

RAMON

I now pronounce you man and woman.
Time to kiss the woman.

Before Cynthia can move, he's kissed her.

RAMON (CONT'D)

Cynthia, Italians crap out after sex. Here's my number. As soon as he's asleep. I'm ready any hour, day or night. I'll keep her happy, Bobby.

There's no meanness in any of this - the way it's spoken or the way it's taken.

RAMON (CONT'D)

Hey - which one of you is handling Eugenio Constanza tonight? I want to work out a plea bargain before we get down there. Attallah, the Hun is sitting tonight and she'll crucify the poor kid unless we work something out before we're up there.

A pretty young ADA answers.

PRETTY YOUNG ADA

It's mine, Ramon.

RAMON

What did I do to deserve this? Thank you, God.

And over he goes. Cynthia and Bobby are still looking at each other.

CUT TO:

16 INT. A CONFESSIONAL -- DAY

16

Mike Byrne sits opposite a young priest. He has a tumbler in his hand that half-filled with rye.

MIKE BYRNE

I don't know which way to turn anymore, Father. Look, I know I'm supposed to be reciting sins, but I haven't sinned, Father. I just need some words.

(MORE)

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START
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MIKE BYRNE (CONT'D)
Something to help me through the
night. You got people waiting,
Father?

YOUNG PRIEST
You're the last, Mike. You want to
go to my office where we can talk
face-to-face?

MIKE BYRNE
No - I like it here. I like the
dark, the smell - all the years I
been coming to confession - I always
liked it. I feel like a kid again.

YOUNG PRIEST
Happy like a kid?

MIKE BYRNE
No. Innocent like a kid.

YOUNG PRIEST
That's nice to hear.

Mike takes a long sip.

YOUNG PRIEST (CONT'D)
What about the booze, Mike?

MIKE BYRNE
Oh, it's fine, Father. I can control
it anytime I want to.

YOUNG PRIEST
I don't think so, Mike.

MIKE BYRNE
Sure I can. It helps me sleep.

YOUNG PRIEST
I think you're kidding yourself.

MIKE BYRNE
I'm not, Father.

YOUNG PRIEST
I think you are, Mike. Look, I know
you and Sheila are going through a
bad time. But you were drinking
hard a long time before that.

MIKE BYRNE

Well - you know, Father - it's a stressful job.

YOUNG PRIEST

Don't I know it, Mike. My father - God rest his soul - cops and booze. It happens a lot. The department used to have its own program. What happened to it?

MIKE BYRNE

I have no idea.

YOUNG PRIEST

Why don't you check it out?

MIKE BYRNE

You know, Father. You go into the program and the word is out. Your whole career can change. Next thing you know they got you going to see one of their psychologists or some other ungodly thing.

YOUNG PRIEST

What about AA?

MIKE BYRNE

I went once. A bunch of self-pitying jerks sitting around feeling sorry for themselves.

YOUNG PRIEST

I don't think so, Mike. You know, they got what they call the 12 steps. You know what the 3rd step is? Turning your life over to a higher power. They want you to come back to God, Michael.

Mike is silent.

YOUNG PRIEST (CONT'D)

Think about it. What was the stressful part, Mike?

MIKE BYRNE

What?

YOUNG PRIEST

You said the job was so stressful.
I know the obvious part, the streets,
the crime, the human degradation.
For you - was there more?

A long pause.

END →

MIKE BYRNE

Yes.

YOUNG PRIEST

What?

MIKE BYRNE

The pictures in my head.

YOUNG PRIEST

Pictures?

MIKE BYRNE

Yes.

YOUNG PRIEST

What pictures?

MIKE BYRNE

The blood - the split heads - the
starved babies - or the ones with
cigarette burns on their tummies.
The women with teeth marks on their
necks and breasts - the faggots with
their bleeding anuses - the pretty
sixteen year old girl with the spike
in her neck 'cause she couldn't find
a vein anymore. The eleven year old
boy with a 32 in his mouth and the
back of his head blown off - a guy
with his eye hanging out - the mother
bleeding to death with the coat hanger
still in her - a guy holding his
guts in 'til he gets to the ER and
it all spills out on the floor -
(he stops)

I'm sorry, Father. I just see them
all the time. Pictures.

YOUNG PRIEST

Come stay at the Rectory, Mike.