Rudolph proudly raises his head, gazing up at the sky as a distant look comes into his eyes...

END FLASHBACK

13. INT. FORD MUSTANG - DAY

13.

Rudolph shakes his head, hunching over the wheel and gripping it even tighter.

RUDOLPH
Come on! This will change my life,
and it'll be easy. I'm tired of
selling those damn hoovers all
day...

He speaks in a high pitched voice, mimicking an annoying client.

RUDOLPH (CONT'D)
I want a powerful one with a big
nozzle, a multifunction nozzle. I
want it to suck up absolutely
everything!

He loosens his grip on the steering wheel and runs a hand through his hair.

RUDOLPH (CONT'D)
An exciting life, with a big
family, that's what's waiting for
me. Finally.

He reaches into his pocket and takes out an OLD COLT PISTOL.

RUDOLPH (CONT'D)
I'll finally have a new purpose in
life.

He caresses his cheek with the gun, when he suddenly notices a centipede walking across the dashboard. Using the tip of barrel, he flicks it out the window.

RUDOLPH (CONT'D)
Damn creepy crawler.

14. INT. SHREVEPORTE'S CUSTOMS OFFICE - DAY

14.

RUDOLPH, collar up and toothpick in the corner of his mouth, heads to the counter.

He nervously stops behind an OLD LADY. Looking to his right, he sees two elderly African American MEN sitting on a bench wearing black hats, black glasses, and dark suits.

SUPERIMPOSE: Shreveport Customs Office, Louisiana

RUDOLPH

Who are they supposed to be, ZZ
Top?

The man on the left is UNCLE SAMMY. Small and slight of build, he nods to Rudolph with a smile.

RUDOLPH (CONT'D)

What's up with Ray Charles?

The old lady turns around with a smile and leaves with a box under her arm.

Rudolph approaches the counter and comes face to face with AGENT 1 (30s). He nervously reaches for the right pocket of his coat, resting his hand on the butt of the pistol.

Agent 1 stares at him.

With a nervous smile, Rudolph chuckles and quickly moves his hand to his inner pocket. He takes out the receipt for the case and his ID card.

RUDOLPH (CONT'D)

Quickly! I'm in a hurry.

The agent takes the documents and checks them over. Then he heads for the back room.

Rudolph chews on his lip, nervously tapping his fingers on the counter. Slowly, he turns his head to look at Uncle Sammy.

Smiling, Uncle Sammy gets up and gets in line behind Rudolph, jostling him slightly.

UNCLE SAMMY

Shit.

RUDOLPH

Don't worry about it... Armstrong.

Agent 1 reappears, empty-handed.

AGENT 1

I'm sorry, Mr. Calagland, but your
parcel has already been retrieved.

Rudolph freezes.

RUDOLPH

What?

UNCLE SAMMY
Shit! The package is gone.

RUDOLPH
It's a crate with...

UNCLE SAMMY
Screw that! It's gone, man.

Rudolph turns sharply to face Uncle Sammy with a frown. Uncle Sammy points to the exit.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)
Christ, it's been gone two hours at least!

RUDOLPH
You sure of that, old timer?

UNCLE SAMMY
Erm, yes!

RUDOLPH grabs his documents from the agent then turns and seizes Uncle Sammys' arm.

RUDOLPH
Who took my package?

UNCLE SAMMY
Christ! Who do I look like this time?

RUDOLPH
Hey!

UNCLE SAMMY
Ray Charles? Armstrong? I'm flattered.

RUDOLPH
Definitely not Beethoven, he was deaf as a door post.

UNCLE SAMMY
Screw you! Shit! You're not much of a gangster, are you... Rudolph Calagland !

Rudolph glances around in shock.

RUDOLPH
You... you know my name?

UNCLE SAMMY
For Christ's sake, let's get out of
here.

15. EXT. SHREVEPORT CUSTOMS OFFICE PARKING LOT - DAY 15.

Rudolph walks tensely with Uncle Sammy to an old rust-red pickup truck.

Uncle Sammy opens the passenger side door and gestures Rudolph to get in.

RUDOLPH
You're not gonna ask me to...

UNCLE SAMMY
For Christ's sake, Calagland, get
in!

Rudolph obeys. He has to force the door shut behind him.

Uncle Sammy gets behind the wheel. He starts the engine and starts backing out of the space.

INT. RUST-RED PICKUP TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

RUDOLPH
How do you know my name? Who double-
crossed me ?

Uncle Sammy makes a face and changes gears while looking anxiously in his rear view mirror. He takes a cigar from his pocket and lights up.

UNCLE SAMMY
Thank God, no one on our tail.

RUDOLPH
But... Who are you?

Uncle Sammy lowers his window. He hawks and spits outside.

RUDOLPH (CONT'D)
Yuck!

Uncle Sammy closes the window again and then turns to Rudolph, spittle on his chin.

UNCLE SAMMY
My name is Bens... Uncle Sammy.
Salvatore told me about you.
(MORE)

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)
He asked me to watch out for you
and help out if things went tits
up.

RUDOLPH
You work for the Broloks gang?

UNCLE SAMMY
(drooling)
Hell, no! I'm not an idiot like
you, trying to become a gangster...
Let alone joining the Broloks!

Rudolph pulls a face.

RUDOLPH
Your mouth... It's disgusting!

Uncle Sammy wipes his mouth on the back of his hand.

UNCLE SAMMY
Fucking old age!

RUDOLPH
Why do you swear all the time?

UNCLE SAMMY
Goddamnit, I don't swear! Thank
God, Calagland, once you've got the
sax, you'll piss off for good...

RUDOLPH
Let's stick to the subject. Why
would you help me?

UNCLE SAMMY
I'm paying off a fucking debt. And
as soon as it's done, I sure as
hell will breathe better.

INT. JEEP - DAY

Across the parking lot from the pickup truck.

LUPIN, a distinguished looking Frenchman of medium height and
build, is behind the wheel.

Next to him sits BONAPART, also French, nervously chewing
gum. He's burly but short, with a military crew cut and a
poorly shaved chin.

In the back is BEAUDELAIRE, a cheery Frenchman with a well-
groomed beard and fashionable haircut.

He's tall and muscular, takes good care of himself. He greedily sucks on a lollipop.

All three speak with French accents.

BONAPART

Lupin, ram this rotten van and
let's beat them up until they tell
us where the sax is.

BEAUDELAIRE

Looks like our dear Calagland has a
friend. Toni didn't see this
coming, did he Bonapart?

BONAPART

Doesn't matter, I'm gonna whack
them both, two for the price of
one.

LUPIN

Shut up! It's not the right time,
not yet, it's not the right time.
Let's keep our distance and see
where the sax is. We steal it my
way, and then... Do whatever you
want. That's what I say, do
whatever you want!

BEAUDELAIRE

Fine, let's just take in the
scenery and keep an eye on them.

18. INT. RUST-RED PICK-UP TRICK - DAY

18.

Rudolph wriggles nervously in his seat.

RUDOLPH

The man who managed to steal the
crate, where did he come from?

Cigar in mouth, Uncle Sammy blows smoke and turns on the car
radio. The sounds of JAZZ fill the cabin.

UNCLE SAMMY

Fuck. I've got an idea where the
guy cribs, and that's where the
shit might really hit the fan!

RUDOLPH

You don't say.

UNCLE SAMMY

I just hope that he's not working for Papa Tcho-Tchot. But damn it, how did he know the sax was at customs?

RUDOLPH

Someone must have told him. Who's this Papa... Tcho-Tchot?

UNCLE SAMMY

Someone to avoid like hell. He's a gang leader and a powerful voodoo priest.

RUDOLPH

A wizard! We gotta get back to my Mustang and get more weapons.

UNCLE SAMMY

Your car? Are you kidding or what? Right now, your bitchin' Mustang is getting dismantled piece by piece, I can promise you that!

RUDOLPH

What? But I'm still paying for it!

RUDOLPH takes the Colt out of his pocket and brandishes it.

RUDOLPH (CONT'D)

I won't stay quiet about this, you hear?

UNCLE SAMMY

Hey! Careful with that antique!

RUDOLPH

It's not an antique! It was my grandfather's. He was a mobster.

UNCLE SAMMY

Shit, put it away! I don't like guns.

RUDOLPH

I've got to have a gun now I'm a gangster.

Uncle Sammy shakes his head, bites down on his cigar, and turns up the radio.

Rudolph proudly pockets the Colt, turns up his collar, and rests his head against the window.

EXT. BAYOU, UNCLE SAMMYS' HOUSE - EVENING.

Rudolph, exhausted and bleary-eyed, yawns as he gets out of the pick-up truck. His hair has been flattened against the window.

Uncle Sammy walks up to the screen door of an old house framed by the drooping branches of two trees and inserts his key in the lock.

Rudolph stretches and gives the house a haggard look.

RUDOLPH
What the hell is this place?

UNCLE SAMMY
Shit, are you planning on taking
root there?

RUDOLPH
Erm...

UNCLE SAMMY
Rudolph! Ha! What kind of name is
that for a gangster? Santa's
reindeer!

RUDOLPH
Hey!

UNCLE SAMMY
Welcome, Calagland.

RUDOLPH
But... What is this place?

UNCLE SAMMY
This is my place.

RUDOLPH
Your place! Statistically there are
more thefts and murders here than
anywhere else in the country.

UNCLE SAMMY
Is that right, Mr. Gangster? Well
then, you'll soon be robbed of
everything you have and left for
dead. And don't forget about the
alligators!

RUDOLPH
What?

UNCLE SAMMY
 Oh, Christ! Get over here and don't
 believe everything you're told!

Rudolph checks around as he heads for the door.

RUDOLPH
 Only thing missing is vampires.

UNCLE SAMMY
 Holy mother! We got a connoisseur!

INT. JEEP - EVENING

Lupin, Bonapart, and Beaudelaire watch from across the street as Rudolph and Uncle Sammy enter the house. Lupin switches off the engine and lights.

LUPIN
 Now we know where he lives.

BONAPART
 What is he doing in this dump?
 Tomorrow, I start shooting!

BEAUDELAIRE
 First the sax, first and foremost.

21. INT. UNCLE SAMMYS' HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - EVENING 21.

RUDOLPH glances around. There are no pictures or decorations of any kind. He grimaces at the sight of an old rotary phone.

RUDOLPH
 Mind if I use the phone?

Uncle Sammy throws himself into an armchair and turns on the TV.

UNCLE SAMMY
 Shit! Ain't you got a cellphone,
 gangster?

RUDOLPH
 I left it in the car.

Uncle Sammy starts to laugh and turns up the SOUND on the TV.

Rudolph picks up the receiver, dials, and turns away. When someone answers, he starts to WHISPER down the phone.

Uncle Sammy discreetly looks at him. Turns down the TV. Turns it up again.

Rudolph hangs up and turns back to him, looking grave. Uncle Sammy raises his eyebrows.

UNCLE SAMMY

What's the matter, Calagland?

Rudolph covers his face with his hands.

RUDOLPH

What have I done?

UNCLE SAMMY

Are you gonna spit it out? Shit!

RUDOLPH

I've got until the end of the week to bring the saxophone to the Broloks or my parents...

UNCLE SAMMY

Pfft! What did you really expect, gangster? Seriously!

RUDOLPH

This wasn't part of the agreement!

UNCLE SAMMY

For sure, it's bullshit.

Rudolph paces nervously back and forth, then stops.

RUDOLPH

You got a bathtub? I need a bath!

UNCLE SAMMY

Second door on the left. The towels are in the cupboard, right in front of the fuckin' tub.

RUDOLPH

The tub?

UNCLE SAMMY

Where you put your ass, buster.

Head down, Rudolph heads for the stairs.

22. INT. UNCLE SAMMYS' HOUSE, BATHROOM - EVENING 22.

A plastic cap on his head, Rudolph sits in the soapy water. On the chair next to him, his Colt lies on top of his neatly folded clothes.

Suddenly, something THUMPS the bottom of the tub. Surprised, Rudolph sinks so that only his head is above water.

RUDOLPH
Hey! Uncle Sammy!

23. INT. UNCLE SAMMYS' HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - EVENING 23.

Uncle Sammy is smoking another cigar while a wrestling match plays on TV. He frowns and looks towards the stairs.

UNCLE SAMMY
What?

RUDOLPH (O.S.)
(Screaming)
Your tub!

Uncle Sammy sighs.

UNCLE SAMMY
Must be Jo-Black.

24. INT. UNCLE SAMMYS' HOUSE, BATHROOM - NIGHT 24.

Rudolph reaches for the Colt when the tub is violently SHAKEN by further BLOWS.

RUDOLPH
What the hell's going on?

Suddenly an ALLIGATOR emerges from under the bath, turning its head to look at Rudolph, opening wide its toothless mouth.

Rudolph scrambles for the Colt, only to drop it in the water. He frantically searches for it through the bubbles.

JO-BLACK snaps its jaws.

Rudolph freezes.

The alligator wanders over to the bathroom door, pushes it open, and disappears through it with heavy steps.

Finding the Colt at last, Rudolph brandishes it in the direction of the door.

RUDOLPH (CONT'D)
Damn crawler!

25. INT. UNCLE SAMMYS' HOUSE, HALLWAY - NIGHT

25.

Pale-faced, Rudolph walks to the living room door with a towel around his waist and raises a finger.

RUDOLPH
Mmm! Mmm! Mmmmmmm!

Uncle Sammy looks at him, belches smoke, then gets up and comes over to him.

UNCLE SAMMY
Goddamn, buddy! What's up with you?

RUDOLPH
What... What's with the alligator?

UNCLE SAMMY
Ah, you'll get used to him. He's like a pet pooch.

RUDOLPH
You don't say!

UNCLE SAMMY
Yeah, it's great, I raised him from a baby. And besides, you've got nothing to fear, he's got no teeth left.

RUDOLPH
No teeth?

UNCLE SAMMY
Yeah, thanks to my friend Rose.

Rudolph looks back towards the corridor to see Jo-Black speeding towards him. A swipe of the alligator's tail and Rudolph hits the floor hard.

Uncle Sammy looks down at him.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)
Fuck, Jo-Black! Careful with my guest!

Jo-Black nonchalantly settles in the big armchair in front of the TV.

26. INT. RUST-RED PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

26.

Uncle Sammy drives, cigar clenched between his teeth, tapping his fingers on the wheel in time to the SOUL MUSIC on the radio.

Next to him, a grimacing Rudolph holds a bag of ice to his head.

RUDOLPH

Listen, I've got to find the sax,
the sooner the better.

UNCLE SAMMY

Shit! Don't forget I'm here to
help.

RUDOLPH

Yeah, but we gotta move fast. You
could have warned me about your...
Pet.

UNCLE SAMMY

Ah, screw you. You still
bellyaching about that?

RUDOLPH

As soon as I've got the sax, I
swear I'm out of here...

UNCLE SAMMY

Good. So what's your problem?

RUDOLPH

What do you mean?

UNCLE SAMMY

Shit, I mean why the change? Why
d'you want to be a gangster, you a
loser or something?

Rudolph takes an old photo out of his pocket and shows it to Uncle Sammy.

RUDOLPH

I want to look like this.

The photo shows Rudolph's grandfather, MARCEL CALAGLAND:
30ish, wearing a dark suit. He has a pale complexion and a
harsh, unforgiving face framed by slicked back hair.

RUDOLPH (CONT'D)
To join the gang, I've got to get
the sax.

Uncle Sammy squints at Rudolph.

UNCLE SAMMY
Shit! I get the feeling you're not
telling me the whole truth.

RUDOLPH
Of course I am! I don't want to be
ruled by my parents any more. I
want to be free.

Uncle Sammy looks at the picture again and nods, smiling.

UNCLE SAMMY
What a load of crap! You think it's
better to be like your grandpa,
always being hunted, waiting to get
whacked?

RUDOLPH
Wait, what? How do you know about
my grandpa?

UNCLE SAMMY
I already said, Salvatore told me
everything. Besides, it ain't
difficult to figure out.

RUDOLPH
My grandpa was a respected man. He
lived his life the way he wanted,
and that's enough for me.

UNCLE BENS
And what a way to live!

Rudolph puts the photo back in his pocket, slaps the ice pack
against his head, and sullenly turns up the radio.

27. EXT. PIER - DAY

27.

Rudolph sits in the truck; four heavysset GIRLS sitting on the
side of the pier wink and blow kisses at him.

Uncle Sammy speaks with an African-American man with greying
hair. Then he salutes and comes back to the truck, looking
tense.

Seeing him, four girls suddenly become serious. They turn away and throw their fishing lines into the water.

28. INT. RUST-RED PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

28.

Rudolph is red in the face as Uncle Sammy gets in.

RUDOLPH

So, Uncle Sammy... Where is the sax?

Uncle Sammy, face drawn, slams the door and starts the engine.

UNCLE SAMMY

Goddamn! It's at the Afrika Jazz Club.

RUDOLPH

You don't look too pleased.

UNCLE SAMMY

Shit! I was hoping the sax was still in the hands of one of his lackeys. Unfortunately, he already has it.

RUDOLPH

Who?

UNCLE SAMMY

You idiot, Papa Tcho-Tchot, that's who!

Rudolph straightens up and takes out his Colt.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)

Put the gun away, for fuck's sake!

RUDOLPH

Time's running out for my parents.

UNCLE SAMMY

Shit. If you show up at his place with that thing, he's gonna fuck you up real bad.

RUDOLPH

We'll see about that.

29. EXT. AFRIQUA JAZZ CLUB PARKING LOT - DAY

29.

Rudolph and Uncle Sammy make their way across the parking lot, heading for the club's entrance.

RUDOLPH

We've got to be fast.

UNCLE SAMMY

Calm down! We're on his turf here,
so let me do the talking. No
aggressive moves, you hear?

RUDOLPH

What's the point of being a
gangster if I can't-

UNCLE SAMMY

Listen, you must never, never
reveal who you are.

INT. AFRIQUA JAZZ CLUB - DAY

Rudolph and Uncle Sammy approach a small table where PAPA TCHO-TCHOT (60) sits. Tall, thin, and with his bright white hair cut short, he wears a long multicolored robe.

RUDOLPH

What the...

Around Papa Tcho-Tchot are four African-American MEN, heavyset and wearing dark suits. One of them is BOLOS, a gold ring in his right nostril.

The four men move away to allow Rudolph and Uncle Sammy to see Papa Tcho-Tchot properly for the first time: a wrinkled African-American man with strange sigils marking his face, wearing gold earrings and nose ring.

Rudolph looks him up and down.

RUDOLPH (CONT'D)

So this is him.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT

Hey, hey! It's the jazzman in
person.

UNCLE SAMMY

Goddamn, it's been a while.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
And what is the purpose of this
rare visit...?

RUDOLPH
You're a musician?

UNCLE SAMMY
Shut the fuck up, let me do the
talking.

Papa Tcho-Tchot frowns at Rudolph. Suddenly, his eyes turn
red - he reaches out, grabs Bolos, and drags him nearer.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)
Shit, I just came for some
information...

Papa Tcho-Tchot stands.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
With some idiot who thinks he's Al
Capone.

RUDOLPH
Hey!

Papa Tcho-Tchot wags his finger and mutters under his breath.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
(to Uncle Sammy)
I didn't realize you were so
vulgar, Bens.

UNCLE SAMMY
Fu... Shi... I'm here because of
him.

Wincing, Uncle Sammy raises his hands to his throat.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
You really know this bozo?

UNCLE SAMMY
He's the son of an old friend from
Chicago. His sax got stolen at the
Shreveport customs.

Uncle Sammy claps a hand over his mouth.

RUDOLPH
What the hell are you telling him
for?

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
Your friends are far away.

RUDOLPH
Okay, enough with the corny street-
magician act!

Rudolph reaches for his gun and advances on Papa Tcho-Tchot.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
I'm master here. Nobody threatens
me!

Opening his eyes wide, Papa Tcho-Tchot mumbles something
through his teeth and thrusts his hands out towards Rudolph.

Rudolph is suddenly stopped in his tracks. He fights to keep
moving forward, swinging his fists at Papa Tcho-Tchot, but he
can't reach him.

Uncle Sammy grimaces, watching helplessly as Rudolph's arms
suddenly drops and his body becomes inert.

UNCLE SAMMY
What... What have you done?

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
Just a little trick to keep your
"acquaintance" from doing anything
stupid.

UNCLE SAMMY
I see that old habits die hard.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
Let's come to the point, dear Bens.

UNCLE SAMMY
You've recently acquired a sax.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
Indeed. Bolos here was at
Shreveport customs when he saw some
clumsy thieves getting arrested.
After that, it was no problem to
find the crate they were after.

Papa Tcho-Tchot takes a seat, drawing a crooked cigar from
his pocket. Lighting up, he blows greenish smoke towards
Bolos.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT (CONT'D)
Strange, huh? All this energy just
for a lousy musical instrument!

Bolos inhales the smoke. Suddenly he winces, shakes, scratches his ass, and makes a creepy face. He advances on Rudolph.

Papa Tcho-Tchot frowns and gesticulates with his fingers.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT (CONT'D)
 No jewels or drugs hidden in it,
 it's not made of gold... And it
 makes an awful sound. I don't think
 you're telling me the whole truth,
 Bens...

Bolos raises his fists and squares up to Rudolph like a boxer.

UNCLE SAMMY
 I told you, I just want to get it
 back for my friend's son.

Bolos THUNDERS a punch into Rudolph's head, sending him heavily to the floor. Uncle Sammy watches on in horror.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)
 What are you doing!?

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
 Every time you lie, my dear Bens,
 Bolos will hit your acquaintance.
 Like Mike Tyson. It's up to you to
 stop him.

There's a cut on Rudolph's forehead. Wincing, he gets up and faces Bolos again.

UNCLE SAMMY
 Oh, God!

Bolos throws a powerful punch into Rudolph's stomach and follows up with a hook to the face. Rudolph is knocked to the ground again.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)
 Stop! You're gonna kill him!

Rudolph, looking bewildered, gets up and faces Bolos again. His face is swelling up.

INT. 4X4 - DAY

Lupin gently rubs the leather steering wheel while chewing on a toothpick.

Bonapart, his features drawn, nervously rubs his fist and grinds his teeth.

Beaudelaire lies in the back, sucking on a lollipop.

BONAPART

I swear, I'm gonna kill them all!

LUPIN

Patience is a virtue. Keep cool, keep cool.

BEAUDELAIRE

Who couldn't he live in the Old Quarter though, or the Big Easy? I could have eaten anything I wanted, ridden the trams...

The three Frenchmen sullenly turn away from one another.

32. INT. AFRIQUA JAZZ CLUB - DAY

32.

Uncle Sammy stamps his foot.

UNCLE SAMMY

Stop! I'm telling the goddamn truth!

Bolos goes to punch Rudolph again - only to suddenly FREEZE in place. His fist stops flush to Rudolph's face.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT

Mmm. I'm sure you're not, but...

UNCLE SAMMY

But?

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT

If you want your piece of junk back, I'll give you a chance. If you win the contest tomorrow night, here at the club.

UNCLE SAMMY

Fucking hypocrite! I haven't played for a long time and you know it!

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT

Indeed.

Papa Tcho-Tchot lays a hand over his heart.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT (CONT'D)
Bonnie will always leave an empty
space in my heart.

UNCLE SAMMY
Then why rub salt in the wound?

Papa Tcho-Tchot smiles mischievously and waves his fingers
towards Rudolph, mumbling under his breath. Then he turns and
walks towards the back room.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
Take it or leave it, Bens. See you
tomorrow night.

33. INT. UNCLE SAMMYS' HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

33.

Rudolph lies on the couch, an ice pack on his head and cream
on his bruises. He winces, opens his eyes, and groans as he
sits up.

RUDOLPH
Oh! My God!

Uncle Sammys' sits smoking a cigar, lost in reverie as he
strokes Jo-Black's head.

UNCLE SAMMY
Goddamn it, Calagland. What doesn't
kill you makes you dumber, huh? I
warned you he was a powerful.

Rudolph gingerly touches his face.

RUDOLPH
He said you were a musician.

UNCLE SAMMY
Shit. You didn't miss that one.

RUDOLPH
What happened?

UNCLE SAMMY
Goddamn it. Let's just say I tried
playing big brother to a bandmate.
Tried to save him from shit creek.

RUDOLPH
And it came back and hit you like a
boomerang.

UNCLE SAMMY
Boomerang my ass! Listen, right now
we've got a big problem.

Uncle Sammy gets up sharply.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)
Papa Tcho-Tchot has the sax and to
get it back, he wants me to take
part in his contest tomorrow.

Rudolph plunges a hand into his coat pocket and draws his
gun.

RUDOLPH
I've got just the instrument we
need to win right here.

UNCLE SAMMY
Hey, big nose! Didn't you learn
your lesson? I'm not gonna play in
any goddamn contest.

RUDOLPH
Why not?

UNCLE SAMMY
Shit! Because I swore I wouldn't,
that's all. No fucking exceptions.

RUDOLPH
Well then, I'll go get it myself.

Jo-Black suddenly stands and turns to look at the door.

34. EXT. UNCLE SAMMYS' HOUSE - DAY

34.

Lupin, Beaudelaire and Bonapart hurry up to the front door.

Frowning, Lupin kneels in front of the door and starts
picking the lock.

Bonapart nervously looks around, tapping his fist with the
palm of his other hand.

Beaudelaire studies a hatch, low down near the front door. He
bends down to inspect it and pinches his nose at the smell.

As the door silently swings open, Lupin smiles victoriously
and puts away his tools. He steps inside, followed by the
others.

35. INT. UNCLE SAMMY'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

35.

Rudolph and Uncle Sammy look out into the hall.

RUDOLPH AND UNCLE SAMMY

What the...

Jo-Black moves between them and the door. GROWLING deep in his throat, he THUMPS his tail on the ground.

Rudolph and Uncle Sammy give the alligator a funny look.

RUDOLPH

What's the matter with him?

UNCLE SAMMY

Maybe it's just colic.

The sound of FOOTSTEPS approaching from the hall.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)

Shit! Who the hell?

Rudolph brandishes his gun in the direction of the door.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)

Damn it, none of your gun bullshit
in my house!

The three Frenchmen abruptly BURST into the room and face down Rudolph and Uncle Sammy.

Jo-Black keeps THUMPING his tail against the ground.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)

Who the hell are you guys?

LUPIN

What are you looking at, huh? I
said, what are you looking at?

RUDOLPH

Funny accent.

Bonapart slams his fist into the palm of his other hand.

BONAPART

So here's our would-be, old-
fashioned gangster. Worthy of the
Broloks.

RUDOLPH

Hey!

LUPIN

We're just here for the sax, you
hear me? We're just here for the
sax.

BEAUDELAIRE

Put down that antique cannon of
yours, Rudolph Calagland, and
there'll be no need for bloodshed.

BONAPART

And quickly! Or else!

Bonapart steps forward and stops, facing down the barrel of
the Colt.

RUDOLPH

Not so old-fashioned I can't stop a
gang of petty thieves.

BONAPART, BEAUDELAIRE AND LUPIN

What?

Rudolph's hand shakes violently. Uncle Sammy looks at him in
confusion.

UNCLE SAMMY

Holy shit, what the hell are you
doing?

RUDOLPH

There's no other option. I have to
pull the trigger.

Bonapart suddenly LEAPS forward, PUNCHING Rudolph in the face
and THROWING Uncle Sammy to the floor.

Jo-Black faces Beaudelaire, whipping his tail back and forth
and snapping his jaws.

BEAUDELAIRE

Keep cool, handbag.

LUPIN

Don't upset it, they can be
unpredictable and...

Jo-Black CHARGES at Beaudelaire and HITS him hard, sending
him flying into his accomplices.

Bonapart grabs his gun and SHOOTs wildly at the ceiling, then
aims at the alligator.

Uncle Sammy desperately jumps in between Bonapart and Jo-Black, his hands in the air.

UNCLE SAMMY

No!

Suddenly the hatch by the door RATTLES. Outside, the sound of HEAVY FOOTSTEPS.

Beaudelaire sticks his head out into the hallway and looks towards the front door. Then he immediately pulls back,, grabbing his accomplices and sharply dragging them away.

BEAUDELAIRE

ALLIGATORS!

36. INT. UNCLE SAMMYS' HOUSE, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 36.

The three terrified Frenchmen flee, FIRING their guns towards the kitchen.

Behind them come ALLIGATORS, SNAPPING their huge, sharp teeth. The three men smash through the back door and quickly disappear into the night.

37. INT. UNCLE SAMMYS' HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY 37.

Uncle Sammy picks Rudolph up off the floor and shakes him.

UNCLE SAMMY

Fuck you, Calagland, fuck you! My life flashed before my eyes! Who the hell are those assholes?

RUDOLPH

Some rival gang, probably, since they knew who I am.

UNCLE SAMMY

Holy shit, who doesn't?

RUDOLPH

We have to work together.

UNCLE SAMMY

Together my ass! We're only working together out of necessity, you hear me?

He shakes his head and looks at Jo-Black.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)
 (to Jo-Black)
 Your friends made one hell of a
 mess. It's up to you to watch the
 house when we're out, okay?

Jo-Black growls and heads for the couch.

Rudolph watches him go fondly. Then he pulls himself together
 and turns back to Uncle Sammy.

RUDOLPH
 I'm going to the club right now to
 put an end to this.

UNCLE SAMMY
 No!

38. INT. RUST-RED PICKUP TRUCK - NIGHT

38.

Uncle Sammy drives. Rudolph sits in the passenger seat, his
 bruises freshly covered with cream.

RUDOLPH
 Where are we going?

Uncle Sammy anxiously chews on his cigar.

UNCLE SAMMY
 To see a friend of mine. Her name
 is Rose, Rose Fée la Mambo. She
 shouldn't be too expensive.

RUDOLPH
 Does she know where the sax is?

UNCLE SAMMY
 Hell no, but she might help you get
 it back.

Uncle Sammy breathes a huge plume of smoke, then turns to
 Rudolph sternly.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)
 Tomorrow, with her help, you'll be
 taking my place in the music
 competition at Papa Tcho-Tchot's.
 That is... if you still want to get
 the sax back and save your parents.

RUDOLPH
 But I'm no musician!

UNCLE SAMMY
Shit, you don't say!

RUDOLPH
So, what, your friend is gonna
teach me in a day?!

UNCLE SAMMY
Goddamn it, don't you see we're
getting deeper and deeper in shit?

RUDOLPH
Yeah, it's all pretty disturbing...
Alright, fine, but if it goes wrong
I'm gonna take the sax by force,
understood?

39. INT. ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO'S HOUSE, ENTRANCE HALL - NIGHT 39.

Rudolph and Uncle Sammy come to a stop in front of a man made
of straw, stabbed through with several swords.

RUDOLPH
What a warm welcome! I see your
friend's into art.

UNCLE SAMMY
(calling out)
You here, Rose Fée?

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO (O.S.)
Take a seat, Uncle Sammy! I'll be
there in a minute!

Rudolph nervously leans closer to Uncle Sammy.

RUDOLPH
Just don't tell her who I am. I'm
incognito!

UNCLE SAMMY
Trust me.

40. INT. ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY 40.

Uncle Sammy and Rudolph sit at a round table in the middle of
the room. On the table sits the head of an alligator, mouth
open to reveal a small green pot.

Rudolph looks curiously around the gloomy room. A strange assortment of objects hang from the walls and sit on the shelves: taxidermy, animals in jars, and other strange objects.

RUDOLPH
Your friend's got interesting
taste.

UNCLE SAMMY
Shit, it's how she makes a living.

RUDOLPH
You don't say?

UNCLE SAMMY
She's a voodoo priestess.

Rudolph leaps out of his chair.

RUDOLPH
Like Papa Tcho-Tchot!

UNCLE SAMMY
Holy shit, she's not like him!

RUDOLPH
If that's your plan, I'm not
staying here another minute!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO (30) appears at the door. A heavyset African-American woman with blue eyes, she's dressed in a flowery dress and a big fancy black hat.

Mouth agape, Rudolph slowly sits back down, plucking the cotton wool from his nose with a trembling hand.

Rose elegantly enters the room. Studying Rudolph closely, she takes a seat at the table.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
What brings you here, Bens?

UNCLE SAMMY
I'm here with the son of an old
friend from Chicago.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Mmm. I see, I see.

UNCLE SAMMY
His name is Rudolph, Rudolph
Calagland.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Bonjour, Rudolph.

RUDOLPH
B... Bonjour.

Rose takes the small pot from the alligator's mouth and shakes it, muttering under her breath. Then she lifts the lid, takes out a smoking chicken thigh, and swallows it whole.

Speechless, Rudolph and Uncle Sammy just stare.

UNCLE SAMMY
Goddamn! Listen, I'm in need of your services.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
No blaspheming in this house, Bens, you know that! And as for my services, you should have asked the famous Marie Laveau instead.

Rudolph turns to Uncle Sammy.

RUDOLPH
Marie Laveau. A friend of yours?

UNCLE SAMMY
No. Just an old voodoo priestess everyone used to be scared of around here.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Okay, okay! Let's hear what the problem is then.

Rose takes a brown terracotta pot out from under the table. She throws raw chicken legs and bones into it, then closes the lid, shakes it, and puts it into the alligator's mouth, muttering under her breath.

Suddenly she lifts the lid.

Rudolph and Uncle Sammy lean in close and peer into the pot.

UNCLE SAMMY
Well?

RUDOLPH
What? You can see...

Rose leans over the pot and frowns.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Shush, the magic has worked!

UNCLE SAMMY
Gah, it stinks like death!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Just need to double check it with
another potion.

Rose draws two vials out of her pocket and pours them into the pan. A huge cloud of thick, roiling smoke emerges.

Rudolph and Uncle Sammy nervously draw back.

Suddenly, chicken legs come JUMPING out of the pot, one of them leaping straight into Rudolph's open mouth.

Uncle Sammy covers his face with his hands.

UNCLE SAMMY
Holy crap!

Grimacing, Rudolph swallows the chicken leg. Then suddenly he starts to convulse.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)
Shit, what's the matter with him?

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Nothing... I think.

Uncle Sammy gets up, grabs a black bowler hat from one of the shelves, and puts it on Rudolph's head.

UNCLE SAMMY
Damn! His face, it looks like...

Rudolph's chin starts to elongate, a wide smile crossing his naïve looking face. He notices the hat.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Shush, Rudolph's letting go! He's
going to tell us something.

RUDOLPH
(British accent)
Yes mister! When I start crying,
it's because I'm afraid of being
scolded!

Rudolph pulls a face, scratches his head, and suddenly starts crying.

UNCLE SAMMY
Holy shit, it's that fucking
English actor. It's Stan Laurel!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Never heard of him. This is not a
good sign.

Rose takes off her extravagant hat, revealing long black hair woven with beads.

Rudolph vigorously shakes his head. Suddenly, Stan Laurel's features disappear from his face.

Uncle Sammy removes the hat from Rudolph's head, then puts the remainder of his cigar in his mouth and lights up.

UNCLE SAMMY
Gee!

Rose looks at Rudolph and he smiles back at her.

RUDOLPH
I feel funny. Damn!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
I sense that you're facing someone
very, very strong.

UNCLE SAMMY
Shit, there's no keeping anything
from you. It's Papa Tcho-Tchot.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
(wryly)
Oh, is that's all ?

41. INT. AFRIQUA CLUB JAZZ, OFFICE - NIGHT

41.

Papa Tcho-Tchot sits cross-legged on the floor, eyes closed, surrounded by shadows. His hair and the sigils on his face are brightly lit up.

Suddenly he opens his eyes and frowns.

There is a KNOCK on the door, and Bolos enters.

BOLOS
We picked up three guys with funny
accents near Uncle Sammys' house.
They're pretty beaten up.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
 What do you know? Get them ready
 for me, I'll be right over...

42. INT. ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 42.

Rudolph shakes his head, looking from Uncle Sammy to Rose.

RUDOLPH
 What happened?

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
 You swallowed that chicken leg by
 mistake.

RUDOLPH
 Huh?

UNCLE SAMMY
 Shit, you had me in stitches,
 Calagland. Even Nostradamus
 couldn't have seen it coming.

Rose takes three large vials out of her pocket and places
 them on the table.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
 Shush, calm down. I think I just
 figured it out. But first...

She takes another vial from her pocket and downs the
 contents, then shakes her head vigorously.

RUDOLPH
 Uncle Sammy promised me a solution.
 If you can't help me, I'm leaving
 right now.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
 Shut up! Now watch...

She reaches under the table and brings out a black pot
 covered with a lid, which she puts in the alligator's mouth.

RUDOLPH
 Not again!

Rose lifts the lid and throws the three vials into the pot.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
 Now you must spit in the pot before
 I close the lid.

UNCLE SAMMY

God, I have to mix my spit with his?

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

I have seen that you are linked to one another in strange ways.

RUDOLPH

Huh, no kidding.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

It's that or nothing. You must do it at the same time.

RUDOLPH

Wait a minute, your strange accent...

Rose smiles.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

Ah! I often experiment with little potions, allowing me to speak unusual languages.

RUDOLPH

You are sober?

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

Absolutely. Is there a problem?

RUDOLPH

No! I'm not questioning your abilities.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

Just kidding, Rudolph.

Rudolph and Uncle Sammy lean over the pot, spit, and sit back again.

Lightning starts to flash from the pot. The room darkens and is filled with the sound of THUNDER.

Rudolph and Uncle Sammy anxiously draw closer to one another.

Rose's hair starts to move wildly as if whipped by the wind. She starts to CHANT a prayer, her voice growing louder and louder. Lightning CRACKLES across the room.

RUDOLPH AND UNCLE SAMMY

Oh, God!

Rose's face trembles with effort, her eyes wide and her hair tousled. Suddenly, the thunder and lightning subside and the room brightens again.

With a sigh of relief, Rudolph and Uncle Sammy relax. Then suddenly, several fiery red beans JUMP from the pot, falling from the table and bouncing on the ground.

UNCLE SAMMY

Holy shit, your pot just shat beans!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

Erm...

Rudolph stands.

RUDOLPH

You know, I think I'm gonna go solo from here.

UNCLE SAMMY

Look! The beans, they're moving.

Rose shakes her head, tidies her hair, and looks closely at the beans in confusion. Suddenly smoke pours out of the pot and covers the beans lying on the ground.

RUDOLPH

This is really weird.

UNCLE SAMMY

Shit, it stinks!

RUDOLPH

It looks like your toilet, Uncle Sammy.

UNCLE SAMMY

Screw you, Calagland.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

Shush, be quiet you two! Look, the beans are gone!

The three scan the ground for the beans as the smoke dissipates.

Suddenly the air is filled with music: TRUMPETS, SAXOPHONES, and CHANTING VOICES.

UNCLE SAMMY

My God! Where is it coming from?

43. INT. AFRIQUA JAZZ CLUB, BASEMENT - NIGHT

43.

Lupin, Bonapart, and Beaudelaire sit, gagged and bound, facing Papa Tcho-Tchot.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
Mmm. So that's it!

Papa Tcho-Tchot regards the three Frenchmen, his eyes turning red. Then he places his hands on each of their heads in turn, whispering strange words.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT (CONT'D)
A rivalry... all the way from
Chicago. Oh! No, this saxophone...
Nothing interesting about it. But
you three are going to help me now.

Lupin, Bonapart, and Beaudelaire all blink and nod their heads.

44. INT. ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

44.

Rudolph, Uncle Sammy, and Rose are all closely studying one of the walls.

Suddenly, the smiling face of an African-American man EMERGES from it. He raises a trumpet to his lips, PLAYS loudly, then stops and rubs his nose.

UNCLE SAMMY
Look! It's Louis Armstrong!

RUDOLPH AND ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Louis Armstrong!

Uncle Sammy shakes his head. He looks at another wall just in time to see another African-American man emerge from it, this one wearing a white hat and PLAYING a clarinet.

UNCLE SAMMY
Holy fuckin' shit! Sidney Bechet!

Rudolph, Uncle Sammy and Rose gaze around as all sorts of musicians and singers start to emerge from the ground, walls, and ceiling, rising into the air, PLAYING and SINGING.

Eyes wide, Uncle Sammy points at them.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)
Buddy Balden! Roy Brown! Mahalia
Jackson and Lonnie Johnson! It
can't be!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
It's their ghosts, their spirits!

RUDOLPH
What is this madness?

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
To be honest, I don't have a clue.
All I know is that this is the
solution to your problem.

The ghosts DANCE happily around the room. Louis Armstrong pinches Uncle Sammy, then suddenly moves behind him and KICKS him in the ass.

UNCLE SAMMY
Shit! What's he got against me?

He comes face to face with a smiling Sydney Bechet.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Look out!

Sydney Bechet PUNCHES him in the stomach.

UNCLE SAMMY
Holy hell, he lives up to his
reputation. What's got into them?

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
I don't know!

RUDOLPH
Better make them stop, or I'll
knock 'em out!

Rose starts SINGING to Lonnie Johnson and Mahalia Jackson.

Rudolph takes up a boxing stance and THROWS a PUNCH at them, only to miss. They lift him into the air and THROW him against a wall.

RUDOLPH (CONT'D)
No!

Uncle Sammy runs over to him.

UNCLE SAMMY
Don't forget to stay alive!

RUDOLPH
I definitely won't forget this
little séance of yours.

Rudolph and Uncle Sammy look to Rose.

UNCLE SAMMY
Shit! When is this going to end?

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
In ten minutes... More or less.

RUDOLPH AND UNCLE SAMMY
TEN MINUTES?

Suddenly the ghosts move to the walls and ceiling, the musical euphoria stopping dead. They gaze at the three living souls in the room, descending slowly towards the ground.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
What are they doing?

Louis Armstrong rubs his nose, while next to him, Sydney Bechet sneers and smooths the brim of his hat. Then they float up over Rudolph, Uncle Sammy, and Rose.

Suddenly Louis Armstrong and Sydney Bechet start pulling their hair and sticking their fingers in their eyes and noses; the three living people struggle away from them and run.

Doubled over, the ghosts HOWL with LAUGHTER.

Rudolph, Uncle Sammy and Rose head for the table and hide underneath it.

RUDOLPH
You really have no control over all this.

UNCLE SAMMY
Shit! They're crazy!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
This isn't what was supposed to happen, I promise.

RUDOLPH
Oh, great! And tomorrow I'm supposed to win the contest at the Afrika Jazz Club with your help!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
WHAT!?

UNCLE SAMMY
I was about to tell you, but...

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
He's supposed to be entering Papa
Tcho-Tchot's contest?

UNCLE SAMMY
That's the deal if we're going to
get the sax back. You know I swore
to never play an instrument again,
so I thought that with your help,
Rudolph could...

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
For a saxophone!

RUDOLPH
It has sentimental value.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Shush! You know tomorrow is October
31st?

UNCLE SAMMY
So what?

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
So, Bens, it's the reason these
ghosts are here. The magic has
changed because of Samhain.

RUDOLPH
It's still voodoo.

The ghosts return to the ground. LAUGHING, they approach the
three protagonists.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
No, Rudolph! Samhain is special,
it's the one time in the year that
ghosts can cross over from the
other side. That's where Halloween
comes from.

The ghosts menacingly surround the table.

Rudolph, Uncle Sammy, and Rose huddle together and SCREAM -
but suddenly the ghosts DISAPPEAR, leaving nothing behind but
a thick cloud of smoke.

Rudolph, Uncle Sammy and Rose relax.

UNCLE SAMMY
Shit, it stinks again.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
At least they're gone.

RUDOLPH
It's over.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
The potion had its limits. The
ghosts didn't know that.

UNCLE SAMMY
I'm out of here. I've had enough
for today.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
I'll come see you tomorrow and
we'll find a solution for your
problem.

RUDOLPH
Just as long as there's no more
crazy magic!

45. INT. UNCLE SAMMYS' HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

45.

Rudolph and Uncle Sammy are sitting watching the TV: the
commentator calls out the name of the football players as
they take the field.

Jo-Black lies on the couch, quietly chewing on a huge bone.

Uncle Sammy passes Rudolph a beer, who takes it and then
jumps as the bone SNAPS in Jo-Black's mouth.

RUDOLPH
How did he managed to break it?

UNCLE SAMMY
Jo-Black doesn't like to be
disturbed when the Green Wave are
playing.

RUDOLPH
Damn crawler!

UNCLE SAMMY
Shut up, for fuck's sake ! It's
starting.

46. LATER

46.

Uncle Sammy LEAPS excitedly from his chair, whiskey bottle in hand, and drunkenly stumbles towards the TV.

UNCLE SAMMY

Damn it, go on Green Wave! Just this touchdown to win!

Jo-Black wiggles his tail and SNAPS his jaws. Rudolph jumps and turns towards the alligator.

RUDOLPH

You damn...

He gets up and joins Uncle Sammy.

COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

It's the final play! He's on the move!

UNCLE SAMMY

TOUCHDOWN! Goddamn it, we won!

He waves the whisky bottle around.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)

What a game! I'm heading outside.

47. EXT. UNCLE SAMMYS' HOUSE - NIGHT.

47.

Rudolph stands next to a bench, looking up at the bright full moon.

Slumped over, Uncle Sammy is sat down, drinking from the whisky bottle. When he's done, he offers the bottle to Rudolph.

Shaking his head, Rudolph moves away, keeping a close eye on Jo-Black, who lumbers over and settles down next to Uncle Sammy.

RUDOLPH

You know, sometimes alcohol loosens people's tongues. Why don't you tell me how you ended up owing the Broloks?

UNCLE SAMMY

Fuck it, alright. When I was still a musician, Salvatore got me out of jail. Possession of drugs.

RUDOLPH
You were using?

UNCLE SAMMY
Hell no!

RUDOLPH
Why didn't you pay off the debt
before now?

UNCLE SAMMY
It would have been easier to,
but...

RUDOLPH
There's always a "but".

UNCLE SAMMY
Shit. One of the younger members of
my band was using. Selling, too.

RUDOLPH
And he didn't pay his debt.

UNCLE SAMMY
That's right. So I took the fall
instead and handed myself over to
the cops. And now I'm still paying
for this bullshit.

RUDOLPH
Tomorrow, we'll get the sax and
your freedom with it.

UNCLE SAMMY
Fucking hell, you really think
you're ready to take on Papa Tcho-
Tchot tomorrow?

RUDOLPH
I'll be better prepared than last
time. I'll know what's coming.

UNCLE SAMMY
Shit, it was just bad luck, huh?
Well, that's what always makes or
breaks a man!

RUDOLPH
Something else you want to get off
your chest, Uncle Sammy?

Uncle Sammy forlornly gazes up at the full moon. Then he lowers his head, lights up a cigar, and blows smoke while petting Jo-Black's head.

UNCLE SAMMY

This fuckin' life ain't easy.
You'll find there are a lot of
unexpected challenges.

RUDOLPH

True.

UNCLE SAMMY

You dumbbass! I mean real
challenges, not your stupid
problems with joining a gang!

RUDOLPH

Sorry.

UNCLE SAMMY

When I was doing time, my wife
Bonnie... She didn't know I'd gone
away. She was still waiting for me
to come back with the rest of the
band. She was pregnant with our
first child. She gave birth just
after this big music festival in
Chicago.

RUDOLPH

You have a child?

UNCLE SAMMY

Shit, I should have had a family!
But I wasn't there. I lost it all.

Tears in his eyes, Rudolph puts a hand on Uncle Sammys' shoulder.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)

The police told me that Bonnie died
on the way to the hospital.

RUDOLPH

I'm sorry. With all my heart.

Rudolph gazes up at the moon for a moment, then turns back to Uncle Sammy. Suddenly he freezes, terrified, and raises a hand to point:

Louis Armstrong and Syndey Bechet are sitting on the bench next to Uncle Sammy, hunched over, covering their faces with their hands.

Uncle Sammy wipes away his tears and drinks.

Jo-Black turns to the two ghosts and snaps his jaws.

RUDOLPH (CONT'D)
It... It can't be!

UNCLE SAMMY
Holy cow! Leave me alone, big nose!

The ghosts raise their heads and make rude gestures at Rudolph to leave.

RUDOLPH
What are you doing here?

LOUIS ARMSTRONG
We're crying over our dear
brother's sadness!

SIDNEY BECHET
Why, is there a law against that?

Uncle Sammy jumps as he suddenly notices the two ghosts, pressing himself up against Jo-Black.

UNCLE SAMMY
Goddamn, what...!

RUDOLPH
And they talk too.

Louis Armstrong and Sydney Bechet look at each other and burst out LAUGHING. Then suddenly they frown and glare at Uncle Sammy and Rudolph.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG
The gall of you two! First you drag
us out of the afterlife...

SIDNEY BECHET
And then you leave us stranded
here, waiting on the two of you...

LOUIS ARMSTRONG
While all our friends have gone
back home nice and easy.

UNCLE SAMMY
Shit! It's nothing to do with us.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG
 Oh, is that what you think,
 brother? It wasn't me who spat in
 the pot!

Sidney Bechet smooths down the brim of his hat.

SIDNEY BECHET
 And now we're stuck here until the
 last day of Samhain!

RUDOLPH
 What can we do ?

LOUIS ARMSTRONG AND SIDNEY BECHET
 Nothing!

UNCLE SAMMY gets up, stumbles, looks at the bottle in his
 hand, then throws it away.

UNCLE SAMMY
 Shit! I'm going to bed. I've had my
 fill of emotions for today.

48. INT. UNCLE SAMMYS' HOUSE, RUDOLPH'S ROOM - DAY

48.

Rudolph sleeps under the covers. Next to him, on a chair, his
 clothes are neatly folded with the Colt on top of them.

Also asleep, Louis Armstrong and Sidney Bechet FLOAT near the
 ceiling.

A sharp KNOCKING sounds at the front door of the house.

FOOTSTEPS make their way up the stairs, stopping in front of
 the door to Rudolph's room. Someone KNOCKS on the door.

Rudolph blearily opens his eyes.

RUDOLPH
 Who's there?

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO
 It's me, Rose. I came as promised.

Rudolph sits up, rubs his eyes, and looks at the clock.

RUDOLPH
 Damn, it's early.

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO
 Hurry up, Rudolph, and I'll make
 you breakfast. Cajun style.

Hair in disarray, Rudolph gets up and gets dressed. Then he looks up at the ghosts.

RUDOLPH

What are you doing up there?

SIDNEY BECHET

Can't even get a good night's sleep in this world!

RUDOLPH

But you're dead!

LOUIS ARMSTRONG

So?

RUDOLPH

Well, do as you want, I guess...

49. INT. UNCLE SAMMYS' HOUSE, CORRIDOR - DAY 49.

Rose cheerily makes her way to a second door with the names "Bonnie and Bens" carved on it and knocks.

50. INT. UNCLE SAMMYS' HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY 50.

Rose cracks open the door and peers inside, then grimaces when she sees Uncle Sammy.

Fully dressed, he lies SNORING on top of the covers next to Jo-Black. The alligator is lying on his back, legs in the air.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

Breakfast is served!

51. INT. UNCLE SAMMY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY 51.

Rose hums joyfully as she lays out breakfast on the little table next to the back door, which has been hastily repaired with tape.

Hearing FOOTSTEPS, she turns towards the stairs and freezes.

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO

Impossible! Quick, out of the way,
Rudolph! I'll take care of them!

52. She grabs a frying pan from the stove and brandishes it. 52.

Rudolph comes to a stop at the bottom of the stairs and raises his hands. He turns to Louis Armstrong and Sidney Bechet who are following him.

RUDOLPH
Everybody calm down!

He turns to Rose and smiles.

RUDOLPH (CONT'D)
I'll explain in a second, but first... You look great.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG
Indeed! Pretty dame!

Rose relaxes and lowers the frying pan.

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO
Okay, let's have some breakfast and you can explain what the hell is going on here.

53. INT. UNCLE SAMMYS' HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

53.

Rudolph, Rose, and a pale-looking Uncle Sammy sit at the table, eating breakfast. Louis Armstrong and Sidney Bechet stand in the background, looking glum.

RUDOLPH
...and that's how our illustrious guests ended up here.

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO
There must have been some kind of interference that stopped them going back to the afterlife with the other ghosts.

UNCLE SAMMY
Hell! We better keep their faces hidden, 'cause otherwise...

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO
I agree, they'd better stay here for the next three days until they disappear after Samhain.

RUDOLPH
Three days!

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO
 Samain begins three days before
 October 31st and ends three days
 after it.

The ghosts both pull faces and flip Rudolph the bird.

RUDOLPH
 What about the contest? You
 wouldn't happen to know any secret
 ways I can get in and out of the
 club with the sax?

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO
 I know the club, I go there often.
 Crazy atmosphere.

UNCLE SAMMY
 Papa Tcho-Tchot might have taught
 you everything you know, but right
 now, we've got no way to get the
 sax back.

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO
 Don't doubt me, Bens.

RUDOLPH
 (To Uncle Sammy)
 Hey, old timer, I've got what it
 takes to take down Papa Tcho-Tchot,
 okay?

UNCLE SAMMY
 Shut your mouth and wise up! This
 guy's dangerous!

RUDOLPH
 We've only got three days!

Rudolph pulls himself together and turns to Rose.

RUDOLPH (CONT'D)
 You know this Papa Tcho-Tchot,
 then.

The ghosts approach the table, stuff some food into their
 mouths, then immediately spit it back out.

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO
 I was brought up in an orphanage.
 That's where Papa Tcho-Tchot found
 me. He used to visit and teach me
 about magic and occultism.

MONTAGE: Rose learns magic.

– At 4 years old, Rose is given a small crystal ball by Papa Tcho-Tchot, only to accidentally drop it. It SHATTERS on the floor, the smoke dissipating in the shape of colorful animals.

– At ten, she empties two little vials onto a frog which changes color and then EXPLODES.

– At eighteen, she rubs a crystal ball, studying the fear-stricken face that appears within.

– At twenty-one, she happily reads tarot cards for a sad, defeated-looking client.

– At twenty-six, she stabs a pin into a straw effigy. She pricks her finger, blood splattering on her client.

– At thirty-two, she pours the content of two small vials down Jo-Black's throat. The alligator's teeth immediately fall out.

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO (CONT'D)
It's been my way of life ever
since.

RUDOLPH
But!

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO
But! Eventually I realized how
corrupt he was, using his powers
for his own selfish gains, willing
to do anything to achieve his
goals.

RUDOLPH
He was just using you. Bastard!

Compassionate, Rudolph leans in close to Rose. Suddenly their hair becomes attracted to one another like static electricity, and where it touches there is a shower of sparks.

Gaping, Uncle Sammy looks at the duo.

UNCLE SAMMY
Holy hell!

RUDOLPH
I'm really sorry.

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO
What about you, Rudolph? What do
you do?

RUDOLPH
I sell hoovers with my old man.

They come closer to one another again, and again sparks fly
when their hair touches.

Uncle Sammy gapes at them.

UNCLE SAMMY
Father and son, my ass!

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO
What?

UNCLE SAMMY
Shit, I'm going to go see my
buddies at the dock.

Uncle Sammy stands and saunters towards the front door.

RUDOLPH
He still looks pretty drunk.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
I've never seen him like this
before.

RUDOLPH
How do you know him?

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO
When I was a child, I used to leave
the orphanage without permission.
Uncle Sammy used to show me around,
he took me to every corner of the
Mississippi on his boat. I loved
the feel of the wind in my hair.

54. EXT. UNCLE SAMMYS' HOUSE - DAY

54.

Uncle Sammy walks round to the driver's side of his truck,
puts his key in the lock, and pauses to look at his wrinkled
reflection in the window. He smiles.

55. INT. UNCLE SAMMYS' HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

55.

Rudolph admiringly watches Rose run a hand through her hair.

Louis Armstrong grabs a glass from the table and takes a swig. He spits it back out again with a grimace.

RUDOLPH

Then you must know about what happened to his wife, Bonnie.

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO

That's when he became so rude. It's also when he swore to never play again.

RUDOLPH

So that's why he won't play.

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO

I'm surprised he told you the story. He must like you, even if just a little.

RUDOLPH

No less than Papa Tcho-Tchot, at least.

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO

They used to come into conflict with one another all the time. Did he tell you that Papa Tcho-Tchot loved Bonnie too? She chose Bens, though. She loved him for his gentleness and his talent as a musician.

RUDOLPH

I didn't know.

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO

One of them gave meaning to his life through music, the other indulged in sick powers to take revenge on a society which had abandoned him.

RUDOLPH

They were totally different, but they were in love with the same woman.

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO

You'd better go and join him. I'll do the dishes and try to find a solution for your problem.

Rudolph gets up and runs to the door.

Rose sighs. Jo-Black wanders into the kitchen, heading for the hastily repaired back door.

ROSE FÉE LA MANBO (CONT'D)
Hey! Hello there, Jo-Black!

Jo-Black glances at Rose, then speeds up and rushes out the door.

56. INT. RUST-RED PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

56.

Rudolph clambers into the passenger seat and turns to Uncle Sammy, who is behind the wheel.

RUDOLPH
You remind me of the moralizer in that Van Gogh painting, you know, the old bearded man with an air about him...

UNCLE SAMMY
Moralizer, my ass! I know what you want, big nose!

RUDOLPH
Hey!

Grimacing, Uncle Sammy starts the engine, takes out a cigar, and lights up.

UNCLE SAMMY
Goddamn! D'you think I didn't see the sparks flying? Tell me, is there a Mrs Calagaland back in Chicago?

RUDOLPH
I'm single.

UNCLE SAMMY
Listen up, big nose. If you hurt her, I'll finish you, you hear?

Without looking, Rudolph grabs Uncle Sammys' cigar. He inhales a great puff of smoke and immediately chokes on it.

57. EXT. PIER - DAY

57.

Cigar clenched between his teeth, Uncle Sammy gets out of the truck and Rudolph follows. They head to a small wooden cabin where three old African-American men - TRUMAN, STUART, and TOM - are working on a small boat.

UNCLE SAMMY

These are the people I spend my days with.

RUDOLPH

No monkey business.

UNCLE SAMMY

I'm sorry about your parents. I thought Rose would find a solution, but she isn't up to it and neither are you.

Confused, Rudolph points at the small boat.

RUDOLPH

Is this the boat you used for your tours of the Mississippi?

UNCLE SAMMY

Yep, and we take smaller boats through the swamps for trips that are a lot more fun than the one to Natchez.

Rudolph grabs hold of Uncle Sammys' arm.

RUDOLPH

What are you afraid of? Why can't you just bury the past and look to the future for once!

Uncle Sammy is frozen in place for a moment, then shakes his head and leads Rudolph to the boat.

UNCLE SAMMY

Meet Truman, Stuart, and Tom. We're gonna take a ride, and then we'll have sautéed coconuts.

TOM

And we're gonna fish for baralousas.

RUDOLPH

What's a baralousa?

UNCLE SAMMY

Nah, he's just messin' with you. But there are some pretty big fish around out there.

Uncle Sammy puts an arm around Rudolph's shoulders.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)

Let's take it easy this afternoon.
And tonight you'll face Papa Tcho-
Tchot, but without your fucking old
Colt, understand?

RUDOLPH

Alright, I'm okay with that. But
not a word to Rose about my
parents. I don't want to stress her
out any worse.

Uncle Sammy nods and invites Rudolph to follow him. They head
for a boat equipped with fishing rods and get on board with
Truman, Stuart, and Tom.

Truman starts the engine and the boat leaves the jetty.

58. EXT. AFRIQUA JAZZ CLUB, PARKING LOT - NIGHT

58.

Rudolph, dressed in his long coat with the collar turned up,
walks with Uncle Sammy, who wears a black suit and hat. Both
look tense and wear dark glasses. They stop in front of the
club's entrance.

At the door, an African-American DOORMAN, all smiles,
indulges in a languorous dance. He wears a black evening suit
and a white top hat, heavy white makeup on his face, and a
pair of sunglasses with a broken arm. He has cotton wool
stuffed in his nostrils.

RUDOLPH

What's this?

UNCLE SAMMY

Shit, don't start! It must be the
evening's theme!

Rudolph approaches the Doorman.

RUDOLPH

We've been invited by your boss to
take part in the music contest
being held in his honor.

DOORMAN

Very well! Under what name shall I
introduce you tonight?

RUDOLPH

Huh?

DOORMAN

Let me introduce myself. Tonight
you may call me Baron Samedi,
spirit of death and resurrection.

The Doorman extends a pale white hand with red nails.

Rudolph jumps and takes a step back.

Uncle Sammy lowers his glasses and looks at the Doorman.

UNCLE SAMMY

Well then, tonight we come under
the name of... The Marx Brothers.

RUDOLPH

But were three of them!

UNCLE SAMMY

No, there were five.

DOORMAN

No matter, I accept this name.
Please come in, Marx Brothers.

Rudolph and Uncle Sammy enter the club. Glancing back,
Rudolph sees the Doorman smiling broadly, his dance languid
and sexual.

59. INT. AFRIQUA JAZZ CLUB, HALL - NIGHT

59.

Rudolph and Uncle Sammy make their way along the dark hall.
SOUL MUSIC can be heard: "Papa Was a Rollin' Stone" by The
Temptations.

When they come to the end of the hall, they stop, take off
their glasses, and gape at the scene before them.

60. INT. AFRIQUA JAZZ CLUB - CONTINUOUS

60.

A seething crowd, people dancing frenetically, all dressed up
in a variety of outfits for Halloween.

UNCLE SAMMY

Goddamn, it's been a long time
since I saw so many people at a
music contest.

RUDOLPH

God, it's worse than Black Friday
at the Chicago Hooverville shop!
Where's Rose Fée la Mambo?

UNCLE SAMMY

Don't worry, I'm sure she wouldn't miss this for the world.

Rudolph and Uncle Sammy notice an African-American man (MAN 1) coming towards them. Tall, lanky, and disguised as a voodoo character, he gestures for them to follow him.

INT. AFRIQUA JAZZ CLUB, BALCONY - NIGHT

Rudolph and Uncle Sammy are shown onto the balcony overlooking the main floor. It is dark, lit only by illuminated magical signs and sigils. Their guide withdraws.

Papa Tcho-Tchot is in the company of three pretty GIRLS, sitting at a round table with Bolos and Agent 1. On the table sits a crystal ball which radiates an intense light.

Rudolph and Uncle Sammy both remove their glasses and pocket them.

Agent 1 glances at the two men, then puts on his mask - a half-crushed pumpkin - and exits, followed by Bolos.

Bewildered, Rudolph and Uncle Sammy watch him go, then turn to Papa Tcho-Tchot. The voodoo priest smiles at Uncle Sammy and starts to gesticulate with his fingers, muttering strange words. Uncle Sammy suddenly grabs at his own throat.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT

Still not ready to do what I want... Marx Brothers?

UNCLE SAMMY

Chico, Harpo, Groucho, and those other two were the real band. We're not even a duet!

RUDOLPH

(To Uncle Sammy)
What's wrong with you?

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT

And you, the wannabe-gangster from Chicago...?

RUDOLPH

How do you know who I am?

Rudolph shakes his head, swallows hard, and walks over to Papa Tcho-Tchot.

RUDOLPH (CONT'D)

You might have fooled me once with your two-bit trickery, but not this time. I'll do whatever it takes to get back the sax.

Uncle Sammy grabs Rudolph and holds him back.

UNCLE SAMMY

Have you blown a fuse or something?

Papa Tcho-Tchot straightens up and lazily snaps his fingers. The girls around him immediately FREEZE in place, unable to move even a finger.

Uncle Sammy and Rudolph nervously huddle closer together.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT

No more secrets! Tell me everything and I just might be merciful.

UNCLE SAMMY

I'm here to help him get back the sax so I can pay off an old debt to the Broloks. They helped me get out of prison.

Papa Tcho-Tchot regards Uncle Sammy and lightly rubs the crystal ball.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT

You were careless back then, Bens. Honestly, you have a talent for putting yourself in awkward situations. If you want, I could summon spirits to protect you.

UNCLE SAMMY

No! I may have my regrets, but free will should be left to take its course.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT

Ha! You need all the luck you can get. It would make your life so much easier...

UNCLE SAMMY

A man makes his own luck. It can't be bought.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT

Think again, Bens!

63. EXT. AFRIQUA JAZZ CLUB, PARKING LOT - NIGHT

63.

The doorman bows low before Rose, dressed to the nines, her curly hair loose. She blows him a friendly kiss and enters the club, followed by four heavysset African-American girls who are all dressed in voodoo costumes, one with a hood and skull mask.

The doorman theatrically bows again as they pass. Once they're gone, he continues his slow, languorous dance.

DOORMAN

No need for names, my lovely ladies. Have a great night!

64. INT. AFRIQUA JAZZ CLUB, BALCONY - NIGHT

64.

Rudolph takes a step towards Papa Tcho-Tchot.

RUDOLPH

The sax has no value to you. Give it back to us.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT

This piece of junk may not be of much interest to me, but...

RUDOLPH

But?

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT

My offer remains the same. Uncle Sammy must enter the contest.

UNCLE SAMMY

You'll never change, will you? There's nothing but evil flowing in your veins.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT

True enough! And seeing you chained by debts makes me so very happy...

UNCLE SAMMY

Enjoy yourself while you can.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT

Be careful about what you're about to say, Bens. I might suddenly stop being so friendly.

RUDOLPH

Okay, Papa Tcho-Tchot, you win.
Except for one thing: I'm the one
who will enter the contest, not
Uncle Sammy.

Papa Tcho-Tchot bursts out laughing. Then he abruptly stops
and nods.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT

I very much doubt you'll measure
up, but since Bens refuses to play,
I'll be a good sport. On one
condition.

RUDOLPH

Another one of your Machiavellian
schemes?

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT

If you win the contest, you can
leave with the sax. But if you
lose... you can kiss your future
goodbye, 'cause you'll belong to
me. Forever!

UNCLE SAMMY

No! No!

Rudolph locks gazes with Papa Tcho-Tchot.

RUDOLPH

Okay, you've got a deal. But get
ready to lose, you phony!

Uncle Sammy grabs Rudolph by the arm and drags him out of the
room.

Papa Tcho-Tchot sits down, grinning broadly, and SNAPS his
fingers. The girls immediately start moving again, giggling
and moving in close to him.

65. INT. AFRIQUA JAZZ CLUB - NIGHT

65.

Rudolph and Uncle Sammy follow Man 1 through the crowd. He
leads them to a table then leaves them.

Rudolph takes a seat, staring at the stage where THE SAX is
on display.

RUDOLPH

Look! The sax!

Uncle Sammy sits, lights up a cigar and looks nervously at Rudolph.

UNCLE SAMMY

Christ, what's got into your tiny head? Don't you see he's using you to get to me?

RUDOLPH

I won't fall for any of his tricks.

UNCLE SAMMY

You think you're gonna take on all these seasoned musicians when you can't even play the flute!

RUDOLPH

It's just a ruse, Uncle Sammy. I've just got to buy enough time for Rose to tell me where the secret back door is. And besides, luck's on our side. It's right there on the stage!

Uncle Sammy frowns and looks. He starts laughing.

UNCLE SAMMY

You nincompoop, you really think he hasn't thought of that?

Rose comes storming over, causing them both to jump out of their seats.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

You haven't ordered anything yet.

Rose runs a hand through her hair while staring at Rudolph before turning to Uncle Sammy with a sneer. She grabs a chair and sits between them.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO (CONT'D)

Where have you been? I've been looking everywhere!

RUDOLPH

We were with Papa Tcho-Tchot.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

And?

UNCLE SAMMY

Hell, he's not giving up.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
 Sounds like Papa Tcho-Tchot. I
 wouldn't be surprised if he's got a
 trick up his sleeve!

Rose waves a WAITRESS, a Puerto-Rican girl, over to the
 table. At the same time, the four girls who came into the
 club with Rose take a table close to the stage.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO (CONT'D)
 Let's have a bite and a drink.

UNCLE SAMMY
 I'm not hungry, but hell, I could
 murder a double whiskey.

Rose turns to the waitress.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
 A bottle of whisky with three
 glasses, and... some peanuts.

ON THE STAGE

The musicians finish their song and exit the stage, leaving
 their instruments behind.

An African-American announcer, SNOOKS BRITE - thin, with
 luxuriantly curled grey hair, and dressed like he's just
 stepped out of the 70s - strides towards the microphone.
 Grinning, he salutes the room and is met with CHEERS and
 HECKLES from the audience.

67. AT THE TABLE

67.

Rose throws peanuts into her mouth and watches with
 amusement.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
 And here comes the great Snooks
 Brite.

Uncle Sammy blows smoke and stares at the scene.

UNCLE SAMMY
 Goddamn, it's about to start!

Rudolph downs the rest of his drink, grimaces, and slams the
 glass back down on the table.

RUDOLPH
 Alright, let's go!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Shush, calm down, Rudolph. Trust in me.

RUDOLPH
I'm already calm! But where's that secret door? I'm in a hurry here.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Snooks will lay down the rules and the contest will begin.

The beaming Snooks jumps up and down in excitement, grabbing the microphone. Behind him, the musicians take up their places once again.

SNOOKS
Ladies and gentlemen, tonight's main event is a competition organized by the great and powerful Papa Tcho-Tchot!

APPLAUSE rings out as Snooks and the musicians salute the balcony.

Her face drawn, Rose stands and claps without conviction.

Rudolph and Uncle Sammy remain sitting, indifferently sipping their drinks.

70. ON THE BALCONY 70.

Papa Tcho-Tchot stands up to acknowledge the applause, then takes a seat again, surrounded by his girls.

71. ON THE STAGE 71.

Snooks motions for the dancers to join him on stage. A line of girls forms up behind him, all dressed scantily and carrying maracas.

SNOOKS
The competitors will perform in the order listed on the board.

He points to a digital board which hangs on the wall.

SNOOKS (CONT'D)
 Each competitor will see the kind
 of music he must play and on which
 instrument. Ladies and gentlemen,
 let the contest... BEGIN!

Uncle Sammy gets up and squints at the board.

UNCLE SAMMY
 Shit, I'm blind without my glasses!

He sits and gives Rose a disheartened look.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)
 Rose, tell me his fucking position
 and which instrument he's got to
 play.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
 He's gonna be last. And he'll have
 to play... Maceo Parker. Saxophone.

UNCLE SAMMY
 Goddamn it! This has Papa Tcho-
 Tchot's name written all over it!

RUDOLPH
 You're not asking me to...

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
 It's gonna be okay, Rudolph.

UNCLE SAMMY
 Oh, shit! How are you gonna manage
 to...

Rose calmly stuffs a fistful of peanuts into her mouth, then
 drains her glass in one go.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
 Don't worry, Bens. From now on, no
 booze for you, Rudolph. It'll
 interfere with your metamorphosis.

RUDOLPH
 Not again...

Rose takes two large vials from her pocket and pours their
 vivid green contents into Rudolph's empty glass.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
 I've perfected the potion this
 time.

RUDOLPH
(sarcastically)
Oh, great!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Shush, now we've got to wait for
the color to clear before you can
drink it.

Rudolph gets up and pretends to head for the stage while
watching Rose.

RUDOLPH
You won't get me with your magic
tricks again, I'll force my way in.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Rudolph, wait!

He stops, then goes back to her.

RUDOLPH
Where's the secret door?

Rose slowly stands.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
I'm sorry, but there is no secret
door and you'd never be able to
grab the sax anyway. It's under a
powerful spell.

RUDOLPH
What?

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Listen, Papa Tcho-Tchot is
dangerous and I can help you beat
him, but you've got to trust me.

She comes close to him, and suddenly their hair touches and
sparks fly.

RUDOLPH
So what's the plan?

Rose points to Rudolph's glass.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
For just a moment, you'll become a
virtuoso musician.

RUDOLPH
Hey, I don't know...

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
There won't be any problems, trust
me.

RUDOLPH
I hate this and you know it.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Trust me. Please.

RUDOLPH
Okay, okay.

73. ON THE STAGE

73.

Microphone in hand, Snooks walks nervously to center-stage.

SNOOKS
And now, here's our first
contestant. Coming from the Old
Quarter, she'll be singing for us
in the style of Bessie Smith, queen
of the blues!

To CHEERS from the crowd, the FIRST CONTESTANT steps on the
stage and takes the microphone. The music starts.

74. AT THE TABLE

74.

Rudolph nervously raps his knuckles on the table. Uncle Sammy
is lost in the music.

RUDOLPH
I better get on stage soon, I can't
take this waiting. Tell me about
this Maceo Parker.

UNCLE SAMMY
Maceo Parker played the alto
saxophone. It's a virtuoso's
instrument. A dominant sound, with
a distinctive vibrato.

RUDOLPH
Nothing but noise to me.

Uncle Sammy and Rose both look at him in annoyance.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
No! Shush, Rudolph. Forget your
prejudices, try to get into the
music.

UNCLE SAMMY

You schmuck! For your information,
jazz music was born out of slavery.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

Every kind of music started with
jazz, it lives inside of us. It
lives in our tears and in our
laughter, it makes us who we are.

RUDOLPH

I... I'm sorry.

Rudolph glances at his glass. The liquid is clear.

RUDOLPH (CONT'D)

The potion has cleared!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

Then everything is going as
planned.

75. ON THE STAGE

75.

The first contestant comes to the end of her song and takes
a bow. Snooks runs to the microphone and congratulates her.

SNOOKS

And now! We choose our winners
democratically here, so if you want
our first contestant to win, put
yours hands together!

To CHEERS from the audience, the first contestant leaves the
stage. Another steps up and SOUL MUSIC starts up.

76. AT THE TABLE

76.

Rudolph peers closely at his glass and its contents. Rose
delicately picks it up and offers it to him. Hesitantly, he
takes it - then drinks it straight up.

Uncle Sammy watches anxiously.

UNCLE SAMMY

You feel anything?

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

Shush! Be patient, Bens. Rudolph,
you should feel tingling in your
hands first of all.

UNCLE SAMMY

Goddamn, are you really gonna turn him into a musician?

Suddenly, Rudolph's face begins to twitch. Uncle Sammy recoils as his fingers start to tremble too.

Rose leans in close, frowning.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

Strange!

Rudolph's entire body starts to spasm. Suddenly, he collapses face first onto the table, limp.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO (CONT'D)

Rudolph! Say something, please!

UNCLE SAMMY

Christ on a crutch! What's got into him?

Rudolph scratches at his scalp and abruptly straightens up - his face puny, naïve, and bewildered, with a long chin.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)

Oh, jeez, it's Stan Laurel again!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

This isn't right. Why is this happening?

UNCLE SAMMY

Oh, we're screwed.

Rudolph gets up, takes his coat off, snaps his suspenders, and looks himself up and down.

Uncle Sammy downs the remainder of his drink and immediately chokes on it.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)

Jesus, this is shit!

Noticing that a nearby audience member is wearing a bowler hat, Rudolph steps over and removes it from the man's head, putting it on with a beaming grin.

The man blinks in surprise, leaping to his feet and trying to take it back.

Uncle Sammy gets up and steps in between them.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)
Cool it, hoss.

Rudolph pinches the man's nose and sticks his tongue out at him.

Rose and Uncle Sammy grab Rudolph before he can do anything else and surreptitiously guide him towards the bathroom.

77. ON THE BALCONY

77.

Papa Tcho-Tchot is in ecstasy as he moves to the music. Then suddenly he stops, looking around himself with a frown. His hair starts to glow.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
My dearest Rose, why am I not
surprised you've got involved in
all this...

He waves his hands over the crystal ball and it reacts instantly. Taking a deep breath and closing his eyes, he places his hands against its surface.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT (CONT'D)
Better safe than sorry.

78. INT. AFRIQUA JAZZ CLUB, BATHROOM - NIGHT

78.

Uncle Sammy and Rose bundle Rudolph into the bathroom.

UNCLE SAMMY
Holy shit, we're screwed! How long
is this going to last?

Rose looks at Rudolph. He's pacing back and forth, taking off his bowler hat to scratch at his head.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
About... An hour.

Uncle Sammys' eyes dart around the bathroom, taking in the sinks and mirrors opposite the four toilet doors.

UNCLE SAMMY
Damn, an hour?

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
It had to last until he was going
up on stage, okay?

79. AFRIQUA JAZZ CLUB, STAGE - NIGHT

79.

An excited Snooks introduces the next contestant, who walks quickly to the microphone and breaks out into a rhythm and blues song to cheers from the crowd.

80. AFRIQUA JAZZ CLUB, BATHROOM - NIGHT

80.

Uncle Sammy and Rose anxiously watch Rudolph, who suddenly takes off his hat and pinches Uncle Sammy on the nose.

UNCLE SAMMY

He's supposed to be a musician!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

Oh, shush! He must have really liked Stan Laurel when he was a kid.

Someone KNOCKS HEAVILY on the bathroom door.

Uncle Sammy and Rose glance at one another, then to the door.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO AND UNCLE SAMMY

OCCUPIED!

The door opens to reveal Lupin, Bonapart, and Beaudelaire, all grinning viciously. They march in and SLAM the door behind them.

Rudolph makes faces while wandering around the room.

UNCLE SAMMY

Well, well, if it ain't the three stooges.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

You know them ?

UNCLE SAMMY

Shit. They're the ones with the funny accents who made a mess of my kitchen!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

Who do they work for?

UNCLE SAMMY

Some fucking gang from Chicago.

The three Frenchmen advance on Uncle Sammy and Rose.

LUPIN

Not anymore, actually. Not anymore.

BONAPART

That's right. Papa Tcho-Tchot is a lot more generous than our old employers. Not to mention powerful.

BEAUDELAIRE

And the work's a lot more fun.

UNCLE SAMMY

Crap, this ain't good.

LUPIN

Uncle Sammy, Rose Fée La Mambo, you're in luck. Our orders are to touch no-one but Rudolph... unless you get in our way.

Bonapart frowns at Rudolph.

BONAPART

What's up with the wannabee gangster?

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

The wannabee gangster?

Rudolph removes his hat to scratch his head again, then walks past Lupin and heads for one of the sinks.

LUPIN

What's up with his face, huh?
What's up with his face?

Rudolph turns the faucet on all the way. Lupin, Bonapart and Beaudelaire warily take a step closer to him.

Then suddenly he sticks his hand under the jet of water and it bounces up into the Frenchmen's faces, forcing them to back off.

Rudolph turns and looks at them - and suddenly starts crying.

OLIVER HARDY (O.S.)

STAN! STAN LAUREL!

Rudolph shakes his head and looks into the mirror. There he sees the chubby face of OLIVER HARDY looking back at him.

RUDOLPH

My God, Oliver? I'm so glad to see you!

OLIVER HARDY

Here! Another nice mess you've gotten us into.

Uncle Sammy and Rose approach and stand behind Rudolph, looking into the mirror.

UNCLE SAMMY

Goddamn, it's Oliver Hardy!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

Who?

UNCLE SAMMY

Laurel's partner. They were a comedy duo back in the thirties.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

Shit, what went wrong with the potion?

Lupin, Bonapart, and Beaudelaire, all dripping water, look on in disbelief.

Then Bonapart marches forward, ready to strike.

OLIVER HARDY

Stan, look out!

Rudolph ducks just in time to dodge the punch. Then Oliver Hardy suddenly reaches through the mirror, GRABS Bonapart's fist, and DRAGS him forward, SLAMMING his head into the mirror.

Bonapart goes down and lies still.

Rudolph looks at Lupin and Beaudelaire, innocently raising his hands.

Beaudelaire advances angrily, but Rudolph again hits him with a spray of water. While the Frenchman is blinded, Rudolph SHOVES him towards the mirror.

Oliver Hardy reaches through the glass, SLAPS Beaudelaire on both ears, and then SLAMS a fist down on the top of his head, knocking him out.

Lupin shakes his head in disbelief and cautiously approaches the mirror.

LUPIN

What the hell was that in the mirror? What the hell was that?

Rudolph casually picks up his bowler hat and joins Uncle Sammy and Rose.

81. AFRIQUA JAZZ CLUB, STAGE - NIGHT

81.

Snooks is at the microphone again.

ANNOUNCER

The contest is nearly over, but there's still some great music coming up. Ladies and gentlemen, our next contestant comes all the way from Brooklyn and will blow you away! He's going to sing...

82. INT. AFRIQUA JAZZ CLUB, BATHROOM - NIGHT

82.

Lupin gazes into the mirror. Reaching out, he lays his hands flat against the glass.

LUPIN

Is there someone in there? Show yourself!

Rudolph, Uncle Sammy, and Rose step forward and surround him. Lupin turns towards them.

LUPIN (CONT'D)

Hey! Don't move, any of you! Don't move!

Suddenly, a HUMMING sound comes from the mirror.

Lupin spins towards it, hands raised and ready to fight, but the sound moves on to the mirror above the next sink.

LUPIN (CONT'D)

You want to play, huh? Okay.

Lupin advances on the next mirror, but it moves on again, and again. He wanders back and forth, trying to locate the source.

Sweating, Lupin comes to a stop in front of one of the mirrors and gazes into it, searching.

LUPIN (CONT'D)

Wait, where's my reflection?
Where's my reflection!?

Suddenly, Oliver LEAPS out through the glass and SLAPS Lupin across the face.

Reeling, Lupin stumbles away and comes face to face with Rudolph, who immediately PUNCHES him in the face and lays him out cold.

OLIVER HARDY
Nice one, Stan!

Rudolph winces and shakes out his fist.

RUDOLPH
Thanks, Oliver.

Uncle Sammy and Rose look at Lupin's body, then smile at one another.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Now nothing can stop us entering
the contest!

UNCLE SAMMY
Ha! With Stan Laurel, you mean?

Rudolph places his hand on the mirror; on the other side of the glass, Oliver Hardy does the same, palm to palm. Rudolph starts to cry.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
There might be a solution.

UNCLE SAMMY
Damn it, Rose...!

Rose steps forward and puts her hands on Rudolph's shoulders. Closing her eyes, she starts to whisper strange words - and all of a sudden, her hand stands up on end.

Uncle Sammy takes a step back.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)
Holy shit!

Oliver Hardy violently PULLS on Stan Laurel's arms, dragging him out of Rudolph and through the glass.

Dazed, Rose opens her eyes, her hair cascading back down around her shoulders.

RUDOLPH
What... What happened?

Uncle Sammy and Rose peers into the mirror. On the other side of the glass, Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy are shaking hands and congratulating one another. Rudolph staggers but stays on his feet.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
It's over!

RUDOLPH
I hope I didn't do anything bad.

UNCLE SAMMY
Holy crap, nothing that would hurt
our chances, at least.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Shush, Bens, it's not over yet.

UNCLE SAMMY
You got any more of that potion?

Rose nods. She heads for the door, dragging Rudolph behind her. Uncle Sammy traipses behind.

Beaming, Laurel and Hardy salute them heartily and vanish.

83. INT. AFRIQUA JAZZ CLUB - NIGHT

83.

Rudolph, Uncle Sammy, and Rose discreetly return to their table. Uncle Sammy tops up his and Rose's glasses with whiskey and they both drink up.

Rudolph also tops up and raises his glass to his mouth.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
NO!

RUDOLPH
What?

UNCLE SAMMY
Shit, after everything he's just
been through, I think he deserves a
drink!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Shush! He mustn't drink before
taking the potion.

RUDOLPH
Why don't you tell me what just
happened to me? I remember taking
the potion, and then nothing.

UNCLE SAMMY
Goddamn, Rudolph, tell us: were
Laurel and Hardy your babysitters
when you were a kid?

RUDOLPH
What the hell are you talking
about?

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Just answer the question, Rudolph.

RUDOLPH
Well, my father used to watch their
movies a lot.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Maybe that explains it. Maybe the
films projected onto you,
especially Stan Laurel.

RUDOLPH
Wait, are you saying I was acting
like Stan Laurel?

UNCLE SAMMY
Hell, it was more than that... You
WERE Stan Laurel!

84. ON THE STAGE

84.

Another smiling contestant salutes the audience and exits the
stage. Snooks takes up the microphone.

SNOOKS
And now our penultimate contestant,
well known to us here at the
Afriqua Jazz Club!

85. AT THE TABLE

85.

Uncle Sammy slams his glass down on the table.

UNCLE SAMMY
Shit! It's already the penultimate
contestant!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Magic has no hold over time,
unfortunately.

86. ON THE STAGE

86.

Snooks is bouncing about with excitement.

SNOOKS

Ladies and gentlemen, I give to you
James Ronnie, performing James
Brown's "The Payback".

He motions to JAMES RONNIE - an African-American man in his
70s, plump and with a bush moustache - to join him on stage.

SNOOKS (CONT'D)

James Ronnie, ladies and gentlemen!
James Ronnie!

James Ronnie steps up to the microphone. The dancers stand
ready behind him. The music starts.

James Ronnie starts dancing wildly, doing the splits, and
then HOWLS out the first words of the song.

87. AT THE TABLE

87.

Uncle Sammy and Rose gape at his performance.

UNCLE SAMMY

Goddamn, it's like James Brown in
the flesh!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

He also sings gospel at church.

UNCLE SAMMY

Gospel my ass, it's like he's on
amphetamines or something!

RUDOLPH

This is Papa Tcho-Tchot's doing, it
must be.

Uncle Sammy and Rose are lost in the music, letting loose as
it washes over them.

88. ON THE BALCONY

88.

Papa Tcho-Tchot claps along in time to the song, his girls
dancing all around him.

89. AT THE TABLE

89.

Rudolph picks up his glass, glances around, and downs the
contents in one go.

Uncle Sammy and Rose dance to the music, just two figures in the stamping, cheering crowd. The girls who came in with Rose twerk to the rhythm.

Rose suddenly catches a glance of Rudolph. Regaining her senses, she blinks and sits down next to him.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
No! Rudolph, you mustn't!

Rudolph tries to drink again but Rose stops him.

RUDOLPH
How the hell am I supposed to beat this guy?

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
There's still hope. I'll give you another potion.

RUDOLPH
Forget it. No more Stan Laurel, thanks! I'll just have to get up on stage and... apologize.

Rose gently lets go of his arm. He drinks, slams his glass down on the table, and stands.

RUDOLPH (CONT'D)
I'm gonna have to be quick if I want to grab the sax and run. My parents' lives count on it.

90. ON THE STAGE

90.

Exhausted, James Ronnie comes to the end of his song and falls to his knees. Then he stumbles to his feet and leaves the stage to RAPTUROUS APPLAUSE.

91. AT THE TABLE

91.

Rudolph makes his way towards the stage. On the way, he accidentally bumps into one of the girls who came in with Rose, knocking her into her friends and sending them all tumbling to the ground.

He continues on his way and climbs onto the stage.

ON THE STAGE

James Ronnie gives Rudolph a friendly pat on the shoulder as he leaves. Snooks invites Rudolph to join him.

SNOOKS

Ladies and gentlemen, our final contest comes all the way from Chicago. He'll be performing the incomparable Maceo Parker's famous hit: "1970's Old School Funk"!

Rudolph edges towards the sax, only to awkwardly stop.

Smirking, Snooks pushes him towards the microphone.

Rudolph stands frozen. Suddenly, someone throws a hat to him out of the crowd. He catches it and looks at it.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 1 (O.S.)

Have fun, man!

Rudolph puts the hat on and smooths down the brim, then energetically rubs his nose. Suddenly, boils appear on his forehead and lips, then disappear just as suddenly.

One of the dancers approaches and hands him a saxophone.

Rudolph takes the instrument and puts the strap over his head. The music starts to flow, the first notes fly - and suddenly his belly bulges out and his fingers start to play. His swollen lips close on the mouthpiece and he BLOWS.

93. AT THE TABLE

93.

Rose watches with a smile, a tear trickling down her cheek.

Uncle Sammy clenches a fist in celebration. He nods in time to the song and gives Rose a thumbs up.

UNCLE SAMMY

Holy fuck. Rose, you're the best!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

Why is the potion still working?

Rose claps her hands and starts to move to the beat.

94. ON THE STAGE

94.

Rudolph dances furiously on the stage. Parts of his body sporadically swell up and back down.

95. ON THE BALCONY 95.

Papa Tcho-Tchot gets up and walks away from the girls. His eyes turn red and his hair begins to glow.

96. ON THE STAGE 96.

Rudolph is drenched in sweat as his fingers move like lightning on the saxophone. As he reaches the final note, he undoes the strap, lets the instrument drop, and leaps off the edge of the stage.

The audience catches him and Rudolph crowd surfs through the audience for a few moments before falling to the ground. A moment later, he gets up, looking dizzy, and casually heads back to the table.

He takes a seat as the crowd APPLAUDS.

98. ON THE STAGE 98.

Snooks takes up the microphone, shaking his head in disbelief.

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentlemen, what an incredible end to the contest... This evening has been full of surprises. Now, let's check the applause-o-meter to see who will be our champion!

For a moment, the board remains blank. And then, to a roar from the audience, two names appear: Rudolph Calagland and Maceo Parker.

Snooks leaps up and down the spot, CLAPPING wildly.

AT THE TABLE

Rudolph sits, stunned, looking around at the rest of the audience. He catches sight of Truman, Stuart, and Tom clapping him. Uncle Sammy and Rose beam at him.

UNCLE SAMMY

Christ, you did it!

Crying, Uncle Sammy looks up.

UNCLE SAMMY (CONT'D)
I can finally repay my debts to the
Broloks!

RUDOLPH
But...!

UNCLE SAMMY
Holy cow, the sax is ours! You've
got heart, kid!

ROSE LA FÉE MAMBO
You don't remember anything, do
you, Rudolph?

RUDOLPH
Nothing. Another bout of amnesia!

Suddenly, the entire crowd FREEZES.

100. ON THE STAGE

100.

Papa Tcho-Tchot, his eyes still red, advances to the
microphone. In his hands: the saxophone.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
Will the winner approach and claim
his prize?

101. AT THE TABLE

101.

Rudolph, Uncle Sammy, and Rose gaze at the frozen crowd. Then
they turn and approach the stage.

RUDOLPH
What do you intend to do?

102. ON THE STAGE

102.

Rudolph walks towards Papa Tcho-Tchot. He hesitates for a
moment, then reaches out and takes the sax with a smile.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
To be or not to be, that is the
question.

RUDOLPH
What?

Papa Tcho-Tchot sees Rose and frowns.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
Well played, my dear, but it's not
really fair to use magic...

UNCLE SAMMY
Ha, and I guess you didn't help out
James Ronnie the same way?

Papa Tcho-Tchot scoffs and wags a finger at Uncle Sammy.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
I admit I cheated too, but what a
performance, huh?

UNCLE SAMMY
Yeah, well you met your match this
time!

Papa Tcho-Tchot watches jealously as Rudolph turns and gives
the saxophone to Uncle Sammy. His hair begins to glow as he
turns to look at Rose.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
I can't help but wonder how you
were able to bewitch a man like
that, as clumsy and stupid as you
are...

Rose winces and writhes in pain.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Ah! Please, stop!

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
Show me how you did it, or I'll
tear you apart!

Rudolph steps between Papa Tcho-Tchot and Rose.

RUDOLPH
Leave her alone!

UNCLE SAMMY
This wasn't what we agreed, Tcho-
Tchot!

Rose shakes her head, breathing hard as she tries to recover.
Rudolph stands tall, coldly gazing at Papa Tcho-Tchot.

RUDOLPH
This time, fight me without magic.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
No! He's too strong!

RUDOLPH
I have to beat him once and for
all.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
Alright, no magic.

Rudolph advances on Papa Tcho-Tchot and clumsily SWINGS at him. The two trade BLOWS, the older man seeming to come off best at first. But then, under the amazed gazes of Rose and Uncle Sammy, Rudolph starts to gain the upper hand.

Papa Tcho-Tchot is on the ropes. Yet then his eyes turn red, and his hair and sigils start to glow. He spreads his arms wide and mutters under his breath.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
No!

UNCLE SAMMY
You cheater!

Papa Tcho-Tchot waves his arms, his eyes growing a deeper and deeper red. Rudolph falls to the ground, his body quivering.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG AND SIDNEY BECHET
(O.S.)
Stop, sorcerer! Pick on someone
your own size!

Papa Tcho-Tchot pauses and glances around.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
Who's there?

In the crowd, the girl wearing the hood and death mask starts to move. She slips through the audience, heading for the stage.

Sitting on the stage, Rudolph shakes his head and watches the girl approach. She stops next to Rose.

Then suddenly, the girl TEARS OFF her dress, unveiling SIDNEY BECHET and LOUIS ARMSTRONG awkwardly packed together. They straighten up.

UNCLE SAMMY
You were supposed to stay at the
house!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
It was... you?

LOUIS ARMSTRONG
We figured he could do with some help.

SIDNEY BECHET
Being in Rudolph's body was a pain, but it sure was great to play again.

Rudolph gingerly prods his body.

RUDOLPH
I feel violated.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
Armstrong and Bechet!

LOUIS ARMSTRONG
Yep, that's us.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
Ha, you can't hurt me.

SIDNEY BECHET
I wouldn't be so sure about that, sorcerer...

Louis Armstrong looks at Rudolph, Uncle Sammy, and Rose, and vigorously rubs his nose.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG
Looks like we're gonna be parting ways pretty soon.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
You're leaving?

SIDNEY BECHET
There's enough energy here to send us home before the last day of Samhain.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG
As for you, beautiful, I suggest you think carefully before you start meddling with this kind of magic again.

SIDNEY BECHET
Yeah, there's some real bad riff-raff where we come from.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG
 And you, Rudolph, don't forget that
 freedom of choice isn't always what
 you think.

Louis Armstrong and Sidney Bechet turn to Papa Tcho-Tchot and
 start moving towards him.

RUDOLPH
 Stop!

The two ghosts stop in their tracks and turn to him.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG
 What's the problem, Rudolph?

SIDNEY BECHET
 What, did we forget something?

RUDOLPH
 I have a small favor to ask you...
 although it means a big sacrifice
 for me.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
 Rudolph, no! Don't do it, it's too
 much!

RUDOLPH
 There's no other way. I have to
 beat him at his own game. I just
 want you to know, before I do
 this... I love you!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
 I love you too!

UNCLE SAMMY
 Go get him, kid!

Rudolph stands and faces up to Papa Tcho-Tchot.

RUDOLPH
 If you could see me now,
 Antoinette...

Louis Armstrong and Sidney Bechet leap into Rudolph, who
 suddenly transforms into a muscular, threatening boxer.

PAPA TCHO-TCHOT
 NO! NOT MIKE TYSON!

Rudolph charges at Papa Tcho-Tchot and HAMMERS him with a
 MASSIVE PUNCH.

The sorcerer tries to raise his arms to cast a spell, but under the blows raining down on him, they begin to SPLIT apart, light SHINING out of the tears.

Louis Armstrong and Sidney Bechet jump back out of Rudolph's body. Pulling on Papa Tcho-Tchot's arms, they then LEAP into the light coming out of him. The glow immediately dies.

Papa Tcho-Tchot stares down at his hands. The magic sigils that adorned his skin have vanished and his hair has returned to normal.

The audience returns to life, showering the stage with APPLAUSE.

Uncle Sammy hugs Rudolph warmly.

UNCLE SAMMY

Thanks to you, I have a new life
ahead of me!

Rudolph looks happily at Rose, then turns to the saxophone.

RUDOLPH

Guess I'd better give the Broloks a
call.

105. INT. BROLOKS GANG HEAD OFFICE - DAY

105.

Salvatore, John, and Frank sit at the table, counting out wads of banknotes, when there's a KNOCK at the door.

SALVATORE

Frank, go see who it is.

Frank grudgingly drops the money he's holding and heads for the door. He opens it and is handed a long crate by the COURIER waiting on the other side.

FRANK

What the...

Salvatore and John put down their money. Frank signs the slip, closes the door, and returns to the table. He puts down the crate and studies it, noticing a note pinned to the top.

SUPERIMPOSE: "End of the week, Broloks Gang Head Office"

Salvatore takes the note and opens it. A smile breaks out on his face as he reads it.

SALVATORE

Looks like Rudolph doesn't want to follow in his old man's footsteps any more!

FRANK

That's weird, Marcel was his idol.

JOHN

Did he complete the mission? Or do I need to go make his parents disappear?

Salvatore cracks open the crate and grins.

SALVATORE

Looks like the contract is complete. One of you give me a light!

John takes a lighter out of his pocket and hands it over. Salvatore clicks it on and holds the flame against the body of the saxophone.

As it heats up, a chemical formula starts to appear, carved into the metal.

SALVATORE (CONT'D)

How times change!

106. INT. BROLOKS APARTMENT - HALL - DAY

106.

Kovak stands with his ear to the door, listening. Then he moves away, takes out his phone, and dials.

KOVAK

Toni, da... The Frenchmen failed.

TONI (O.S.)

What? Damn it, this is not acceptable, you hear me?

107. INT. AFRIQUA JAZZ CLUB - DAY

107.

Papa Tcho-Tchot vigorously rubs the crystal ball. Nothing happens.

Lupin, Bonapart, and Beaudelaire sit before him, looking unconvinced.

LUPIN

What the hell are we gonna do? This
shit doesn't work at all!

SUPERIMPOSE: "Two Days Later"

108. INT. UNCLE SAMMY HOUSE, HALL - DAY

108.

Uncle Sammy, wearing a Green Wave t-shirt and holding Jo-Black on a leash, stops near the front door. He gazes at a photo of him and his wife Bonnie which hangs on the wall. Sighing happily, he grabs a saxophone case and heads out.

He calls back over his shoulder as he leaves:

UNCLE SAMMY

Don't do anything stupid while I'm
out. And don't forget we're going
fishing later, Rudolph!

109. INT. UNCLE SAMMY HOUSE, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

109.

A dishevelled Rudolph and Rose sit opposite one another, gazing lovingly into one another's eyes. The radio plays JAZZ softly in the background. They lean in close and sparks fly where their hair touches.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

You shouldn't have hidden that you
wanted to be a gangster from me.
But your parents...

RUDOLPH

I know I'm leaving them behind, but
I'm sure they'll accept my
decision.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

So now we'll move into my place and
work together in my shop.

RUDOLPH

You heard what Armstrong and Bechet
said about your voodoo magic!

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO

I promise. And you, my love, no
regrets?

Rudolph opens his mouth to speak, then notices a tiny spider crawling on his shoulder. He gently scoops it up and puts it on the floor.

RUDOLPH
Damn creepy crawler.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
What?

RUDOLPH
I swear to take responsibility for
my life. Every single day.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
I have a feeling our lives are
going to be something special.

RUDOLPH
That's because being with you is
special.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
You're so sweet. Now, before I
forget, throw away that old Colt.

RUDOLPH
But it belonged to my grandpa! And
besides, it doesn't even work.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Throw it away, Rudolph.

RUDOLPH
Well, alright. For you.

ROSE FÉE LA MAMBO
Shush... Everything will be
perfect, my love. I promise.

She leans in and kisses him. From the radio comes "What a
Wonderful World" by Louis Armstrong:

"I see trees of green, red roses too. I see them bloom, for
me and you. And I think to myself... What a wonderful world."

Their hair entwines in a shower of sparks as they kiss, and
the room trembles with energy.

FADE TO BLACK.

FIN