

FROM THE LAST MAFIOSO  
BY OVID DEMARIS  
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"DEEP SIX FOR JOHNNY"

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A FEW DAYS AFTER MIKE RIZZI'S INITIATION, JIMMY, KEEPING HIS promise to Louie Dragna, got him and Johnny Roselli together for lunch. They talked at each other for an hour, polite but cool, neither saying anything that would soothe old wounds. At one point Roselli inquired about Dago Louie and Dragna told him he was almost totally blind, an old man living out his remaining years in seclusion. They talked about golf but there were no reminiscences of the days when they had played together. Johnny said that he was living a quiet life, playing golf a few times a week, watching television at night, and reading by the pool in the daytime. His swinging days were behind him. Jimmy calculated that Roselli was probably seventy-one but still looked trim and physically fit.

One day, Jimmy and Roselli went driving in the Santa Monica mountains, which overlooked the sprawling city on one side and the equally sprawling San Fernando valley on the other. It was a beautiful day, with only a thin shroud of smog hanging low over the land. Up in the mountains the air was fresh, the warm June sun cooled by a gentle breeze.

Although not much had been written in the newspapers about the CIA-Mafia plot in recent months, the subject was very much on Jimmy's mind.

"What's happening with Washington?" he said. "Are they still after you?"

Roselli chuckled. "They had me up at the Carroll Arms Hotel, Bobby Baker's old stomping ground, for a secret session and I really fixed their fucking wagon. All hot, you know, about who killed Kennedy. Sometimes I'd like to tell them the mob did it, just to see the expression on their stupid faces.

You know, we're supposed to be idiots, right? We hire a psycho like Oswald to kill the President and then we get a blabbermouth, two-bit punk like Ruby to shut him up. We wouldn't trust those jerks to hit a fucking dog.

"Anyway, they start questioning me about this bullshit I'd told Morgan years ago. You know, Castro retaliating against Kennedy because of our attempts on his life. I said, 'I have no recollection of receiving or passing on such information.'

"Well, Jimmy," he said, laughing, "it's not my fault if Morgan has a vivid imagination. I've also been dropping by Jack Anderson's office and we're getting pretty chummy, having lunch and dinner together. Nice guy, but he's always trying to pump me, but he's cool about it."

"Johnny, it's not what you don't tell them guys that worries me," Jimmy said. "You've got to touch bases, go to Chicago and tell them what you're doing, let them know it's just fun and games."

"What the fuck," Johnny said. "I'm not saying anything. Why go there and get a lot of bullshit shoveled at me? Either way, I'm on their shit list. And that's something I've got to talk to you about. Somebody's got to shut Bomp's big yap. He's really trying to bury me. He's filling Spilotro's head full of bullshit, says I gave secret testimony to the grand jury in the Frontier case that turned Friedman into a witness against Tony Zerilli, Mike Polizzi, and Tony Giordano, which is plain, unadulterated bullshit. What's this fucking guy's problem?"

Jimmy decided it was time to tell Roselli. "Johnny, it goes back to when you got the gift shop at the Frontier. See, Bomp did some work for Detroit and he was expecting to get a piece of the Frontier. He thinks you fucked him out of it."

"Oh, Jimmy, what a treacherous world we live in. All I did is help Joe Breen get the gift shop and he was grateful enough to cut me in for a piece of it. So I net fifty, sixty grand a year out of it, big fucking deal."

Jimmy was still worried about the assassination committee. "The problem, Johnny, is that Chicago don't know what you're saying to the committee. Maybe Aiuppa and Batters figure if you talk to them, then you'd talk to grand juries. Don't forget, they've already started clipping guys close to Sam."

Roselli pondered this a moment, gazing out at the scenery as they drove. The wind was ruffling his hair, which seemed as light and silky as a baby's. That was what old age did to people, Jimmy thought, it turned them into babies again.

"Jimmy, let me think out loud for a minute. I'd like your reaction to this idea. You remember Joe Shimon, don't you? He was with us on the Castro plot, former Washington police inspector.

"We've talked about Sam's murder, the three of us were close, and he thinks Santo [Trafficante] made a deal with Castro. Remember when Santo was jailed and they grabbed his money when Castro came into power, then suddenly he was released with all his money? Shimon thinks he's a Castro agent spying on Cubans in Florida. Sam shared that suspicion. That's why Santo sat on his ass and did nothing with all that shit we gave him. He was probably reporting everything to Castro's agents, and Miami's full of them.

"I still see Santo, we have dinner or lunch every now and then. He thought his name would never surface in the hearings, which is stupid. But if he was playing both ends against the middle, he had plenty to worry about. Those Cubans, either side, would cut his balls off if they thought he

double-crossed them. They don't give a shit about the Mafia down there. I remember Sam telling me when he got his subpoena. He said, 'Santo's shitting his pants, but you can't keep his name out of it. I introduced the guy to the CIA, for Christ's sake. Everybody knows it. Maheu, Shimon, you, the whole FBI and CIA. This Santo's crazy to think we can stop his name from surfacing.'

"Don't let this cocksucker set you up," Jimmy said. "Watch yourself."

"Jimmy, right now my problem is Bomp. This guy's got telephonitis. Like with Santo, I've got no proof, but I've got a feeling about this prick. I think he's a snitch. Him and Dago Louie are in the same fucking boat."

"Johnny, don't worry about Bomp," Jimmy said, pausing for emphasis. "It's in the works. Brooklier put the contract out. We're just waiting for the proper spot."

"Well, that's the best fucking news I've had all year."

"It might take a little while, this guy's cagey," Jimmy said. "He goes home every afternoon, around three or four o'clock, and he never leaves the house at night. But I'll tell you something, him and Spilotro clipped that broad, Tamara Rand, that was giving Glick all that heat."

"I had a pretty good idea that little ant was involved, but I didn't know about Bomp."

"Oh, he denies it, but not too hard, you know what I mean. Says all he did was show Tony where she lived. One thing about Bomp, he's capable of it."

Roselli was registered at the Beverly Hilton, and one night he dined at the hotel's Trader Vic's restaurant with Jimmy, Allen Smiley, and Mike Rizzi, who had been anxious to meet Roselli after all the praise Jimmy had heaped upon him. Smiley and Roselli were old friends, but Roselli never discussed family business in front of Smiley. Their conversation was always pleasantly challenging—current news, movies, books, sports, women—and Jimmy always enjoyed their friendly bantering.

On this evening, however, he was too busy wrestling with his conscience to pay much attention to the conversation. Months ago he'd heard from Peanuts Tranalone that there was a contract out on Roselli. Tranalone was close to Trafficante and knew all the made guys in his Tampa family. This was probably the straight dope, but how could he tell Roselli without getting Tranalone in trouble? He just couldn't say it was a rumor because Roselli would insist on knowing the source, which was only natural, for how else could he judge its accuracy? So Jimmy had said nothing and had been agonizing over it ever since.

Later that evening, when he was alone with Roselli in the lobby, Jimmy tried to warn him.

"Johnny, what we talked about the other day, about Bomp poisoning Chicago and your testifying before that committee—be careful, will you? You're right, this thing of ours's treacherous. You never know when you're going to