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THE SOPRANOS: PILOT (FIRST 10 PAGES) - DAVID CHASE

This is an edited version of the final shooting script to match the final cut of the episode. This means includes camera shots and ad-libs that would not have appeared in early drafts of the script.

INT. DR. MELFI'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

ANTHONY SOPRANO, 40, sits and waits. Uneasily. Staring confusedly at a vaguely erotic Klimt reproduction. Inner door opens. DR. JENNIFER MELFI (attractive, 35) appears.

DR. MELFI
Mr. Soprano?

TONY SOPRANO
Yeah.

INT. DR. MELFI'S OFFICE DAY

Melfi gestures Tony to a choice of seating.

DR. MELFI
Have a seat.

She seats herself in a facing armchair. She looks at him with a polite, expectant gaze. He stares back, waiting. There is utter silence. Nothing happens. Such is psychotherapy. Finally -

DR. MELFI (CONT'D)
My understanding from Dr. Cusamano, your family physician, is that you collapsed, possibly a panic attack. You were unable to breathe.

TONY SOPRANO
They said it was a panic attack because of all the blood work and the neurological work came back negative. And they sent me here.

DR. MELFI
You don't agree that you had a panic attack?

He Laughs - too loud.

DR. MELFI (CONT'D)
How are you feeling now?

TONY SOPRANO
Good. Fine. Back at work.

DR. MELFI

What line of work are you in?

TONY SOPRANO

Waste management consultant.
Look, it's impossible for me to
talk to a psychiatrist.

DR. MELFI

Any thoughts at all on why you
blacked out?

Tony shrugs. Fidgets. Then -

TONY SOPRANO

I don't know. Stress maybe.

DR. MELFI

About what?

TONY SOPRANO

I don't know...

EXT. SOPRANO HOUSE - DAWN

Split-level. New Jersey. The only thing distinguishing it from its neighbors is high security fencing and mercury vapor lamps that make the lawn bright enough for the night basketball.

INT. SOPRANO - BEDROOM - DAWN

Tony's EYE slams open from sleep. He stares up at the ceiling.

TONY SOPRANO (V.O.)

The morning on the day I got sick, I've been thinking. It's good to be in something from the ground floor. I came too late for that. I know. But lately I'm getting the feeling that I came in at the end. The best is over.

EXT. SOPRANO HOUSE - DAY

Bathrobed Tony reads his morning paper in the gated driveway: CLINTON WARNS MEDICARE COULD BE BANKRUPT BY 2000. Tony goes to the sports, ambles down the driveway.

DR. MELFI (V.O.)

Many Americans I think feel that way.

TONY SOPRANO (V.O.)
 I think about my father. He never reached the heights like me. But in a lot of ways he had it better. He had his people. They had their standards, they had pride. Today, what do we got?

DR. MELFI (V.O.)
 Did you have these feelings of loss more acutely in the hours before you collapsed?

EXT. SOPRANO HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

An expanse of lawn, then a pool with Tropitone furniture. Tony gathers speed, excited. But reaching the pool he looks around worried. The water is like glass. The morning is too still.

TONY SOPRANO (V.O.)
 I dunno. A couple months before, two wild ducks landed in my pool. It was amazing. They're from Canada or someplace. It was mating season. They had some ducklings.

DUCK FAMILY

Wild mallards, mother and babies, come waddling from the bushes, quacking. Tony beams, takes feed from a bin and ducks down on both knees.

INT. SOPRANO HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

CARMELA SOPRANO (mid 30's), in bathrobe makes breakfast for her kids. She is a dark-eyed, dark-haired, pretty woman with blonde hi-lites and nails are a priority. At the table are MEADOW SOPRANO, 15, and her friend HUNTER SCANGARELO.

TONY SOPRANO (V.O.)
 My daughter's friend was there to drive my daughter, meadow, to school.

HUNTER
 (staring out the window)
 Meadow, your father with those ducks.

MEADOW
 I know the whole yard smells like duck poo. It's like embarrassing.

CARMELLA

Girls, you got to have more than just cranberry juice for breakfast, alright? You need brain food for school.

ANTHONY JR. Enters. He's thirteen. He sits, starts spooning cereal in. Carmela smooches him.

CARMELA

Happy birthday, handsome. 13.

MEADOW

He doesn't act it.

AJ

Shut up.

HUNTER

The male and female duck just made a home in your pool and did it.

MEADOW

Ew, get out of here! So gross.

CARMELLA

Girls... You want some of last night's sfogliatell?

MEADOW

Get out of here with that fat.

CARMELLA

One bite.

HUNTER

How do you stay so skinny, Mrs. Soprano?

Carmela isn't listening. She is staring out somberly.

CARMELA

Him, with those ducks.

EXT. SOPRANO HOUSE - BACKYARD - POOL - DAY

Tony has waded into the pool to adjust a plywood launching ramp he has constructed for the ducks. His robe on the water; he doesn't care. He talks to the ducks.

TONY SOPRANO

Listen, if you don't like that ramp I'll build you another one. Maybe it's the wood.

The ducklings suddenly furiously flap their wings in protoflight, following their mother's lead.

TONY SOPRANO (CONT'D)
hey, hey, kids, come here. Come here, they're trying to fly. Come here, the babies, they're trying to fly. Look, they're trying to fly.

The teenagers trudge dutifully to the door.

MEADOW
National geographic, dad.

HUNTER
Yeah, super.

AJ
You showed us yesterday. It was great.

They go back inside.

INT. DR. MELFI'S OFFICE DAY

TONY SOPRANO
My wife feels this friend is a bad influence.

INT. SOPRANO HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

HUNTER
It's so cool you're gonna be able to come to aspen with my family at Christmas. Last year at aspen I saw skeet Ulrich. As close as from where you're sitting.

MEADOW
Oh, my god.

CARMELA
Miss meadow, we made a deal. You keep your school grades up and you keep your curfew between now and Christmas, then you get to go.

MEADOW
I know that.

Tony enters, robe gone, his lower torso wrapped in a beach towel.

TONY SOPRANO
Morning, ladies.

HUNTER
Hey, Mr. Soprano.

MEADOW
We're late, dad.

He claps Anthony Jr. on the back.

TONY SOPRANO
Hey, happy birthday.

AJ
Thanks, dad.

He runs his hand on Carmela's butt, but she seems not to notice. Tony reaches for The Audubon Society "Master Guide to Birding" and getting engrossed.

CARMELA
You're gonna be home tonight for Anthony junior's birthday party, right? Bird man, hello?

TONY SOPRANO
Yeah, yeah. I'll get home early from work.

CARMELA
I'm not talking about work.

INT. DR. MELFI'S OFFICE - DAY

Tony in the present - a strained silence. She stares.

TONY SOPRANO
This isn't gonna work. I can't talk about my personal life.

DR. MELFI
Finish telling me about the day you collapsed.

INT. CHRISTOPHER'S CAR - DAY

Back to the past. Brand new Lexus 400.

TONY SOPRANO (V.O.)
I drove to work with my nephew, Christopher. He's learning the business.

CHRISTOPHER MOLTISANTI (25) is in cool-ass mode. Good looking - almost pretty - wears an ear ring, a jersey Shark's baseball cap. Tony rides passenger, engrossed in his Audubon book.

Rust-belt New Jersey floats by: the Meadowlands - mile after mile of marsh, iron bridges, and raw honking trucking. The skyline of Manhattan beckons from the distance.

TONY SOPRANO (V.O.) (CONT'D)
He's an example of what I was talking about before.

TONY SOPRANO (CONT'D)
Did you call, uh... What's his name down at Triboro Towers about the hauling contract?

CHRISTOPHER
I got home too late last night. I didn't want to wake the man up.

TONY SOPRANO
Did you get up early this morning and call? He's always in his office by six.

CHRISTOPHER
I was nauseous this morning. My mother told me I shouldn't even come in today.

TONY SOPRANO (V.O.)
Bear in mind this is a kid who just bought himself a \$60,000 Lexus.

They are now in the business district. Christopher's head whips around.

EXT. STREET - BUSINESS DISTRICT - US/HMO - DAY

CHRISTOPHER
It's that guy? Mahaffey.

TONY SOPRANO
Get out.

CHRISTOPHER
Right there next to the boo-boo in pink.

TONY SOPRANO
Back up. My friend, Mahaffey, pullin' his taffy. Hello.

ON MAHAFFEY

A forty-four year old executive, walking with a YOUNG WOMAN, a secretary. They carry lattes and bagels.

The Lexus pulls up.

INT. DR. MELFI'S OFFICE - DAY

TONY SOPRANO

We saw this guy and there was this issue of an outstanding loan.

DR. MELFI

Can I stop you for a second? I don't know where this story is going. There are a few ethical ground rules we should quickly get of the way. What you tell me here falls under doctor-patient confidentiality. Except if I was-- if I was to hear, let's say a murder was to take place. Not that I'm saying it would, but if... If a patient comes to me and tells me a story where someone's going to get hurt, I'm supposed to go to the authorities. Technically.

He waits. She smiles nervously.

DR. MELFI (CONT'D)

You said you were in waste management.

TONY SOPRANO

Environment.

DR. MELFI

Dr. Cusamano, besides being your family physician is also your next door neighbor. See what I'm saying? I don't know what happened with this fellow. I'm just saying--

TONY SOPRANO

Nothing. We had coffee.

EXT. STREET - BUSINESS DISTRICT - US/HMO - DAY

MAHAFFEY

help!

When Mahaffey sees Tony, his latte splatters on the sidewalk as he takes off running! Christopher takes after him, but is spun to the ground as Mahaffey wiggles free.

Tony gets behind the Lexus wheel, and takes pursuit.

MAHAFFEY (CONT'D)

Security.

Tony chases Mahaffey down before finally and deliberately clipping Mahaffey sending him over the bonnet of the car and onto the ground.

Tony calmly gets out the car.

TONY SOPRANO

You alright?

MAHAFFEY

My leg is broken. The bone's coming through.

TONY SOPRANO

Let me see.

Tony starts punches him in the leg, before start on the face.

TONY SOPRANO (CONT'D)

(punching)

I'll give you a fucking bone, you prick! Where's my fucking money?

INT. DR. MELFI'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. MELFI

So you had coffee?

TONY SOPRANO

Right.

EXT. BUSINESS DISTRICT - US/HMO - DAY

People watch in horror.

TONY SOPRANO

You son-of-a-bitch. Motherfucker.

(to Christopher)

What are you doing? Get over here.

Christopher looks at the damage done to his car.

CHRISTOPHER

That's three thousand dollars here. Three thousand dollars. Go ahead.

Christopher crosses, takes over the physical labour - kicking Mahaffey in the chest and stomach while Tony catches his breath and picks up where he left off.

TONY SOPRANO

Where's the fucking money?

MAHAFFEY

I'll get the money.

TONY SOPRANO

I'll know you'll get the fucking money. But you know what you should get? A cork in your fucking mouth because you tell people I'm nothing compared to the people that used to run things. You prick.

Tony heads back to the car.

TONY SOPRANO (CONT'D)

What are you crying about? HMO. You're covered, you prick. Degenerate fucking gambler.