

CHAPTER 1

“No Sleep Till Brooklyn”

He knew they were coming.

As he walked the snow-crusted streets near his home in Howard Beach, Queens, on the night of January 8, 2003, the middle-aged man could sense the many pairs of eyes that followed his every move.

Street smart since leaving school in the eighth grade, he had acquired a finely tuned sense of when trouble was stalking him. Walking around on what was an unseasonably warm night along Cross Bay Boulevard with his youngest daughter, Joanne, the rotund grandfather had noticed cars he knew were those of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The sedans and the vans with tinted windows, the “bad cars” as he would say, had been around a lot recently. This night they shadowed him constantly.

He went to the Target department store and the cars were there. He went to the Cross Bay Diner and the cars were there. His daughter walked into Blockbuster Video and even she saw the cars.

Looking like Jackie Gleason with a big frame that carried 300 pounds and sporting a full head of graying hair, the old man whose grandchildren called him by the pet name Poppy had a habit of returning to his own place every evening. In his younger days, he might have spent the nights with his overeating friends. Lately, his high blood pressure and diabetes, as well as the toll of obesity, kept him closer to home. So when the agents parked at the end of the block and watched him enter the dark brick home on Eighty-fourth

Street for the final time that day, they were certain he was in pocket for the night.

The agents would stick around until morning. It was standard operational procedure for the FBI just before a big arrest to make sure a target stayed in place no matter how long the surveillance team had to be on the street. Poppy was the kind of man they would take as much time as needed to make sure he was in the bag.

Poppy, the affable grand dad who delighted in belly flopping and swimming with neighborhood kids in his backyard pool on Eighty-fourth Street, was better known to law enforcement as Joseph Massino, born January 10, 1943, and branded with FBI number 883127N9. He was the secretive and elusive boss of the Bonanno crime family, the last American Mafia don of substance to be free on the streets. The Dapper Don was dead. The Chin and the Snake were in prison. But Massino had flourished.

A crafty and perceptive man who could be as gentlemanly as he could be vicious, Massino was a throwback to an era when Mafia leaders acted like patricians rather than ill-bred street thugs that had come to symbolize the public face of organized crime. Yet, Massino was not above having blood on his hands—lots of blood if truth be told—and in a few hours that dark side would change his life forever.

In terms of FBI tradecraft, putting someone to bed in the way the agents monitored Massino that night was an example of a crucial surveillance ritual that preceded an arrest. Seeing the subject enter a home and not leave allowed the next day's arrest team to know with certainty that the person who was to be apprehended was at a particular place when the warrant was to be served. By midnight, Massino was at his faux Georgian-style home. The agents outside the house sat in their car at the location, fortifying themselves with cups of coffee and donuts from the Dunkin' Donuts a few blocks away.

Surveillance duty is usually given to newly minted agents fresh out of the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia. It is a way for the new agents to learn the geography of a place like New York City

while at the same time making observations of people and places that might prove crucial in some investigation months or even years down the road. Any observation, even those made at a distance so great that nothing could be overheard, might prove important if it later corroborated something a witness might say in court or to a grand jury.

Special Agents Kimberly McCaffrey and Jeffrey Sallet had done their share of surveillance drudgery when they joined the FBI some years earlier. But early on January 9, 2003, the two agents had a different task. Dressed in dark blue raid jackets that were embossed with the large yellow letters that spelled out "FBI," McCaffrey and Sallet exited an official government sedan and walked up the front walk of 163-37 Eighty-fourth Street. Accompanying them were three other law enforcement officials—an Internal Revenue Service agent, a state police officer, and another FBI agent.

The IRS agent made his way stealthily around the back of the house, taking care to avoid the covered swimming pool. McCaffrey and Sallet led the others up the walkway. The morning was chilly and at 6:00 A.M. the neighborhood was quiet.

McCaffrey rang the door bell. It might have been early but it was Massino, his hair neatly combed and fully dressed in a black pullover and large-sized sweat pants, who opened the front door. It was at that very instant that the two FBI agents, who had been studying and watching Massino from a distance for over four years, finally came face to face with their quarry. Though his pasta belly and mirthful grin gave him a genial appearance, Massino had a gaze that could be penetrating, steely, and cold. It was a look that could pull you in and captivate with its strength. It could also scare you. Slightly arched eyebrows made him always look as though he were expressing surprise. Yet, on this particular morning, Joseph Massino was not surprised.

"How are ya," he said.

He surveyed the agents and police arrayed on his doorstep and looked out at the black government sedan in front of his house. Since he had seen the other government vans in the neighborhood

over previous days and had been arrested before, Massino knew that something was coming down. The numerous cars that had shadowed him the night before also added to his feeling of apprehension. After McCaffrey flashed her FBI credentials, Massino replied quickly, almost glibly.

"I was expecting you yesterday."

McCaffrey, a diminutive woman whose dark hair, black eyes, and fair skin bespoke her Irish roots, had to chuckle at his bravado. Here was a man who was hijacking trucks in the 1970s, before she was even born, a killer who is said to have boasted about being a one-man killing machine. But she also knew he could be a gentleman, a charmer, and certainly there was no hint of him causing any trouble. He will go peacefully, McCaffrey thought.

So began the day that Joseph Massino, the boss of one of New York City's five legendary Mafia families and "The Last Don," left his home in Howard Beach to live courtesy of the U.S. government in jail for the rest of his foreseeable life. Massino's wife of forty-two years, Josephine, a petite and stylish, titian-haired Sicilian, dressed in her pajamas and housecoat, could do little but watch stoically and tight-lipped as her spouse walked down the front way toward the government car.

Josephine Massino had witnessed this trip into incarceration before when Massino had been arrested in the 1980s. It led to a wearying routine of jailhouse visits and uncertainty. In recent days, as her husband's sense of apprehension grew, she felt her own anxiety mount. The timing couldn't have been worse. She was expecting an important call that very day from her oncologist. She would have to face that without him.

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It was more than just the presence of the government surveillance cars, long a common fixture in a neighborhood that was home to other gangsters, that had tipped Massino to impending trouble. Federal investigators had been snooping around Massino

and his businesses for years and word had gotten back to him fairly quickly when subpoenas started landing around town.

Then there were the arrests. One by one FBI agents started picking off some of Massino's old cronies. Frank Coppa was in prison on securities fraud charges when he found himself indicted again in October 2002 for extortion. That particular indictment allowed the FBI to cast its net wider and arrest a number of other Bonanno crime family members like Richard Cantarella, one of Massino's captains and trusted aides.

Massino wasn't touched in that roundup. But it was clear that the government investigation was making a concerted push against a crime family that had survived much of the earlier onslaughts of federal prosecutions that began in the mid-1980s. Massino knew from the tally of arrests in recent months that it was only a matter of time before someone from a circle of mobsters he had confided in over a four-decade career in La Cosa Nostra would weaken and deliver him to the government.

Compared to his one-time neighbor John Gotti, the flashy but disastrous boss of the Gambino crime family, and Vincent "the Chin" Gigante, the Genovese crime family boss (who dressed in a bathrobe and mumbled as he walked through Greenwich Village in Manhattan in a crazy act), Massino was a relatively unknown face of the Mafia. True, he had been indicted in big cases in the past—once for plotting some gangland murders in the early 1980s and again in 1985 for labor racketeering. He also had a few mentions in the news media, usually accompanying his arrests or occasionally in speculative newspaper stories about the inner workings of La Cosa Nostra.

But if he was a mystery to the public, Massino, through his skill in mob politics as well as the ability to earn money, made for a steady rise through the ranks of the mob. Unlike Gotti, who taunted law enforcement with illegal fireworks displays in Ozone Park every Fourth of July and liked being a celebrity, Joseph Massino remained low key and avoided the flashy Manhattan night

life. He liked to pad around the house in terry cloth shorts and cotton t-shirts. He filed his tax returns on time and declared income as high as \$500,000 some years. When the police or FBI talked with him, Massino acted like a gentleman. He seemed almost boring.

But he was crafty. Massino knew that law enforcement surveillance techniques had advanced so much that talking to anyone except in the most circumspect way was suicidal. Gotti, having felt secure in an apartment above his Mulberry Street social club in Little Italy, talked openly about the Gambino family crimes and didn't dream that the FBI would have bugging devices in the room.

Yet hours of Gotti's conversations intercepted on FBI bugs all but wrote the federal indictment that led to his conviction and life sentence for racketeering in 1992. Later investigations of the Genovese, Colombo, and Lucchese crime families also relied on mountains of wiretap evidence that made the job of prosecutors as easy as shooting fish in a barrel. The old Mafia may have become the stuff of legend and hit television shows like *The Sopranos*, but it had also become easy pickings for law enforcement.

Massino could not completely avoid wiretaps. One of Gotti's close associates, Angelo Ruggiero, an overweight and compulsively talkative mobster, had been so indiscreet that FBI agents not only wiretapped his telephone but also planted a bug in the kitchen of his Cedarhurst, Long Island, home. Massino was caught on some of the tapes though not enough to get him in serious trouble. But it was a wake-up call for him about the pervasiveness of surveillance. After that, Massino kept his mouth shut and decreed that his name should never be used in conversations, particularly in places where there may be wiretaps or listening devices.

There were a few slips in that rule. Cantarella was once overheard speaking to an informant. He said that it was Massino, who he referred to as "Joe," who helped him become a made member of the crime family. The informant was wearing a recording device at the time. But for the most part Massino's name was discreetly kept out of incriminating conversations: a tug on the earlobe was how some-

one signaled he was talking about Massino without invoking his name. As a result, federal agents like McCaffrey and Sallet had no tapes that captured Massino's voice saying anything incriminating.

Sallet, a red-headed New Englander and diehard Red Sox fan whose crew cut made him look like a high school athletic coach, picked out a favorite CD and put it in the player. He might be an accountant, but Sallet was no nerd. He liked the Beastie Boys, a group of New York white rappers, and in the minutes before he had arrested Massino, he was listening to the last cut on the disc. The title of that song, "No Sleep Till Brooklyn," had been quite appropriate under the circumstances. That was certainly going to be Joe Massino's day.

It was to the sound of Generation X music of three white Jewish boys from upper-middle-class parents that the maroon Buick Regal with tinted windows carrying mafioso Massino headed out from the quiet residential block where he lived and made its way to the Belt Parkway for the trip west toward lower Manhattan and FBI headquarters. Sallet and McCaffrey were relatively new agents with six years and four years respectively on the job, but arresting Massino was clearly a career-defining move. It would be all over the news before lunchtime: Joseph Massino, the last of old mob bosses, had finally been taken down. No one was listening to the radio though as the government car traveled westward. Sallet's music selection droned on instead as he drove.

While sandwiched between McCaffrey and one of the police officers, Massino engaged in some small talk. Conversation about food was what Sallet found best for chitchat with someone being arrested. He asked Massino where he thought the best pizza in town could be found.

"CasaBlanca," Massino answered. It was his restaurant by Fresh Pond Road in Queens and he knew the sauce was the best in town. Massino was a pretty good sauce man himself. Family dinners at his house would find him holding competitions with his wife over who was the better cook. His daughters were the judges. Massino's ravioli was often the winner.

It had been inevitable with all the snooping McCaffrey and Sallet had been doing around town that Massino had heard of them.

"You must be Kimberly and you must be Jeffrey," Massino said to the pair. They politely confirmed this.

Massino also told them he knew they had convinced his wife's business partner, Barry Weinberg, a chain-smoking Queens businessman who held interests in parking lots all over New York, to wear a recording device. Now Massino, chastened by the Ruggiero tapes, knew that there was no chance that he had been picked up on any recording device Weinberg had been wearing. He never really talked with the man, particularly after some in the Bonanno clan had become suspicious of him. But Massino figured that the only reason he found himself sandwiched between two FBI agents and headed to Manhattan to be booked on an indictment was because somebody close to him had squealed.

"Frankie Coppa got to work quick," Massino said to the agents as the sedan made its way through traffic.

To the uninformed that terse remark meant nothing. But by blurting it out, Massino was letting Sallet and McCaffrey know that he knew his old friend, Frank Coppa, a Bonanno captain, had become a cooperating witness. Once Massino's closest of friends, Coppa had been moved from the prison facility at Fort Dix, New Jersey where he had been serving time for securities fraud, to a federal witness protection prison. It was there that Coppa had been telling investigators what he knew of Massino and the crime family.

Massino now had enough information to know that his predicament was serious. McCaffrey told him that among the many racketeering charges being unsealed that morning in the Brooklyn federal district court were those involving the murders of three rival Bonanno captains in 1981.

"That was a long time ago and I had nothing to do with it," Massino said.

In fact, Massino had been acquitted of conspiracy to commit those murders in an earlier racketeering trial. The killing of the three captains—Dominick Trinchera, Alphonse Indelicato, and Philip

Giaccone—was part of one of New York's most legendary Mafia power struggles. The remains of the three captains were found in a weedy lot on the Brooklyn-Queens border not far from Massino's home. Some other crime family members were convicted of the murders in 1983. But in the trial of Massino and his brother-in-law, Salvatore Vitale, the government's case was weaker and they beat the rap.

In the mob, all friendships could be dangerous. If Coppa or anyone else had been telling investigators what they knew of the deaths of the three captains, they could come back to haunt Massino. McCaffrey thought it curious that right after being told that he was charged with having actually participated in those killings that Massino asked if his brother-in-law had been arrested as well.

Yes, he had been, Massino was told.

Though he didn't respond or show any emotion when told of Vitale's arrest, the news must have caused Massino's already high blood pressure to spike. The brother of Josephine Massino, Vitale had been Massino's childhood friend and over the years had become a close confidant. Massino shared a lot with him, from learning how to swim in the Astoria pool to introducing Vitale to the illegal scores with truck hijacking. Eventually, as Massino rose in the ranks of the mob, Vitale rode his coattails, rising to the rank of underboss. "Good Looking Sal" or "Sally," as Vitale was known, relished the aura of being a mob boss. His vanity was a subject of gossip. His favorite cologne seemed picked as if to symbolize his status: it was the "Boss" fragrance of designer Hugo Boss.

Normally, the underboss position is a powerful one in the Mafia, but over the years Vitale had chafed at the paltry power Massino had given him, going as far as to forbid Vitale from speaking to the captains in the crime family. The trust that once ran deep between the two men had evaporated. Some of the Bonanno captains thought Vitale was too dirty and knew too much to be trusted. Better off with Vitale dead, some said. Privately, they wondered if Massino's judgment about Vitale was clouded by the fact that he was his wife's brother.

Vitale had been involved in a number of murders—"pieces of work," as wiseguys would call them. Knowing what he knew about the crime family business, Vitale could be dangerous if he weakened. And Massino knew that. Just three weeks earlier, a few Bonanno mobsters voiced distrust of Vitale.

"Sal is gonna rat on every fucking body," said Anthony Urso, one of Massino's key captains, who was overheard on a surveillance bug.

Rats were the bane of the Mafia. La Cosa Nostra was riddled with them and it made Massino even more paranoid. If he suspected any man was a rat, Massino gave him a ticket—he called it a "receipt"—to the grave. Joseph Massino was from the old school of tough guys who never turned on their friends. You never squeal: it was a creed that Massino even taught his daughters to live by. It was the way of life and you swore to it with your blood the day they made you a wiseguy by burning the card with a saint's picture in the palm of your hand.

Massino would tell people he was proud of his crime family, the only one that had never had an informant or rat in all its years of existence. *Omerta* had never been violated within the family until old man Joseph Bonanno revealed some of La Cosa Nostra's secrets in his 1980 autobiography *A Man of Honor*. Massino had become so angry over Bonanno's tale that he wanted to change the name of the crime family to Massino. Time in jail, not tell-all books, went with the job of being a mob boss. John Gotti, Vincent Gigante, Carlo Gambino, Anthony "Tony Ducks" Corallo, Anthony "Fat Tony" Salerno, Carmine "the Snake" Persico—they all took their medicine and didn't rat out anybody. Massino would be a stand-up guy. That was part of a boss's job. Everybody knew that.

It turned out McCaffrey was wrong in her characterization of the charges against Massino during the car ride back to Manhattan. It might have been a ploy to see if Massino talked, but the indictment in the process of being unsealed that morning by Brooklyn federal prosecutors did not mention the killings of the three captains. In reality, Massino had been indicted for the 1982 slaying of

another old friend: Dominick "Sonny Black" Napolitano. The killings of Trinchera, Giaccone, and Indelicato, as well as several others, wouldn't be laid at Massino's feet until much later.

The FBI car in which Massino rode went through the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel, north on West Street, left onto Worth Street, and then headed into the basement of the forty-five-story federal office building known as Twenty-six Federal Plaza. A 1960s-style soaring rectangle of glass, stone, and chrome on Foley Square, the building housed most of the federal law enforcement agencies in the city. Anyone arrested in a major FBI operation—and Massino's bust was big—was usually taken to "Twenty-six Fed" and put through the ritual processing: fingerprinting, photographing, and the recording of personal information. One thing the agents decided against was a "perp walk," that is, parading Massino before prying newspaper photographers. They had decided to treat him with a little dignity.

For the Bonanno squad known by the designation C10, the processing of defendants all took place on the twenty-second floor and although it was serious business, Massino couldn't help joking with the agents as he was fingerprinted, saying he probably wouldn't get bail if he hired one attorney he knew from the old neighborhood. The agents knew at that point that bail was the remotest long shot for Massino, but they let his remark pass. Spotting one of the squad supervisors, Nora Conely, Massino had a flash of recognition. He remarked that he had seen her talking once to his old friend Louis Restivo, one of the owners of CasaBlanca Restaurant, about a fugitive.

She was second in command of the squad, McCaffrey explained to Massino.

"Like an underboss," Massino answered McCaffrey, putting it in lingo he understood.

Massino was going to spend the rest of the day shuttling between the FBI offices and across the Brooklyn Bridge to the U.S. District Court, where he would eventually be arraigned on the charges before a federal magistrate. It would take hours for that to happen. In the meantime, as the rest of the city awakened, another

ritual was getting underway. Federal officials began to alert news agencies that they had a big announcement and at One Pierrepont Plaza, an office tower in downtown Brooklyn, copies of a four-page press release were stacked on a table in the law library of the office of the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, a fancy way to describe Brooklyn and everything to the east.

The document had a long title: Boss and Underboss Charged with Racketeering, Murder, and Other Crimes in Culmination of Four-Year Investigation and Prosecution of the Bonanno Organized Crime Family—Murders Include Retaliation for Infiltration of Family by “Donnie Brasco.”

Press releases from prosecutors don't just relate the news; they also mention who the big shots are in law enforcement who want credit, or at least hope to get some mention in the news accounts that will follow. This press release was no exception. It listed Roslynn R. Mauskopf, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York; Kevin P. Donovan, Assistant Director in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, the man who was McCaffrey and Sallet's boss; Paul L. Machalek, special agent in charge of the criminal investigations unit of the Internal Revenue Service; and James W. McMahon, the superintendent of the New York State Police.

The next four names listed in the press release told the world who was in trouble. First named was Massino, “who is the only boss of the five LCN families in New York not currently incarcerated.” In law enforcement jargon the initials LCN stood for La Cosa Nostra, the Italian expression commonly used to describe the American Mafia. Though the public, press, and even police refer to organized crime composed of men of Italian heritage as the Mafia, purists are quick to point out that the term *Mafia* really refers to the organized crime based in Italy. The term *la cosa nostra*, which loosely translates as “our thing” or “this thing of ours,” is actually what the FBI prefers.

Rounding out the list of those arrested that morning was, as Massino already knew, Salvatore Vitale, “who serves as the family's underboss.” Also nabbed was Frank Lino, a mean-spirited, fire-

plug-sized Brooklyn man seven years' Massino's senior who had somehow survived mob infighting to become a *capo* or captain. Finally, there was Daniel Mongelli, a pubescent-looking thirty-seven-year-old who made up for what he may have lacked in intelligence with loyalty to a life of crime. His reward was the title of acting captain in Massino's regime.

As she gripped the podium before the assembled reporters and photographers, federal prosecutor Mauskopf said that the arrest of Massino and Vitale meant that the leadership of the Bonanno family was either in prison or facing the prospect of a lifetime behind bars. This was Mauskopf's first major organized crime indictment and her statement included such usual obligatory prose. She reminded everyone that the government was committed to eradicating the influence of organized crime in the city and that the case demonstrated this resolve.

But she also noted that this was a superseding indictment, meaning it built on an earlier set of charges that had led to the arrest of other Bonanno crime family figures like captains Anthony Graziano, Richard Cantarella, and Massino's old friend, Frank Lino. In all, Mauskopf noted, twenty-six members and associates of the Bonanno clan had been charged in the previous twelve months. Clearly, the crime family was facing big trouble. Time, she said, had not been good to the mob.

"In the early years, the middle years of the twentieth century, the structure of traditional organized crime was formulated, in large measure right here in Brooklyn," Mauskopf told the reporters assembled in her office. "At the beginning of the twenty-first century, as a result of federal law enforcement's efforts, their determined, their sustained, and their outstanding efforts, the heads of the five families and a significant portion of their members had been brought before the bar of justice."

Such self-congratulatory comments by law enforcement were common at such news events. But Mauskopf's attempt to give the case a touch of history caught the attention of many journalists who had been following the machinations of organized crime. The

reference to “Donnie Brasco” and the murders that surrounded him tied Massino’s arrest to one of the most legendary sagas of latter-day Mafia history. Brasco was in fact Joseph Pistone, who as an FBI agent beginning in the late 1970s infiltrated a branch of the Bonanno family. (Pistone’s role was celebrated in the 1997 film *Donnie Brasco* starring Al Pacino.) Working undercover, Pistone posed as Brasco, jewel thief. With the patience of a crafty spy, he ingratiated himself with Bonanno soldier Benjamin “Lefty Guns” Ruggiero and his captain, Dominick “Sonny Black” Napolitano.

For three years Pistone gathered evidence against his mob friends, fooling them so completely that he was even proposed for membership to the crime family, a state of affairs that had angered Massino if only because no one really knew this Brasco fellow. In hindsight, Massino’s wariness about Pistone demonstrates his survival instincts. When Pistone’s undercover role was dramatically and publicly revealed in 1981, the results were predictable. Like the dark days of some Stalinist purge, the Bonanno family went through bloody days of reckoning. Those who had allowed Pistone to infiltrate the family had to pay the price. Napolitano was high on the list and federal officials believed he was murdered for the unpardonable sin of vouching for Pistone. The indictment charged that Massino, along with Frank Lino, engineered Napolitano’s slaughter.

Pistone’s infiltration of the Bonanno family had made it not only the laughing stock of the Mafia but also a pariah. Believing they couldn’t trust the Bonanno hierarchy, the other mob families in New York kept the wounded family at bay and cut it out of some rackets. Among the fruits denied the Bonanno family was a cut of the lucrative “concrete club” that had evolved in the early 1980s. The club members were the four Mafia families who took a percentage through kickbacks of every cubic yard of concrete that was poured in New York City. This amounted to millions of dollars in illegal profits and contributed to what critics said was the inordinately high cost of doing construction in New York.

It was in May 1984, in a private home on Cameron Avenue in Staten Island that the boss of the Gambino family crime family,

Paul Castellano, lorded over a meeting of representatives of three other Mafia families—the Genovese, Colombo, and Lucchese families—to hash out business disputes over their construction rackets, including the concrete shakedown. Investigators were also watching and recorded the men going to the meeting. In 1986, federal prosecutors in Manhattan secured convictions for the concrete racket against the leadership of the Mafia Commission: Anthony "Fat Tony" Salerno (Genovese crime family), Anthony "Tony Ducks" Corallo (Lucchese crime family), Carmine "the Snake" Persico (Colombo crime family), and their assorted lieutenants for taking part in various rackets.

But the Bonanno family, having been denied a cut of the concrete scheme, escaped conviction in the Commission case. True, Philip Rastelli, the Bonanno boss at the time, had been indicted. But Rastelli's case had been severed from the Commission trial and was never convicted. (He was found guilty in an unrelated Brooklyn federal racketeering trial.) Ironically, by being kept out of the loop by the other crime families in the concrete case, the Bonanno clan dodged a big bullet and continued to operate with much of its leadership intact. While other crime families were knocked off balance, the Bonannos were able to consolidate and recover from the disaster of L'Affaire Brasco.

But that honeymoon was over. The news release that accompanied Massino's indictment listed more murders. Vitale, investigators said, had set up the murder of Robert Perrino, a delivery supervisor at the *New York Post*, in 1992. After Manhattan District Attorney Robert Morgenthau began an investigation into the Bonanno family's infiltration of the newspaper's delivery department that investigators believed had become a mob fiefdom, Vitale panicked. The indictment charged that Vitale and others, fearing Perrino might cooperate with law enforcement, arranged for the newspaper supervisor's death in 1992.

Daniel Mongelli was charged with killing Louis Tuzzio in 1990. Tuzzio was a crime family associate whose death had already been charged in an earlier indictment against Robert Lino, Frank Lino's

cousin. Tuzzio was murdered as a favor to John Gotti, payback for a bizarre shooting stemming from the death of Everett Hatcher, a Drug Enforcement Administration agent, at the hands of aspiring Bonanno family member Gus Farace in 1989. Tuzzio didn't die because Hatcher had been killed but rather, investigators said, because one of Gotti's associates had been wounded during the killing of Farace. Gotti had to be appeased. The mob can police its own as payback for screw ups—Hatcher's murder brought a lot of law enforcement heat on the mob—but it better be done cleanly.

There were some other charges against Massino involving gambling in cafés in Queens. Joker Poker machines and baccarat games were profitable staples of the crime family along with loan-sharking, which Massino was also charged with. But loan-sharking and gambling charges against a mob boss were an old story. What really had Massino tied up was murder. While more killings would be laid at Massino's feet in the months to come, prosecutors only needed one—the Napolitano hit—to make the case that Massino should not be given bail.

"It has taken over two decades to get the goods on Joe Massino for the murder of 'Sonny Black' Napolitano, but justice delayed is not always justice denied," said Kevin Donovan, the top FBI boss for New York City, to reporters.

Donovan referred in passing to a pair of agents who had doggedly tracked Massino for years. But he didn't mention their names. Sallet and McCaffrey didn't seek adulation and preferred to keep a low profile.

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Massino's youngest daughter, Joanne, had walked her own daughter to the nearby parochial school on the morning of January 9 as she always did. The child had often accompanied both her mother and grandfather on shopping trips to Cross Bay Boulevard in Howard Beach, Queens, near Kennedy International Airport. Joanne had felt the peering eyes of the FBI and, like her father, had spotted the numerous cars that seemed to be following them.

It was a little after 8:00 A.M. when Joanne came back to her home on Eighty-fourth Street in Howard Beach. Both she and her eldest sister, Adeline, had decided to stay close by their parents after each girl got married, so it was almost a daily ritual that the Massino girls saw their parents. (A middle sister had moved out of state.) Now that Joanne was divorced, she remained in the home she once shared with her ex-husband, who had moved to Long Island. As soon as she returned from escorting her daughter to school, Joanne spotted her mother in front of her own home a few doors away. The older woman didn't say a word; she just gestured.

"Come here, quick, I have something to tell you about your father and it isn't good," Josephine Massino seemed to say with an urgent wave of her hand toward her daughter, who knew in an instant that there was trouble.

Adeline, who lived about four blocks north of her parents, was at the Dunkin' Donuts store on Cross Bay Boulevard, the very same place the FBI agents would visit to pick up snacks for the long surveillances of her father. It was the morning ritual of this particular Howard Beach Little League mom to get her cup of coffee there and then visit her folks.

Though Joanne had the dark Neapolitan eyes of her father, Adeline took after her mother, right down to the auburn tint of the hair (which if truth be told they both had done at the same beauty salon on the boulevard). Walking with her embossed coffee cup through the front door of her parents' house, Adeline was oblivious to the tumult that had begun to envelope her family. She would find out about it soon enough.

CHAPTER 2

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When Roslynn R. Mauskopf, the federal prosecutor, told the news reporters that La Cosa Nostra got its start in the borough of Brooklyn, she really was telling the truth. But she may not have realized all the historical details. There were a few twists and turns before Brooklyn became the Mafia's American holy land.

The roots of Italian organized crime in New York City were tied closely to the great waves of immigration in the early part of the twentieth century. To understand what Joseph Massino inherited nearly 100 years later, one has to look at those early days, when the mob was evolving and its values were being adapted to life in America. The story of what became the Bonanno crime family was like some long, medieval tapestry, a continuing saga interwoven with the life stories of many of the Mafia's key personalities and bloody events.

By the turn of the twentieth century and continuing into the years immediately after World War I, Italians were among the largest group of immigrants coming to the United States. It was a largely economic immigration to be sure, pulling Italians from the economically depressed southern areas of Italy, the *mezzogiorno* region composed of Naples, Calabria, and Sicily. While Italians settled in many cities, New York was a main attraction. It became a cliché image, the mass of immigrants dressed in Old World-style garb, gazing in awe at the Statue of Liberty as the crowded passenger liners sailed into New York harbor and made their way to Ellis Island, the first point of entry into the United States. Earlier immigrants

who settled in the five boroughs of New York served as the seed for the later arrival of *amici*, relatives and friends from the same villages and towns in southern Italy.

Because a substantial number of Italian immigrants settled in Brooklyn, the borough attracted its share of new arrivals—a trend that continued late into the twentieth century. When World War I ended, one Italian man became the top Mafia figure and lorded over an enterprise of young criminals who he ruled with an iron fist. Joe Masseria was known in the underworld as Joe the Boss. A fat, short man, Masseria was known for his prodigious appetite for food and drink. Dinner with Joe the Boss saw his underlings try in vain to keep up with his devouring of plates of pasta and meats, washed down with Chianti.

Old mug shots show Masseria with a fat, round face and small piglike eyes. He was one of the “Moustache Petes,” though he was clean shaven, the derisive name given to the old-timers who rose to the upper levels of Italian organized crime and were known for keeping with their Old World mentality. A peasant in manners—Masseria was said to have spewed food as he talked with animation over dinner—he had a retinue of young, ambitious mob toughs who ensured that his orders would be followed. Their names should be very familiar. Among them was Al Capone, Salvatore Lucania, better known as Charles “Lucky” Luciano, Vito Genovese, and Frank Costello (Francesco Castiglia), men who in their own right became major Mafia leaders and legends of their time. Masseria recruited men like Luciano, Genovese, and the others to beef up the ranks of a Mafia organization that was actually run by Ignazia “Lupo” Saitta. Known as a sadistic Sicilian, Lupo emigrated from Sicily to avoid a murder prosecution, and as a Mafia member he took over the Unione Siciliane, a sort of fraternal organization and mutual-aid society of Italian immigrants.

In 1910, Lupo was sentenced to thirty years in prison and Masseria was essentially the boss of the American Mafia in his absence. He consolidated his power and saw to it that fellow Sicilian immigrants had key positions of power under him as a way of en-

suring fealty and obedience. It was after building an organization that owed its loyalty to him that Masseria is reported to have made a bold political maneuver that removed Lupo from the picture—without a shot being fired. According to Tony Sciacca in the book *Luciano: The Man Who Modernized the American Mafia*, Masseria convinced Lupo that even if he were to be paroled on the counterfeiting charge that he risked being arrested again for a parole violation.

"Joe the Boss would run the American Mafia, with Lupo as an unofficial advisor, immune from reimprisonment by remaining in the shadows," Sciacca states. "The legend in Little Italy has it that Lupo agreed to accept retirement."

Through the intercession of Harry Daugherty, the U.S. attorney general, Lupo was paroled in 1921 by President Warren G. Harding. Free from a prison cell, Lupo came to Little Italy, kissed Masseria on the cheeks, and then left for a year's sabbatical to Sicily. He was never a factor again in the American Mafia.

With the help of Luciano, Genovese, and others, Masseria became the undisputed boss of the Mafia in the United States. Under his leadership, the organization developed its own corner of the drug trade, bringing opium into New York City, bootlegging, and protection rackets in the Italian community. But it was not enough.

The Italian immigrants were not all alike in that they brought with them to America old clannish ways and prejudices. A Sicilian might hold secret resentment of the Neapolitan and vice versa. Among the Sicilians, of which Masseria was one, suspicions developed as well. Some of those aligned with Masseria traced their origins to the area around the town of Castellammare del Golfo in western Sicily. This was not the area where Masseria traced his roots, and the various Castellammarese who took up residence in Brooklyn viewed another charismatic Sicilian named Salvatore Maranzano as their leader. Tall, lean, and sporting a thin moustache, Maranzano was the physical opposite of Masseria. He seemed like a banker, in sharp contrast to the short, burly, and voracious Masseria. Maranzano, who was something of an intellec-

tual among the immigrants, kept in his apartment volumes about the Roman Empire under Julius Caesar, including his battle tactics.

Many of the Castellammarese who settled in Brooklyn did so in the area around Roebling and Havermeyer streets, near Metropolitan Avenue. It is a part of Brooklyn known as Williamburg and it was in this area, close to the waterfront, that Maranzano held court with fellow Sicilians. Among them were many who would come to hold their own place in the genealogy of the Mafia: Thomas Lucchese, Joseph Profaci, Stefano Magliocco, and Stefano Magaddino, a mafioso from Buffalo. There was also a young, handsome Castellammarese who at the age of nineteen had arrived in New York in 1924 after taking a circuitous smuggling route that led from Sicily, Tunisia, Marseille, Paris, Cuba, and then by a small motorboat to Tampa, Florida. He had fled Sicily at a time when the government was trying to crack down on the Mafia. His name was Joseph Bonanno.

Living with relatives in Brooklyn, Bonanno passed up opportunities to toil in the decent obscurity of lawful occupations and instead saw his destiny in the world of crime. It was of course a calculated choice of Bonanno's to seek his fortune in ways the vast majority of his fellow immigrants shunned. In his classic biography of Bonanno, *Honor Thy Father*, author Gay Talese says Bonanno sought respect and saw himself as a leader of men. He was prepared to do what he needed to pursue his goals.

"He did believe that the ruling classes of America as in Sicily had great respect for two things—power and money—and he was determined to get both one way or the other," Talese states. "So in his first year in Brooklyn, Bonanno affiliated himself with the neighborhood Mafiosi, who were obviously doing well; they were driving new cars and wearing finer clothes than their humble countrymen who got up each day at dawn to toil in factories or work in construction gangs."

Aligned with Maranzano, Bonanno made a name for himself in the rackets of the time. There was bootlegging, gambling, and smuggling of weapons. The Brooklyn Italian lottery was also con-

trolled by Bonanno, and it was his organizational ability, as well as his polished, diplomatic manner that earned him respect. Wise enough not to squander his earnings, Bonanno invested in other legitimate businesses such as garment factories, cheese producers, and even a funeral parlor.

Success of Castellammarese men like Bonanno served to make Masseria suspicious of the growing strength of Maranzano and his followers. Historians of the Mafia are unanimous in saying that Masseria, concerned about the independence being shown by Maranzano and his men, planned to strike against them to eliminate their rivalry. Larger tribute payments were demanded by Masseria. These were rebuffed by Maranzano's allies and Masseria knew by 1930 that he had to annihilate the competition.

But just as he was preparing to go to war against the Castellammarese, Masseria's hunger for money and power led him to make a big tactical mistake. Masseria attempted to extort the ice-making business of one of his own crime captains, Gaetano Reina. When Reina resisted, Masseria had him killed in February 1930, just as the ice merchant was leaving a building on Sheridan Avenue in the Bronx. The killing of Reina prompted his gang members to ally with Maranzano and a period of Mafia assassinations and gun-fights known as the Castellammarese War broke out in New York. It was a time of bloodshed that would ultimately go a long way to shaping the modern Mafia in the United States.

The killings went on for over a year as Masseria struck against the bootlegging businesses of the Maranzano crowd. With allies like Thomas Lucchese, Carlo Gambino, Vito Genovese, and, of course, Lucky Luciano, Masseria seemed in a stronger position. But Maranzano had important alliances as well, including the help of a young mob associate known as Joseph Valachi, who would eventually marry the daughter of the assassinated Reina. There was intense mob bloodshed in the war, with some estimates saying over fifty men died on both sides. Whatever the body count, the war proved bad for business and the costs were troubling Luciano and Genovese. They reached out to Maranzano in an effort to stop the fighting.

In return for setting up Masseria for the kill, Maranzano agreed with Luciano and Genovese that the war would stop and that they would be safe. Masseria had escaped death a number of times, so he would not be an easy target. It was Luciano who rose to the task of setting the old man up for the kill. What happened next was reminiscent of a scene right out of *The Godfather*. Convincing Masseria that it was safe to have dinner outside of his Manhattan apartment, Luciano accompanied his boss on the afternoon of April 15, 1931, to Coney Island. The restaurant was a well-known Italian eatery run by Geraldo Scarpato. Masseria's prodigious appetite was on display as he consumed plates of pasta and drank Chianti. After lunch Luciano convinced Masseria to play some cards and then excused himself to go the bathroom.

With Luciano out of the room, several armed men suddenly arrived outside Scarpato's at around 3:30 P.M. in a car driven by Ciro Terranova, the mafioso known as the "Artichoke King" because of the way he extorted the myriad pushcart peddlers in East Harlem. With Terranova remaining behind the wheel, a handful of gangsters—no one is certain just who took part—entered the restaurant and blasted away at Masseria, who died as soon as he hit the floor. When police arrived, Luciano told them he had been in the bathroom, a fact corroborated by the restaurant staff. Apart from a commotion when the shooting started, Luciano said he saw and heard nothing.

With Masseria out of the picture, Maranzano moved quickly to consolidate his power and bring the other mobsters under his control. It was at a meeting in a Bronx social hall that Maranzano threw a big dinner attended by hundreds of Mafia members and associates. It was an event that for all practical purposes marked the formal organization of Italian organized crime in the United States as it would be known for decades. Though powerful mobsters like Capone in Chicago and Luciano were said to be against the idea of a big boss lording over the crime families, Maranzano pushed the idea of himself being anointed the Caesar of organized crime. According to the recollection of mob turncoat Joseph Valachi, Maranzano

spelled out an organization of criminals that was modeled on the legions of ancient Rome.

"Mr. Maranzano started off the meeting by explaining how Joe The Boss was always shaking down members, right and left," Valachi said in his memoirs, the *Valachi Papers*, which were written by Peter Maas. "He told how he had sentenced all the Castellammarese to death without cause."

"He was speaking in Italian," Valachi recalled, "and he said, 'Now it is going to be different.' In the new setup he was going to be the *Capo di tutti Capi*, meaning the 'Boss of All Bosses.' He said that from here on we were going to be divided up into new Families. Each Family would have a boss and an under-boss."

Beneath the top echelon of bosses were to be lieutenants or *capodecini* under which were the regular members or soldiers. Instilling a military-style structure to the crime families, Maranzano set up a chain of command that required soldiers to talk about problems with their lieutenant who might then go higher up the chain to the underboss or boss.

Surrounded by a large crucifix and religious pictures, Maranzano talked continuously to the multitude of gangsters about the code of conduct that mafiosi must live by. The Mafia came before everything, and its members who violated the secrecy of the organization and talked to outsiders about its business would be killed, Maranzano said.

As a result of the Bronx meeting, bosses for five Mafia families emerged with Maranzano's blessing. They were Luciano, Thomas Gagliano, Joseph Profaci, Vincent Mangano, and Frank Scalise. By his own account, Joseph Bonanno was part of Maranzano's family and was an aide-de-camp to the crime boss. But while Luciano and the others should have felt comfortable with the power they now had and the relative peace in their world, they saw Maranzano as a power-hungry despot who threatened their rackets. Maranzano proceeded to shake down other mobsters under the guise of requiring them to buy tickets for banquets in his honor, affairs that netted

him more than \$100,000, a princely sum in 1931. Luciano in particular thought that the rule of a supreme boss lording over the crime families was an anachronism. Maranzano had turned out to be as much of a destructive force as Masseria had been. If Valachi was accurate in his recollection, Maranzano saw Luciano, Capone, and Genovese as threats and wanted them killed.

Maranzano's plan was to summon Luciano and Genovese to his office at 230 Park Avenue for a meeting and then have an Irish gangster by the name of Vincent Coll kill the both of them. But in a classic double cross, one of Maranzano's associates tipped off the intended victims. Luciano then moved quickly and turned to his Jewish cronies from the East Side of Manhattan to set up a counter-attack to take place the day of the meeting. Meyer Lansky, who would become the fabled financial wizard of the mob, hired four other Jewish gangsters who dressed as policemen, and on September 10, 1931, they confronted Maranzano in his Park Avenue office. The crime boss had been expecting Luciano and Genovese, but when two of the fake cops said they wanted to talk business, Maranzano went with them into an inner office. Using knives and guns, the assailants killed Maranzano.

Mob folklore has it that the day Maranzano died there was an orgy of blood in which as many as sixty of Maranzano's men in New York and other cities died. Even Bonanno subscribed to the story in his autobiography. The murders became known as the Night of the Sicilian Vespers and while that label has a certain grandiose ring harkening back to Sicilian history, the factual basis for the bloody legend appears way more modest. One historian checked police records in thirteen major cities for the days around the killing of Maranzano and found no indication of a large Mafia bloodbath—only three other mob homicides. Those three victims were Maranzano associates who author Peter Mass, in his book *The Valachi Papers*, identifies through police records as James LePore, Samuel Monaco, and Louis Russo. LePore was shot dead at an Arthur Avenue barber shop in the Bronx the same day as Maranzano,

while the bodies of Monaco and Russo were pulled out of Newark Bay in New Jersey on September 13, 1931, three days after the Maranzano assassination.

With Maranzano out of the picture, Luciano was the top mobster in New York City, but unlike his now deceased rival he was smart enough to realize that the old ways of having one big boss were outmoded and unworkable. There was too much money to be made in the rackets and everybody could have a cut, if only they worked together. Bonanno, who had been part of Maranzano's inner circle, was the strongest man in his particular crime family and was elected the new boss by acclamation.

"I had the choice of rejecting Luciano's olive branch or of accepting it in good faith. If told to fight, the men in my Family would have fought," Bonanno later said. "But what good would it have done to fight Luciano? He had claimed self-defense in the killing of Maranzano. Now he mainly wanted to be left alone to run his enterprises. He was not trying to impose himself on us as had Masseria. Lucky demanded nothing from us."

At first, Luciano wanted to carve up territory in the garment district with Bonanno, a move that the latter rejected. According to Bonanno's son, Salvatore or "Bill," who later wrote his own book *Bound by Honor*, his father and Luciano worked out a system of consensus and settlement of disputes that involved a so-called *Commizioni del Pace*, or Committee of Peace. This later became known as the Commission, the governing body of the mob.

The idea was for the five Mafia families to have a representative on the Commission and eventually over time this encompassed the heads of the families. Bill Bonanno, who anointed his father with the grandiose title "Angel of Peace" because of the way he brokered the idea of a commission, said the setup kept things relatively quiet between the crime families for decades.

"The heart of it was live and let live," Bill Bonanno explained. "Let each Family run its own business in its own way, don't interfere, and if any disputes arise, mediate them through the Commission. When a matter came up in one Family that might have a

spillover effect for all, *mediation*, not *warfare*, was the ruling word."

There wasn't total peace, even with the Commission set up, as mobsters got caught in disputes within the families and occasionally paid for it with their lives. However, beginning in 1931, there was relative peace and prosperity among the Mafia families in the United States, a period that lasted nearly three decades. It was during this period that Joseph Bonanno ran his family the way he saw fit, remaining one of the premier crime bosses of his time.

It was also a time when Bonanno got married. In a wedding at which many of the Mafia leaders were invited and attended, Joseph Bonanno married Fay Labruzzo on November 15, 1931. The reception was at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Prospect Park, Brooklyn. Just before the ceremony there was a bit of consternation as the ring Bonanno was to give to his bride went missing. It later turned up in the pants cuff of Natale Evola, one of Bonanno's wedding ushers. From that day forward, Evola, a garment trucker who lived in Brooklyn, was known by the moniker of "Joe Diamond."

Though Bonanno got married during the Depression, things were good for his businesses, both legal and illegal. Talese reports that a cash cushion, acquired during the earlier years, allowed Bonanno to buy up real estate at bargain prices. He had homes in Arizona and New York and by all accounts was a respected member of whatever community he called home. While Vito Genovese had to flee the country in 1934 to escape murder charges and Lucky Luciano was convicted in 1936 for running a prostitution business, Bonanno seemed to adroitly avoid trouble. The only rub with the law came in the late 1930s when a Brooklyn clothing factory he was a partner in was hit with a federal wage and hour violation. Bonanno was fined \$50.

Despite the troubles confronting some top mafiosi in America, the period before and after World War II in New York was one of prosperity and power for the mob. It was the start of the mob's Golden Age, when gangsters in New York held sway with politicians, judges, and prosecutors in a way that would become un-

thinkable—and impossible—in the twenty-first century. Bonanno, the consummate Castellammarese who combined a business acumen with a political shrewdness, did well in this halcyon time, even though he kept out of the limelight.

In its own way, World War II was a fortuitous event for the Mafia and allowed a number of American bosses a cushion of several years from legal trouble. Though it was a well-kept secret at the time, it is now well documented that U.S. officials turned to some of New York's mob bosses for help in the war effort. The first approach came after the passenger liner *Normandie* burned and foundered at its mooring on the West Side of Manhattan. Anxious to combat sabotage on the waterfront—something suspected of having caused the *Normandie* to burn—military and government officials turned to Joseph “Socks” Lanza, a Genovese man on the waterfront along the East River, including the Fulton Fish Market. Though under indictment for extortion, Lanza was seen as the right man for the job. While it is impossible to say if his efforts thwarted any sabotage or scared away any Axis spies, nothing akin to the *Normandie* incident happened again during the war.

Officials also turned to Luciano, who during the early part of the war was serving his sentence for prostitution-related offenses in the tough Dannemora prison in upstate New York. Luciano agreed to help and used his influence with his associates to help security on the West Side docks. But the really important help Luciano gave the Allied war effort came when from prison he established contact with his amici in Sicily. He instructed them to serve as spies and guides for the invading U.S., British, and Canadian forces who landed on the island in the summer of 1943.

After the Allies were able to take Sicily in five weeks, they leapfrogged to the Italian mainland with the invasion of the Salerno-Naples area. Again, the Allies had the help of another New York Mafia boss, Vito Genovese. Living in Naples since he fled New York following his indictment for murder of an old business partner, Genovese had become something of a stellar citizen. He even reportedly arranged for the murder on a Manhattan street in

1943 of one of dictator Benito Mussolini's most vocal opponents, Carlos Tresca. For the Allies, Genovese worked as a translator and, as Talese later reports, was able to provide information about the Italian black market profiteers.

Genovese's wartime efforts didn't insulate him from problems. The FBI had him extradited back to New York to stand trial for the Fernando Boccia murder. But conveniently, the key witness against Genovese was poisoned to death in the Brooklyn jail cell where he was being held as a material witness. Deprived of the witness's crucial testimony, prosecutors dropped the case against Genovese. He was free to live and work at his pleasure in New York.

The war assistance by some of the mob bosses didn't give them carte blanche to do business as usual. Luciano had Washington's gratitude and won his freedom from prison when New York Governor Thomas Dewey, the very man who while working as Manhattan's district attorney secured Luciano's conviction, signed an order commuting his sentence on February 2, 1946. But as part of the deal, Luciano had to agree to voluntarily depart the United States (he was not a naturalized citizen), which he did shortly after Dewey signed the commutation order. Before setting sail on the *Laura Keene*, an old Liberty ship, Luciano, in another example of how the mob guys could get one over, was able to leave the immigration station at Ellis Island and attend a farewell party in his honor at the Village Inn in Greenwich Village. Mafiosi, judges, and politicians attended and reportedly gave Luciano thick envelopes presumably stuffed with cash. After sailing back to Italy on February 9, Luciano had to work through his emissaries, chief among them being Genovese, who was out from under the yoke of his legal troubles.

The war years had emboldened the mob; having seen how its effective power on the street and the docks had worked to its advantage. Crime families, including that of Joseph Bonanno, also developed rackets by trading in rationed goods, including precious gasoline stamps. But other core (and illegal) Mafia businesses in New York such as the docks, labor unions, and the garment industry were also prospering. Despite prosecutions by Dewey, the Mafia

families also enjoyed a tremendous amount of connection to New York politicians and judges.

By the end of the war, Luciano had control of his family through Genovese and was a major force. Rounding out the leadership of the New York families were four other bosses from the time Maranzano was deposed: Joseph Profaci, Vincent Mangano, Thomas Gagliano, and, of course, Joseph Bonanno. However, Genovese had an ambitious Frank Costello to contend with and that created problems. It was Costello who had cultivated friendships and allegiances at a time when Genovese had been ducking prosecution in Italy. Profaci, Mangano, and Gagliano all had aspiring and power-hungry underbosses and associates to deal with. But Bonanno had no such complication of leadership and command. He was the sole power in his crime family, unchallenged by any upstarts or intrigue.

CHAPTER 3

The Toughest Kid on the Block

Traveling east along Metropolitan Avenue from Williamsburg where Joseph Bonanno got his start as a criminal, you will soon cross into the area of New York City known as Maspeth. The origin of the neighborhood's name is obscured within some mix of the old Dutch and Indian languages. It was once a swampy area, the Indian name meaning "the place of bad waters." In the nineteenth century, it contained large trout ponds that were drained over a century ago. Today, the largest body of water in Maspeth is the Newtown Creek, an estuary officials have been gamely trying to clean up for years.

When western parts of what is today known as Queens became accessible by the railroad and ferries in the nineteenth century, industry grew and Maspeth saw a large influx of working families. Factories sprung up where workers spun hemp into rope and processed fertilizer and flooring. The neighborhood became another magnet for immigrants. The cheap housing and residential character of the place drew Italian, Irish, and Polish immigrants. Well into the twenty-first century Maspeth was one of the main residential areas for firefighters, sanitation workers, laborers, and truck drivers who traced their ancestry back to Italy.

It was immediately after World War II that an Italian immigrant family with the surname of Vitale took up residence close to Maspeth. Giuseppe and Lilli Vitale had emigrated from the village of San Giuseppe, some forty miles south of Palermo in the western part of Sicily. Life in the old country had not been easy, particularly when faced with the infant mortality rates that Sicilian families experi-

enced. Like most Sicilian households, the Vitale family had hoped for a son. They already had a name. The boy would be called Giuseppe or "Joseph" in English.

Male offspring were favored by parents since they could guarantee the family name would be passed on. But the Vitale family was not going to be blessed with a son, certainly not while living in the hardscrabble hills of the Sicilian countryside. Two baby boys died, either in childbirth or shortly after. Twice the Vitale parents had to bury the tiny bodies as their three daughters watched.

In Maspeth, the Vitale family lived in the kind of working obscurity that immigrants found as their niche. They weren't rich but they had by all accounts a quiet, nurturing home life where the three daughters—Anna, Betty, and the youngest Josephine—thrived. Giuseppe, also known as Joseph, and Lilli Vitale took one more chance at having a son. Seemingly cursed with bad luck with sons named Giuseppe, the parents decided that if another male child came into their lives he would be named something different. On September 22, 1947, Lilli Vitale gave birth to a son, and he was baptized as Salvatore. He survived. The family had great hopes for him.

Both employed, Giuseppe and Lilli spent a great deal of time out of their house and entrusted the care of Salvatore to their daughters. Josephine was four years older than her baby brother but even at such a young age, with her parents spending so much time out of the house making a living, she became a surrogate mother.

The Vitale girls fussed over Salvatore in ways that were certain to spoil him. He got what he wanted when he wanted it, usually from Josephine. Yet, family members would later remember that despite all the doting from his siblings, Salvatore Vitale did not respond in kind to his sisters. Sure, he may have been spoiled, but he seemed to lack affection, his relatives would later recall. He didn't do anything terribly wrong as a child. But while the Vitale women centered their lives around the home, Salvatore seemed distant and

cold. He should have been another girl, his father would say of his only son, according to one family member.

Maspeth is bisected by the Long Island Expressway, the concrete ribbon of a roadway that became over the years the crowded conduit for much of the traffic going to and from New York City. The part of Maspeth north of the expressway—where the Vitale family would buy a house on Sixty-eighth Street near Grand Avenue—retained its residential character. The same was largely true of the southern part of the community, although residential development was hemmed in by large cemeteries.

It was a few blocks from the main shopping boulevard of Grand Avenue in Maspeth that another working-class family took up residence. Like the Vitales who lived about five blocks away, Anthony and Adeline Massino were Italian Americans. But while the Massinos traced their heritage to the city of Naples and its environs, they were second-generation Americans born and raised in the United States. They had three children, Joseph, John, and Anthony. Their father worked in a neighborhood grocery store.

Joseph Massino was a boy comfortable on the streets. Big boned, trim, and muscular, he was athletic but not very good in school. Friends would later recall he became very adept in math. In a working-class neighborhood where as a kid you had to hold your own to make your mark, he earned a reputation of being one of the toughest on the block. He could kick ass with the best of them.

Joseph Massino only got to the seventh grade in what is now Intermediate School 73 on Fifty-fourth Avenue. Bored with school, Massino took a variety of jobs, including as a summer lifeguard at beach clubs in Atlantic Beach on Long Island and in Florida. In something of a Maspeth legend, which Massino himself would insist was true, he supposedly once swam from Breezy Point in the Rockaways to Manhattan Beach, a distance of over one mile. Stories also circulated that he would jump off the Cross Bay Bridge, which connected the Rockaways to the mainland, and swim for hours.

With a reputation for being a tough guy and with a full head of

wavy black hair, Massino's rugged looks caught the eye of neighborhood girl Josephine Vitale, who was seven months younger. She had been voted the best looking in her eighth grade class. The year was 1956.

Around the time Joseph Massino and Josephine Vitale were getting acquainted in working-class Maspeth, the American Mafia was on the verge of some big changes. Bonanno was shuttling back and forth between Tucson, Arizona, and New York. He made one side trip to Havana, Cuba, which in those days was a playground for the rich and infamous. As he recounted the Havana trip in his autobiography, Bonanno hooked up with the financial mob wizard Meyer Lansky, who owned a piece of the Hotel Nacional, and spent his days wandering the streets of old Havana, where he stayed in some flophouse hotel in 1924.

The way Joseph Bonanno recounted the Havana trip it was nothing more than a nostalgic trip away from home of some "Ulysses," as he likened himself, who had his fill of adventure in life. His son, Bill, in his 1999 autobiography, put a different spin on the Havana trip on which he accompanied his father. Bill Bonanno said that his father met up with not only Lansky but also New York Mafia bosses Albert Anastasia, Frank Costello, and Joseph Profaci. "We were there for pleasure, not business, but business came up," the younger Bonanno said. Cuba's dictator Fulgencio Batista met with the mobsters and tried to get them to somehow influence the Eisenhower administration to take a more active role against the insurgency led by Fidel Castro. According to Bill Bonanno, Castro figured the mafiosi had an interest in the island's drug trade, aside from the millions made in the casinos.

The conventional wisdom about the American Mafia's stance on drugs has been that the bosses were against narcotics trafficking. But if it was a hands-off policy, it was riddled with holes like Swiss cheese. Bill Bonanno asserted that in 1947 in a clandestine Mafia Commission meeting on a yacht off Florida—and not in Havana as widely believed—the bosses argued about drugs. According to

Bonanno, the "liberal" faction of the Commission, composed of Vito Genovese and Thomas Lucchese, wanted to get involved in heroin. The conservatives, led by Joseph Bonanno, thought it was a bad idea and prevailed on the Commission to pass a resolution prohibiting narcotics trafficking. The elder Bonanno, his son stated, believed drugs would destroy the families.

Despite such prohibitions, a number of New York Mafia leaders began to push harder and allowed some of their men to get involved in narcotics. The same divisiveness over drugs also split the Sicilian Mafia. When Joseph Bonanno made a trip to Sicily in early fall of 1957—again part pleasure and part business—he learned that New York Mafia families were involved in the trafficking of heroin and its opium base, according to his son. Impossible, the elder Bonanno responded when told of the New York connection. "They are up to their asses in it," an old friend explained. "They couldn't care less about our glorious tradition."

The main violator of the Mafia drug ban was certainly Vito Genovese, who finally got Frank Costello out of the leadership role in their family by ordering an assassination attempt of his rival. The plot to kill Costello culminated in a shooting in May 1957 as the dapper Costello was returning to his apartment in Central Park West. The gunman has long been reputed to have been Vincent Gigante, whose bullet grazed Costello in the head but didn't kill him. Getting the message, Costello retired as boss of Lucky Luciano's old family. From then onward, Genovese pushed the narcotics connections, ultimately pushing so hard that he was arrested on narcotics charges by federal officials in 1958 and after his conviction was sent to prison where he died in 1969.

It was very soon after the Costello assassination attempt that one of the other conservative bosses, Albert Anastasia, was targeted for death. The plotters were rival Vito Genovese, who conspired with Carlo Gambino, then a rising captain in Anastasia's family. Gambino had already arranged the murder of Anastasia's underboss Frank Scalise, the first step to seizing control of the family. The

assassination of Anastasia as he sat in a barber's chair at the Park Sheraton Hotel on October 25, 1957, became one of the legendary mob murders in New York.

Anastasia's murder was splashed on the front page of all of New York's major daily newspapers—there were more than ten of them at the time—and Joseph Massino couldn't have missed seeing the big story. But Joseph Bonanno did, at least initially. He was in Sicily when Anastasia was killed and only learned of it when he returned to New York. For a startled Bonanno, the killing of one of his conservative allies on the Commission was a bad sign. "The Pax Bonanno, that I was so proud of having forged was on the verge of disintegration," he said years later.

Immediately after Anastasia's death, the American Mafia leaders called a massive summit conference in the town of Apalachin in up-state New York, which had been the site of a Commission meeting in 1956. The setting was the home of Joseph Barbara, a mafioso with ties to local politicians and police. Bonanno was opposed to the 1957 meeting, thinking it was ill advised and the location not the safest place for mob bosses to gather. Evidently, Barbara reported having trouble with greedy local law enforcement officials.

Nevertheless, the meeting was held on November 14, 1957, and on the agenda were three items: the ratification of Gambino's takeover of the Anastasia family; ways to deal with the new, tough federal narcotics control law that took effect in 1956; and aggressive unionization of garment factories tied to the mob in eastern Pennsylvania.

The meeting turned into a disaster for the mafiosi who attended. Local police noticed the traffic going into Barbara's property and set up a roadblock, checked the cars, and noted the names on the driver licenses. Bosses like Vito Genovese, Carlo Gambino, Joseph Profaci, and Joseph Magliocco were noted by police. Bonanno, who had tarried in nearby Endicott with his cousin, Stefano Maggadino, said he heard about the roadblocks on the news reports and avoided the meeting altogether. In total, about sixty members of various Mafia families were listed by police as being at Barbara's

home and while no one was immediately arrested, investigation of the meeting spawned further investigations that led to arrests for years to come.

While Mafia politics can sometimes move with the speed of a bullet, in the case of Anastasia's murder, the full ramifications would not be felt for years. Things moved in convoluted fashion and ultimately the changes in two leadership positions in the space of a few months meant that the so-called liberal wing of the Commission, composed of Thomas Lucchese, Vito Genovese, and Carlo Gambino, who took over from Anastasia, was equal in number to the more conservative men of tradition represented by Joseph Bonanno, Joseph Profaci, and Stefano Maggadino, from Buffalo.

For Bonanno, the new alignment in the Commission was a sign that the old traditions of the Mafia were changing in ways that he found distasteful. While the Castellammarese, who shaped the American Mafia since the 1930s, were bound by Sicilian traditions of loyalty and honor, others seemed seduced by the constant chase for money. The descent into narcotics was the clearest indication that the production of capital through risky enterprises was viewed by some as worth the danger. The publicity and law enforcement interest in the Mafia after Apalachin also painted what Bonanno saw as an honorable way of life as nothing more than a conspiracy bent on destroying America.

Bonanno also believed that the Mafia was hurting its own image with the public assassinations like that of Anastasia. The year 1961 was a case in point. Upstarts in Profaci's family, a group of young Turks led by the Gallo brothers—Joey, Albert, and Larry—revolted against the boss. The Gallos were really nothing more than mob toughs who went around strong-arming businesses to take their jukeboxes. Investigators even determined that the Gallos had set up their own union of jukebox repairmen as part of the racket. But as former New York Police Department (NYPD) detective Ralph Salerno recounted, the publicity the brothers received from a 1957 U.S. Senate hearing chaired by Senator John McClellan gave them an inflated sense of self-importance.

Salerno was part of a NYPD investigation that used wiretaps and bugs to discover that the Gallos were unhappy with the way they were being treated by their boss Profaci. According to Salerno's account in his own book *The Crime Confederation*, the Gallos became angered when Profaci asked them to kill a gambler named Frank "Frankie Shots" Abbatemarco in November 1959. Abbatemarco was killed, but his gambling interests went to Profaci and his friends while the Gallo crew got nothing.

The Gallo gang engineered a bold kidnapping of five key leaders of the Profaci family and had also targeted Joe Profaci himself, although he escaped. Salerno said the kidnappings were never reported to police, although informants kept Brooklyn detectives up to date. The hostages were held for two weeks as Commission emissaries tried to broker a settlement. Joey Gallo, the hothead, didn't want to negotiate but was ordered to take a trip to California by his older brother Larry, a move that led to a release of the hostages.

In early 1962, the Commission met to deal with the Profaci-Gallo dispute and it was Bonanno who convinced the members to allow Profaci to remain as head of the family. There had been a push by Gambino and Lucchese to get Profaci to retire. But Bonanno said the families had to trust each other to take care of their internal problems. A truce lasted for about six months, but Salerno said he and his fellow investigators discovered that Profaci was quietly working to strike back at the Gallos. After Larry Gallo escaped a strangulation attempt at the Sahara Lounge on Utica Avenue in Brooklyn, a full-fledged war broke out, unlike anything seen since the days of Masseria and Maranzano in the 1930s. The Gallo brothers went to the mattresses, barricading themselves in two apartments on President Street in Brooklyn, armed to the teeth with rifles and shotguns. In his telling of the Gallo War, Salerno counted no fewer than fourteen attempted assassinations and killings involving Profaci and Gallo loyalists. The war continued even after Profaci died in June 1962.

With the death of Profaci, his underboss and brother-in-law

Joseph Magliocco tried to get the Commission to ratify him as the new boss. He had the support of Bonanno, who no doubt saw a continuation of the alliance Bonanno had with the late Profaci. The Commission, however, denied Magliocco approval. Bonanno chalked that up to the fact that the Gallos had support on the Commission from the Gambino-Lucchese faction. Still, Magliocco persisted and intrigue continued.

Both Joseph and son Bill Bonanno, in their separate accounts of Magliocco's struggle for power, believe this was a significant episode in the Bonanno family's growing disillusionment with the New York mob scene. Joseph Bonanno said that his son Bill, at a time when he was seeking guidance about his marital problems, stayed briefly with Magliocco, his wife's uncle. The Magliocco estate was a walled compound on Long Island that at this time in 1963 was heavily fortified and guarded, much the way Vito Corleone's home was depicted in the *Godfather*.

In a classic mob maneuver, Joseph Bonanno related that Magliocco appeared to have planted his own spy, a mobster close to Gambino and Lucchese. According to the elder Bonanno, both Magliocco and Bill Bonanno met this spy at a Long Island railroad station one particular day.

"Magliocco and the man briefly exchanged a few words," Bonanno recalled. "Magliocco used this man to keep tabs on his enemies and to let him know what Gambino and Lucchese were saying about him."

Sixteen years after his father's account of that brief encounter, Bill Bonanno related a somewhat different, more sinister version of that day at the Brentwood railroad station. The man who got off the train and spoke with Magliocco was Sally Musacio, a relative by marriage to the aging Magliocco. According to Bill Bonanno, Magliocco asked, "Is everything set?" When Musacio answered yes, Magliocco said, "Okay, start."

According to Bill Bonanno's account, that brief exchange was a command by Magliocco that a mob war was to start, with Lucchese, Gambino, and Maggadino being the targets. But a young

captain in Magliocco's crew named Joseph Colombo tipped off Lucchese and Gambino about what Magliocco—and the Bonannos—planned. To undo the political damage, Bill Bonanno met Lucchese at his home in Long Beach, Long Island, and explained that it was sheer coincidence that he was present in Magliocco's company. The wily Lucchese didn't buy the explanation.

Shortly after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in November 1963, Joseph Magliocco died without ever being officially recognized by the Commission as boss of the old Profaci family. As his reward for ratting out Magliocco and the Bonannos, Joseph Colombo was blessed by the Commission with leadership of the family. But while the likelihood of serious mob warfare had been averted, the Bonanno family continued to be the object of scorn by the other New York bosses. According to Joseph Bonanno, his cousin from Buffalo, Stefano Maggadino, was leading the opposition.

Portrayed as an insecure man in the face of the elder Bonanno's business ventures in Canada, Maggadino saw his cousin as a threatening interloper into his territory of Toronto. Joseph Bonanno, who had been expelled from Canada in a legal dustup with authorities there, insisted he had no such designs, but his relationship with his cousin continued to sour. Things did not improve when Bonanno installed his son Bill as consiglieri, a move that angered older family captains such as Gaspar DiGregorio.

For years, Joseph Bonanno had been growing increasingly disillusioned with the mob life. He felt that the old Sicilian traditions of his kind of men of honor were on the wane. He was spending more time outside of New York, mostly in Arizona. A man of intelligence, Bonanno had a curiosity about many things and felt comfortable talking about any number of subjects. But he was also arrogant and condescending, seeing old friends and relatives such as Maggadino as intellectual inferiors. Bonanno also came to view the Commission, which was firmly in the hands of the Lucchese-Gambino alliance, as illegitimate and meddling in his own family affairs. So in 1964 when Maggadino had three Commission emis-

saries summon Bonanno to a meeting to hear grievances against him, the elder Bonanno refused to show up.

The flouting by Bonanno of the Commission's demand for a meeting was a cardinal sin. The severity of the repercussions were noted by Sam "the Plumber" DeCavalcante, the Mafia boss of New Jersey. Though he didn't know it, DeCavalcante's office in Kenilworth, New Jersey, had been bugged by the FBI for a four-year period between 1961 to 1965. DeCavalcante was picked up on the recordings telling associates just how poisoned Bonanno's relationship with the Commission had become. It seemed to DeCavalcante that Bonanno had been the source of the problem. Among Bonanno's sins, DeCavalcante said were his attempts to muscle in on other families and his elevating his son Bill to the role of consiglieri. But it was Bonanno's ignoring of the Commission request for his presence at a meeting that did him in, DeCavalcante claimed.

"The Commission doesn't recognize Joseph Bonanno as the Boss anymore," DeCavalcante told his friend Joe Zicarelli, a Bonanno crime family member who lived in New Jersey. "They [the Commission] can't understand why this guy is ducking them."

DeCavalcante told an incredulous Zicarelli that neither Bonanno, nor his son Bill, would be recognized as leaders of the crime family. That rang ominous for Zicarelli, who suggested both men might be in danger. However, DeCavalcante said Bonanno wasn't in any danger unless he made any tricky moves.

Joseph Bonanno's challenge to the Commission and Maggadino set the stage for one of the most bizarre episodes in American Mafia history. On October 20, 1964, the day before Bonanno was to appear before a federal grand jury in Manhattan probing him on a possible conspiracy charge, he was accosted by two men on Park Avenue near Thirty-sixth Street in Manhattan.

"Come on Joe, my boss wants you," one of the burly men said as they hustled Bonanno into a waiting car.

The grab took place around midnight outside the luxury apartment building of Bonanno's attorney, William Maloney. Maloney tried to chase after the intruders, but one of them fired a single shot

from a handgun at Maloney's feet, sending him scurrying for protection inside the lobby of his building. Bonanno was bundled into a car that sped off toward Lexington Avenue.

The New York newspapers went into a spasm of sensational stories about Bonanno's abduction and for months stories appeared, fed by police sources, that Bonanno had been spotted in Europe, was hiding in Arizona, or was secretly in the protective custody of the federal government. There was plenty of speculation that Bonanno had staged his own kidnapping to avoid having to testify before the grand jury. Some news headlines had Bonanno written off as dead. DeCavalcante held to the theory that Bonanno staged his own disappearance and a month after the incident FBI recordings show him saying as much to his own underboss.

"He pulled that off himself," DeCavalcante said. "It was his own men. We figure it was his kid and Vito."

For sixteen months Joseph Bonanno was missing, at least in the eyes of police and federal investigators who couldn't find him. What happened? The only account of what happened to Bonanno was the one he provided in his autobiography. He recounted that his abductors were men he knew, both relatives of Maggadino. Crossing the George Washington Bridge, the car went over the Hudson River and traveled for several hours over the rain-slicked roads. The next morning at a farmhouse in the woods "somewhere in upstate New York," he was told by his captors to make himself comfortable and wait.

"In the afternoon, I heard a car pull up to the farmhouse. This was it. My nemesis had arrived. I was summoned to the main room of the house," Bonanno recounted. "Stefan Maggadino tromped in—an old spry and portly man with ruddy cheeks and an amiable smile."

According to Bonanno, his cousin was alternately sardonic, angry, solicitous, concerned, and beseeching in what were weeks and weeks of conversations about their relationship and the fact that Maggadino suspected that his New York City relative had designs on his territory upstate. But more important for Bonanno, the

talks revealed that Maggadino had a deep-seated envy of his cousin and feelings of insecurity and inferiority.

Bonanno later speculated about whether Maggadino had acted with the consent of Gambino and Lucchese, or the entire Commission. He never stated whether he had any answer about what support his cousin had for the kidnapping. After a few weeks, Bonanno said he was driven by the same two men who abducted him to El Paso, Texas, where he asked to be let out of the car.

How true is Bonanno's account? No one knows, but it is likely that Bonanno staged his own kidnapping. If the snatch was real, they would have killed him. Years after Bonanno's autobiography was published with the account of his disappearance, Bill Bonanno recounted receiving a cryptic telephone call from an unidentified man about two months after the Park Avenue kidnapping. The call was made to a public telephone Bill Bonanno said he and his father had arranged years earlier to use if either of them ran into trouble. In essence, the caller told Bonanno's son that the Mafia boss was okay and to "just sit tight." His father, the younger Bonanno was told, would see him in a few days.

As far as can be determined, Joseph Bonanno remained out of sight of law enforcement and his son for approximately another seventeen months. Then, on May 17, 1966, after being dropped off by a friend at Foley Square in lower Manhattan and in the company of his new attorney, Albert Kreiger, Joseph Bonanno walked into the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York. Taking a side entrance to avoid being spotted, Bonanno walked into a third-floor courtroom and surrendered himself to the judge on duty. Since federal prosecutors had been notified by Kreiger, federal marshals placed Bonanno under arrest.

In the months that followed his dramatic surrender, Bonanno would have to deal with a trial on charges he willfully failed to appear before a federal grand jury. But it was quite clear that Bonanno was finished as a key New York Mafia boss. He had no backing on the Commission and his arrogant attempt to have his son step in as leader and the snubs of the other bosses destroyed his ability to

lead. He made no secret in relaying a message to the Commission that everything stemmed from problems he had with Maggadino. With a gun held to his head by the Commission, Bonanno then haltingly moved into a forced retirement. He was lucky to get away with his life.

This strange period of strife between Bonanno and Maggadino led to the final distancing of Bonanno from playing any active role in what he called "our tradition." Bonanno's continued absence also brought on leadership instability within the crime family that saw various men attempt to assume the role of boss. Backed by Maggadino, one of Bonanno's captains, Gaspar DiGregorio, made a brief pretense as boss and was able to profit from the defections of some crime family members and associates who didn't want to be frozen out of rackets by being loyal to the Bonannos.

As a tool of Maggadino, DiGregorio tried to set up Bill Bonanno for assassination in January 1966 in what became known as the Troutman Street shootout in Brooklyn. The younger Bonanno escaped unscathed. An aspiring mob gunman named Frank Mari was later credited with firing some of the dozens of shots that never found a target. Ultimately, DiGregorio lost face because of the botched hit and suffered a heart attack; his role as factional leader was taken over by Paul Sciacca, a garment manufacturer who had been a Bonanno consigliere years earlier. Sciacca, while not considered a powerful leader, was nevertheless acceptable to Maggadino and his allies on the Commission, namely Gambino, Lucchese, and Colombo, who by then was firmly set as leader of the old Profaci family.

Though considered by the Commission to be boss of the Bonanno family, Sciacca was really just the leader of a number of factions fighting for power in the clan. Out of a crime family believed in 1966 to number 400 members, Bonanno loyalists were estimated to have comprised about half that. DeCavalcante was recorded on one FBI tape saying that as soon as the Commission voted Bonanno out as boss in 1964 at least sixty members had already defected. Though he was tapped by his father to be among a

group of three or four trusted aides to watch after crime family affairs, Bill Bonanno was distracted by his own legal problems and concerns about the safety of his wife and children. The Troutman Street shootout had also shown that Bill was in personal danger. Because Bill had to be absent quite often from New York during this period, it fell to Natale Evola, who had been an usher at his father's wedding, to steer those loyal to Bonanno.

Times were dangerous, yes. The destruction of what Joseph Bonanno once called the Pax Bonanno had resulted in numerous shootings and murders. Aside from the abortive Troutman Street incident, there were a number of other mob killings and shootings during the "Banana War," as the crime family clashes were known. Among those wounded was Frank Mari, one of the men believed to have been involved in the attempt on Bill Bonanno's life.

Joseph Bonanno had prided himself on the decades of relative peace he had imposed on New York's Mafia scene. In his view, it was the convincing force of his personality and the political ties he had to other Castellammarese leaders that made the Mafia thrive. The peace allowed each crime family to conduct its rackets and make money. But as Bonanno would say, it was because the individual members of the Mafia were restrained by shared values of respect, trust, loyalty, and honor that the families maintained discipline. However, toward the end of his tortured reign, Joseph Bonanno saw that change.

"Everyone likes to have money, but in the absence of a higher moral code the making of money becomes an unwholesome goal," Bonanno said in his autobiography. As Bonanno saw it, the "individualistic orientation" encouraged disrespect for authority and family values. In many ways then, the old crime boss sounded like any conservative man who felt in the face of a changing world that he had become an anachronism.

The debacle with the Commission showed that Bonanno had lost his touch as a mob politician. The internecine warfare that erupted in Bonanno's last years as boss—the Banana War—littered the streets of New York with bodies until well into 1968. By this

time, though, the elder Bonanno had lost his taste for the battle. The fragmentation of his once-powerful family was also too much for its founder.

"There is no *Bonanno Family* anymore," he bemoaned in his book. He was right—to a point.

CHAPTER 4

Maspeth Joe

Those old enough to remember can recall what they were doing and where they were when they heard that President John F. Kennedy was assassinated on November 21, 1963. Bill Bonanno certainly did. He said he was in a Manhattan steak house with a number of mafiosi. Among them was Philip "Rusty" Rastelli, one of a stable of Bonanno loyalists from Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

Destined for a life of crime, Rastelli had the credentials at an early age. A juvenile delinquent by the age of eight, Rastelli had his first big arrest in 1936 at the age of seventeen for homicide. It was later reduced to assault and he was sent away for a term in a reformatory school. The time upstate didn't help him since it was only four years later that he drew a full-fledged adult prison term of five to ten years for assault and robbery. Through the 1940s and 1950s, Rastelli was arrested a few more times but saw those charges dismissed.

The eldest of three brothers who all would go on to be criminals, Rastelli, when he wasn't in jail, was busy developing an interesting business niche. Williamsburg and its environs like Greenpoint and Maspeth were filled with trucking terminals, warehouses, and factories. The workers needed to eat but never had the time—particularly with thirty-minute lunch breaks—to do anything adventuresome. So, a service industry of food wagons developed to fill the need. Loaded with drinks, sandwiches, pastries, and coffee, the silver-bodied lunch wagons were vital to industrial New York. It would become Rastelli's calling and his own racket.

In the 1920s and 1930s, mobster Ciro Terranova wasn't subtle in his extortion of the pushcart vendors in Manhattan's East Harlem and elsewhere. He would shake them down for payoffs and those who didn't comply found themselves the object of a good beating while their pushcarts were trashed. Rastelli had a more intricate form of extortion. Beginning in 1966 he founded the Workmen's Mobile Lunch Association. Among the benefits offered the food vendors who operated the lunch wagons was the guarantee of a daily route with no competition. Business could be so good that even some of the association officers took over routes.

Rastelli kept some routes in reserve and doled them out as favors for friends. Of course, there was a catch for such a guarantee of livelihood. The vendors had to pay \$10 to \$15 a week—not an insignificant sum in the 1960s—for membership (protection) to Rastelli's association. But it was the wholesale suppliers of the lunch wagons who were really cash cows. They had to pay off Rastelli's crowd as well, sometimes over \$900 a month, for the privilege of supplying sandwiches and drinks to the lunch wagons. If those payments weren't made, the suppliers would see their lunch wagon customers dry up. It was classic racketeering activity, maybe not the most flashy stuff around but it suited Rastelli well.

When the great Banana War sputtered to a close in 1968 and Joseph Bonanno and his family decamped for Arizona, Joseph Massino was a strapping twenty-five-year-old man with a wife—he had married Josephine in 1960—and young daughter. For work he ran a lunch wagon, taking a cue from his mother's side of the family, which began outfitting the trucks to carry snacks to factories. Since he lived in Maspeth, Massino didn't have far to travel to service the factories that lined Grand and Metropolitan avenues. "Joe Maspeth" was how the lunch wagon crowd knew him. Friends remember that it was a struggle at first. Massino was strapped for cash and in the wintertime he took to standing around Grand and Metropolitan avenues selling Christmas trees to earn a few more dollars. He even had to borrow a few hundred dollars from relatives to pay the med-

ical bills for the birth of his first child. But Rastelli liked him and that counted for something.

The lunch wagon business might have been a racket, seeing how Rastelli controlled things, but for his friends like Massino things worked out. The lunch business could be a living and for a thrifty husband and father like Massino the work was enough to get by. In 1966, records show that Joseph and Josephine Massino took out their first mortgage for \$16,000 at 5.5 percent interest from the Greenpoint Savings Bank to purchase a house on Caldwell Avenue in Maspeth, just a few doors down from where his parents lived at number 71-21 Caldwell. Joseph and Josephine Massino, who had been living a few blocks away in a two-story frame house on Perry Avenue just off the Long Island Expressway, needed the extra space since they had a five-year-old daughter, Adeline, and were planning for more children. The payments for what appears to be Massino's first tangible stake in the American dream of home ownership amounted to \$98.26 a month.

Anyone connected to Philip Rastelli and his brothers, Carmine and Marty, had an easy entrée to mob life. Philip Rastelli wasn't flashy, but his rackets were solid. Massino was close to Rastelli's brother Carmine, who ran a depot where the lunch wagons filled up with supplies, so he was guaranteed good deals and fresh pastries. Massino's spot for his coffee stand was on Remsen Place in Maspeth, right around the corner from the house on Perry Street and just a short walk from his new house on Caldwell Avenue. The lunch wagon Massino had was dubbed the "roach coach," which may or may not have reflected the level of hygiene practiced in the food trade. Gradually, through the Rastelli connection, Joseph Massino, the beefy food vendor who also earned the nickname "Joe Wagons," became intertwined with the Bonanno crime family. It would prove to be an auspicious time for Massino to build such ties.

The war for leadership of what had been the crime family of Joseph Bonanno had led to a confusing situation to say the least. By

the spring of 1967, law enforcement officials in the United States and Canada believed from their surveillance reports and other investigations that Bonanno had maneuvered a comeback of sorts because of the weakness exhibited by the leadership of Gaspar DiGregorio, the man who was backed by Stefano Maggadino for the role of boss when Bonanno disappeared. But even a top NYPD inspector in charge of intelligence had to admit that in the end investigators were groping to understand what was going on in the crime family.

DiGregorio's abdication after he suffered a heart attack only months after he was chosen as boss led the way to power plays by Bill Bonanno, which had resulted in the Troutman Street shootout and the open warfare that followed. But by late 1968, police perceived a different situation in the Bonanno family, one in which Joseph Bonanno accepted Paul Sciacca as the new boss and had agreed to move permanently with his family to Arizona. MAFIA LEADERS SETTLE "BANANA WAR" was the headline of a November 24, 1968, *New York Times* story about the development.

Police-organized crime investigators, like Kremlinologists of the cold war period who studied the Soviet Union, looked to social circumstances and public appearances to divine what was taking place behind the scenes in the Mafia. In terms of the Bonanno family, it was a September 14, 1968, wedding on Long Island that led police to believe that the crime family war had been settled. As police told the *Times*, Bonanno loyalists and Sciacca supporters who had been on hostile terms were "disported together convivially" at the wedding reception of Sciacca's son, Anthony, to Florence Rando, a niece of Frank Mari.

The Sciacca-Rando wedding wasn't the nuptial of the century, but it drew a lot of attention from law enforcement because such celebrations are places where mobsters want to be seen and do business. The guest lists for such functions are studied because they provide clues to who is in and who is out in the mob hierarchy. In this case, there were 200 guests who attended a reception at the Wood-

bury Country Club and detectives filled nine pages of notes with their jottings of the various car license plates.

There is no evidence that Joseph Massino, who at that stage in his life was nothing more than an associate in the crime family, attended this particular wedding. But his mentor Rastelli was spotted by police at the reception and his presence signaled that those who had once been loyal to Joseph Bonanno and his son had buried the hatchet with the Sciacca faction. Rastelli was clearly safe and in his role as captain had not lost any stature. A peace of sorts had blossomed.

However, Sciacca suffered from a bad heart. So he wanted to stop his involvement with the crime family and was in the process of grooming Mari to become his successor. A triggerman and reputed dope dealer, Mari was elected family boss during a sitdown in a restaurant in Manhattan in May 1969. His reign was short. In September 1969, Mari, his bodyguard James Episcopia, and Sciacca loyalist Michael Adamo disappeared. Their bodies were never found. Police suspected Mari had been killed as payback for having a role in the murder of Joseph Bonanno's bodyguard Sam Perrone a year earlier. Another theory was that some mobsters simply resented the way Mari was pushed forward, particularly since he hadn't distinguished himself.

The Bonanno family could have lurched into another period of disarray, but the Commission took the unusual step after Mari's disappearance of appointing a triumvirate to rule the family, at least temporarily. The three leaders who were to work as a team were Natale Evola, who had weathered a narcotics conviction to maintain his power in the garment trucking industry, an obscure crime captain named Joseph DiFilippi, and the none-too-flashy Philip Rastelli.

As a member of the crime family's governing committee, Rastelli's stature within the mob had grown and those like Massino who had hitched themselves to him began to see their lives tightly intertwined with his fortunes. It would take years for the importance of

this connection between Massino and Rastelli to become apparent. Much of what would later happen to Massino could be traced to Rastelli's influence. Theirs was a mentoring relationship and the ties that developed would endure for a lifetime.

It was also in 1970 that a Brooklyn kid with straw blond hair and a Germanic name started hanging around Massino's Remsen Place coffee trucks. The youngster with the pale complexion stood out among the darker Italians in the neighborhood. He was barely a teenager when he met the twenty-something Massino, but their relationship would take its own fortuitous turn. Duane Leisenheimer, whose fair hair earned him the nickname "Goldie," was really up to no good and going nowhere when he met Massino. A student at Brooklyn's Automotive High School on Bedford Avenue in Williamsburg, Leisenheimer was on his way to becoming an auto mechanic but could only make it through his sophomore year before dropping out. Still, he liked cars and noticed that Massino's Oldsmobile had cracked windows, which was odd since an auto glass business where the youngster worked was around the corner from Massino's coffee stand.

Leisenheimer liked cars so much he started stealing them. He said he was sixteen years old when he stole his first vehicle and started doing some work in a local chop shop. For those unfamiliar with the term *chop shop*, it is a place where stolen cars are stripped for parts that can then be resold at double or even triple the value of the complete vehicle. Leisenheimer made \$150 for each stolen car. In no time, he was stealing them at the rate of fifteen vehicles a week—not bad money for a high school dropout. But it could be bad for the neighborhood to have a budding car thief hanging around, so Massino told Leisenheimer not to steal cars from the area or park them around the stand.

"I don't want your heat," Massino told him.

Massino also didn't want his own heat, his own troubles, to burn the youngster. Of course, Massino had plenty of heat to worry about. Though he had a nice business with the coffee and sandwich stands he acquired, he sold more than food out of the lunch truck.

The neighborhood workers who came for a bite to eat were also able to play the numbers with Massino, who used the trucks as a small gambling location. For them it was the poor man's lottery. He undoubtedly was kicking up some of the proceeds to Rastelli.

Massino had another side job that was a natural for Maspeth. The area around Grand and Metropolitan avenues was riddled with factories, warehouses, and trucking depots. It was New York City's loading dock. Trucks were all over the place and they were laden with consumer goods that everybody wanted and would pay good money for. Apparently, with Rastelli's blessing Massino started hijacking trucks and needed help. He asked around about the young car thief in the neighborhood.

"He is a stand-up guy," said one of the local toughs about Leisenheimer. In plain English that meant the kid from Brooklyn wouldn't rat anybody out.

It was all Massino needed to hear. So even though he couldn't steal cars from the neighborhood, Duane Leisenheimer could be a hijacker, courtesy of Joe Massino and Philip Rastelli. In just one night the car kid from Brooklyn could make up to \$2,000 helping Massino move truckloads of stolen television sets, men's suits, Huckapoo shirts, and Farberware. That was more money than Leisenheimer might make in a week of stealing cars. Maspeth was turning into a nice place for the Brooklyn high school dropout.

Leisenheimer wasn't the only young man who gravitated to Massino. Salvatore Vitale, the younger brother of Massino's wife, Josephine, had bonded at an early age to the budding lunch wagon entrepreneur who was five years his senior. In 1968, Vitale ended a short tour of duty in the army as a paratrooper. He tried going straight and spent two years serving as what he would later say was a job as a "narcotics correction officer," which was ironic considering the involvement over the years of some of the Bonanno family in narcotics. When he left that job, Vitale approached Massino for work. There was plenty to do with the hijacking business, as well as with part-time work as a burglar, and Vitale was a willing recruit for both types of work.

"If you are going to do scores, do them with me," Vitale remembered Massino telling him. It would lead him into another world of big-time break-ins, hijacks, and fur district rip-offs in Manhattan. The commodities stolen ranged from coffee to air conditioners to tennis rackets. Sometimes Vitale and Massino would become very daring and inventive. In one episode later recounted to investigators, Vitale remembered how he rented a storage vault under a fake name in Manhattan's fur district just south of Thirty-fourth Street. During summer nights in August, Vitale said, he would get the locks off other storage vaults, remove furs, and store them in his locker. Another time, he, Massino, and a Colombo crime family member made about \$34,000 in the theft of watches from a store in Livingston, New Jersey. For that job, Vitale said, they cut some telephone lines.

Inevitably, Rastelli, by virtue of his leadership role, was a high-profile target for law enforcement, and he made it easy for the cops. In July 1970, Rastelli was indicted by a Suffolk County grand jury. The secret panel met in such secrecy and with such concern for witnesses that the windows of the district attorney's office were covered with paper and some of the hallways were closed to the public and patrolled by armed guards. Rastelli was among five men charged with usury. The indictment stated that Rastelli's loan sharks charged interest up to 300 percent a year (25 percent was the legal limit) and terrorized nearly two dozen customers. One customer was a local Suffolk County bail bondsman who got so far into debt that he was forced to bring in extra customers to Rastelli and his crew.

Rastelli was convicted in December 1972 on loan-sharking charges and was sentenced to prison. His incarceration deprived the crime family of one part of the leadership troika, but Rastelli was still able to participate and get information through the visits of his brothers, Carmine and Marty, as well as through associates like Massino. This kept Rastelli in the loop at a time when—unbeknown to many—Natale Evola was in serious trouble.

In 1972, federal officials began a series of ambitious undercover operations in Manhattan's garment district. Long a stronghold for the Mafia, the garment area surrounding Seventh Avenue was honeycombed with factories, cutting rooms, showrooms, and innumerable small businesses that supplied the clothing companies with everything from bolts of cloth to zippers. The mob had gained its influence over the industry through labor racketeering in which the unions used the services of mob toughs to go along with the union demands. On the other side, employers used Mafia associates to help set up shadow companies and operations that were nonunion to avoid paying workers contract wages and benefits.

Garment manufacturers also worked on extremely tight profit margins and had to be able to change their production operations to meet the shifting fashion styles and the sudden rush of orders from department stores. It was a tough business and when banks and factors (companies that lend money against a firm's accounts receivables) were reluctant to come up with cash, Seventh Avenue executives turned to Mafia loan sharks for quick infusions of financial help. Never mind that interest rates could go over 300 percent a year. Manufacturers hoped that the orders they would be able to fill after getting mob financial help would bring in enough quick payment from retailers to have the mob debts paid off quickly. Sometimes it worked. Other times a financially stressed manufacturer had to take on the mob as a silent partner.

The trucking companies were vital to the industry because cut goods, the separate pieces that made each item of apparel, had to be shipped to contracting firms where the clothing was actually assembled. Once that was done, the finished goods had to be sent back to the manufacturer for shipment to warehouses and retailers. It was all done by trucks and it was the truckers who provided the lifeline for so much of the industry. As such, truckers like Evola had inordinate power over the garment industry because they could create transport bottlenecks through which everything passed.

Garment truckers policed themselves with a "marriage" system.

As far back as any one could remember, the truckers had a cartel-like arrangement in which no one stole accounts. Sometimes separate buildings, and all the dress manufacturing firms within, were considered the territory of one trucker. The manufacturers were essentially "married" to a certain trucker. There was no "divorce" from the relationship unless the manufacturer went out of business for six months. If the trucking company closed, the manufacturer's account was taken over by another hauler.

Evola was not the only Mafia boss involved in the garment trucking industry, but as a caretaker of the Bonanno family he was certainly the most prominent. To target the coercive marriage system among truckers and other crimes in the garment district, federal prosecutors in 1973 established two undercover companies in Manhattan: a mom-and-pop trucking firm and a coat manufacturing company. The coat company, known as the Whellan Coat Company, employed as its chief executive a veteran garment district executive who was able to lead investigators to Evola and his cronies.

The plan was to see if Evola would try to coerce the new company into using certain trucking companies. There were some tantalizing leads, particularly when one of Evola's cronies, an elderly Austrian immigrant named Max Meyer, indicated to an undercover agent that there was indeed a trucking cartel. But as soon as the undercover operatives visited Evola at his trucking depot on West Thirty-eight Street in Manhattan they noticed he was walking with the assistance of a cane and walker. As the weeks went by, he appeared in the office less and less. The old Bonanno boss was ailing with cancer and the investigative game plan, which also called for the undercover agents to get a meeting on garment district business with Rastelli, had to be revised. Evola died on August 28, 1973, and investigators were never able to implicate him in any coercion.

Evola's death left Rastelli as one of the powers in the Bonanno family. DiFilippi, the other part of the ruling triumvirate, did not have the stature or support to challenge Rastelli. Had he been able

to stay out of trouble, Rastelli might have been able to cement his leadership with the passing of Evola and build his own dynasty, avoiding some of the strife that would follow. But while he was able to play the deadly Machiavellian game of mob politics, Rastelli had not been very astute about the cops. For much of his adult life Rastelli had been in prison and in 1974 the prospect of his seeing freedom continued to recede. The problem was the lunch truck business.

By 1974, Rastelli's coercive racket with the lunch trucks caught the attention of federal investigators in Brooklyn. Although the Workman's Mobile Lunch Association aspired to get its forty-eight charter members benefits like group insurance and discounts on truck repairs, nothing like that happened. Instead, with Rastelli operating in the background, the association was engaged in a classic shakedown. Suppliers of the lunch wagons were pressured for kick-backs amounting to a percentage of the dollar value of the items sold to the mobile canteens. Truck owners who were in the unfortunate circumstance of not being part of Rastelli's association were persuaded by "implicit threats of violence," as one federal court stated, to stop coming around to certain lucrative locations.

Rastelli was indicted in March 1975 on charges that he directed a protection racket in the lunch wagon industry. The bad luck rubbed off on Massino. All the hijacking around Maspeth had also caught the attention of federal investigators who gathered evidence that the lunch wagon vendor was trafficking in goods stolen from interstate commerce. The bad luck that hit Rastelli and Massino in 1975 came at time when the Bonanno crime family was entering another period of flux and instability. While it was true that Rastelli was considered by the Commission to be a major power in the crime family, that didn't mean he had no rivals.

Carmine Galante, like Rastelli, might as well have been born on probation for the way his life had been going. A native-born American who grew up in East Harlem, Galante got into a life of crime at an early age. He was eleven when he got his first rap for robbery

and at the age of twenty he had become enmeshed with the Castellammarese crowd of Bonanno in the Williamsburg area of Brooklyn. A fight with a policeman during a truck hijacking led to Galante earning a twelve-year sentence to state prison. He served about nine years and was released in 1939.

Galante, who became known by the moniker "Lilo" for the cigars he smoked, stayed with the Bonanno clan and rose fairly high up in the hierarchy. Police considered him a key suspect in the 1943 assassination of Italian antifascist writer Carlos Tresca. By the end of World War II Galante was an underboss. Though at the time he was not a household name among famous gangsters, Galante's mob stature and importance in the crime family was shown by his attendance at a 1957 meeting of top mafiosi in Palermo, Sicily. The meeting was also attended by Joseph Bonanno, another family underboss named Frank Garafola, an exiled Lucky Luciano, as well as Sicilian leaders Gaetano Badalementi and Tomasso Bucetta. The latter two would come to some prominence later in heroin dealing.

The exact nature of the meeting has never been determined by officials, although Bonanno said in his autobiography that it had to do with trying to get the Sicilians to think corporate and to set up an American-style commission to govern their activities. That never happened. But it appears that during this Sicily conclave Galante developed deeper ties to his amici in the ancestral land. It wasn't long before a number of Sicilian mobsters, young men known as "Zips," a term believed to be referring to the speed at which they talked in their Sicilian dialect, immigrated to the United States and gravitated to the area around Knickerbocker Avenue in Brooklyn. They would prove to be a source of power and support for Galante later—as well as a cause in his eventual downfall.

But before Galante had time to begin exploiting his relationship with the Sicilians, he was caught up in a major heroin bust in 1959. It was a major investigation that nabbed not only Galante but also John Ormento of the Lucchese family and Vito Genovese. Their undoing was due to the bitterness of Nelson Cantellops, a Puerto Rican drug dealer in Manhattan who had been arrested for selling

drugs and became an informant to get out from under a possible five-year prison term. Cantellops's information proved accurate and showed how brazen top echelon mobsters had become in handling narcotics and how ignored the supposed Mafia edict against drug dealing had become.

Galante, like Ormento and Genovese, was convicted. Just at the point when he could have been developing a substantial power base and easily surpassed Rastelli, Galante was sent away to spend a twenty-year sentence in a federal penitentiary. When he was paroled in 1974, Galante immediately began trying to consolidate his power. In one signature event that is now firmly part of New York Mafia lore, Galante supposedly had the door to Frank Costello's tomb blown open with a bomb as a way of signaling his own return from prison.

But Galante didn't have to try anything more drastic with Rastelli or with Massino for that matter. After a two-week trial in the Brooklyn federal court, Rastelli was convicted in April 1976 of extortion and restraint of trade. Already serving time for the Suffolk gambling case, Rastelli learned that as soon as he was to be released from state prison he would be the guest of the federal government for another five to ten years in custody for being the Maspeth lunch wagon robber baron. His release date was to be in 1983. But in Mafia power struggles things are never clear-cut and even prison will not stop the politics of mob bosses. So Galante and Rastelli became locked in their own deadly game for the leadership of the family. It was a battle that would take nearly three years to play out and in which Massino would play a significant role.

CHAPTER 5

A Piece of Work

The problem with Mafia bosses is that they get an inflated sense of self-importance. Paul Castellano, the greedy boss of the Gambino crime family, was a case in point. He thought of himself as if he were the president of the United States, which is what he once told his Colombian house maid when he wasn't trying to impress her with his virility, something that came late in his life with the help of a penile implant.

Castellano also couldn't take a joke and that could prove deadly. One of his daughter's boyfriends found out about that the hard way. Joseph Massino, it seems, had a hand in that.

Castellano's legitimate businesses were in the meat and poultry industry. As a young man, Castellano had a full head of dark wavy hair and in his old police mug shots he actually looked handsome, despite his thick, pronounced nose. As Castellano aged, he lost a lot of his hair and what was left around the sides turned gray. His nose took on more of a prominence, and in 1975 he looked a bit like another poultry expert, Frank Perdue. With an aggressive television advertising campaign and a distinct, high-pitched whiney voice, Perdue became one of Madison Avenue's darlings. His Perdue chicken ads drew instant recognition. Vito Borelli, a boyfriend of Castellano's daughter, Connie, took a look at Perdue's face in an ad and thought he noticed a similarity.

"He looks like Frank Perdue," Borelli said of Castellano, who at the time was waiting for a sickly Carlo Gambino to die so he could take over the crime family.

That comment was not a good thing to say, especially when the remark got back to Castellano. A person of normal sensitivities would have laughed off the comment or even viewed it as a compliment. But Castellano took offense and according to police turned not only to his boys in the Gambino family but also to Joseph Massino to teach Borelli a lesson.

Over the years, Massino had become close to a number of up and coming stars in the Gambino family. That he also got to know Castellano is a clear indication that Massino was himself a rising power in his own right. It was those Gambino ties that appear to have led Massino at the age of thirty-two to carry out his first "piece of work": a murder. The victim was the loose-lipped Vito Borelli.

Unlike some of the fabled mob assassinations where a victim is spectacularly gunned down on the street or in public, many Mafia homicides are handled like secret production lines with clear divisions of labor. Somebody will arrange transportation. Another will procure a murder weapon. Yet a third person might arrange to clean up the crime scene while more people may help dispose of the body. Of course, there are always those who will entice or inveigle the victim to show up at the place where he will lose his life.

In mid-1975, investigators learned, Massino turned to his trusted brother-in-law Salvatore Vitale and the fair-haired Duane Leisenheimer for help. Vitale was told by Massino to pick up a stolen car from Leisenheimer and bring it to—of all places—a cookie storage facility in Manhattan. The keys of the van, which Vitale had parked outside the storage location, were left under the seat.

The night of the killing, an exasperated Massino called Vitale to complain that the van wouldn't start. So Vitale drove his own car back into Manhattan and pulled up to the storage location. He saw that Massino was there in some very good company. Outside the building were John Gotti, then a young soldier in the Gambino family, his friend Angelo Ruggiero, another Gambino associate, and Frank DeCicco. Vitale also recognized Dominick "Sonny Black" Napolitano, a powerful Bonanno crime family captain. A killer who

also liked to raise racing pigeons, Napolitano was one of Rastelli's allies and as such could count on Massino for help.

According to a law enforcement intelligence report, once outside the Manhattan location, Vitale was told to back up his vehicle and what appeared to be a body wrapped in a tan drop cloth was placed in the trunk. Then, Ruggiero and DeCicco got into Vitale's car and told him to drive to a garage. When asked later about the incident by the FBI, Vitale couldn't recall exactly where the garage was. He thought it might have been in Ozone Park. But what he did remember was that when the body was taken out of the trunk he saw it was Vito Borelli, with his head and body showing signs of repeated gunshot wounds. The corpse was clad only in its underwear.

Vitale later recalled that he didn't see what happened to the body. Whatever transpired with poor Vito Borelli's remains was likely nothing sacred since Vitale would also remember seeing another Gambino associate, Roy Demeo, at the garage. Demeo's forte was that of butcher and he seemed to relish the dismemberment of bodies. Demeo did it all over the city and sometimes got so frenzied in the disembowelments that ears of his victims would fly off, only to be retrieved later by dogs who happened upon the crime scene. It was his special line of work. Borelli's body was never found.

Vitale dropped off Ruggiero and DeCicco at Gotti's infamous Bergin Hunt & Fish Club in Ozone Park. That was a misnomer since the girth of club patrons like Ruggiero and DeCicco showed they did very little outdoor sport or exercise of any kind beyond pulling a trigger or working the espresso machine. Their only hunting was that of the likes of human victims like Borelli. As he remembered it, Vitale was told a few days after the murder that the victim was indeed Borelli. His offense had been the Frank Perdue joke that Castellano saw as an insult.

The Borelli murder and the body disposal indicated to Massino that his brother-in-law could be trusted to carry out an assignment for the mob with no questions asked. Vitale was basically a catering truck driver for Massino, but his childhood friend was connected to a world that was wild, dangerous, and exciting. He knew Massino

was living a double life: as a married father with a stable business and as a Mafia associate on the rise. It was hard for Vitale to walk away from that, not only because Massino was married to his sister, Josephine, but also because his friend was the closest male companion he ever had growing up in a household filled with older women.

The Borelli killing also showed that Massino had made his bones—he killed for the mob when asked. The timing couldn't have been better because around the time Borelli was killed the ranks of the Mafia were opening up for new members. The bosses opened up their books around 1976 to 1977 and Massino was put up for membership in the Bonanno family and made it in easily. He wasn't just big Joe Maspeth anymore, the guy you would see in the lunch wagon to play the numbers or score some hijacked goods. Now, as police learned, Massino was a full-blown wise guy, and if Rastelli or anybody else introduced him around, they would say he was "a friend of ours," which was a coded expression to mean he was a true-blue gangster.

From his Maspeth base, Massino developed a number of rackets. The more he did on the street, the more people Massino met. He developed ties not only to the Gambino family but also to the Colombo group through Carmine Franzese, a soldier known as "Tootie." One of Massino's sidelines was in the trafficking of untaxed cigarettes, always a hot commodity. Federal and state taxes could drive up the price of a carton of cigarettes by as much as 30 percent, and this was before the smoking industry was hit with the affects of the 1990s' antismoking litigation.

Massino's partner in the untaxed cigarette business was an associate of the Colombo crime family known as Joseph "Doo Doo" Pastore. The product was smuggled in from South Carolina without any tax stamps and when he wasn't working that racket Pastore would hang around Massino's deli on Fifty-eighth Avenue, which opened in the 1970s, sampling the coffee and cakes. Massino owned the small building—real estate was not overpriced in that area of Queens—and sometimes he would use the upstairs apartment for business with Pastore, who was generally flush with cash. The

street was a crease in the city, a small byway barely 100 yards long that was easily overlooked by motorists passing by on the larger avenues. Any strange cars on the block would be easily noticed, although that didn't stop the FBI from eventually setting up a surveillance post a mere twenty or thirty yards away from the shop's front door.

The FBI was in the area a lot because Maspeth was a haven for hijackers and the bureau's truck squad got to know the main traffickers in stolen property. Pastore was known to the agents as an "action guy," a man who would take a truck any way he could and bring it back to the alleyways of this industrial part of Queens, where the reputed middlemen like Massino could move the goods to buyers or find a warehouse. By the early 1970s, Pastore was known to the FBI hijack experts to a greater extent than Massino. In June 1972, Pastore was arrested with two other men on charges he possessed a load of stolen trucking cargo. But the case against Pastore was slim and in February 1973 the government asked that the indictment against him be dismissed.

Massino, apparently reluctant to ask directly for a financial favor from his cigarette partner, had Vitale borrow several thousand dollars from him instead. The money Vitale borrowed in the spring of 1976 from Pastore, about \$9,000, was never paid back. It was never paid because Pastore was simply no longer around to collect. While the precise reason is unclear, investigators learned that Massino had become disenchanted with his old cigarette smuggling and hijacking friend and decided to end their partnership in a less than amicable parting. It is possible, seeing that the FBI had focused on Pastore, that Massino feared that his business relationship might make him vulnerable to becoming an informant. Whatever the reasons, Massino turned to Vitale, who had already proved himself in the Borelli murder.

Like many wiseguys, Pastore was a habitué of strip clubs—"Go-Go" bars as they were known at that time. At one club on Forty-fourth Street in Manhattan he met a young woman named Gloria Jean Young. An aspiring singer, Young had gravitated to the city in

the hopes of advancing her career but instead began working as a Go-Go dancer. The night she met Pastore things began to happen fast. As she later told investigators, she spent the night with him at the Plaza Suite Hotel and from then on Pastore was a constant factor in her life. She explained that the mob-connected smuggler put Young up in an apartment, furnished it, and paid her rent.

But in mid-May 1976, Young remembered, things changed drastically. She drove with Pastore to a brownstone house somewhere in Queens and waited in the car while he went inside. After about ten or fifteen minutes, Pastore exited the building and returned to the car. He looked frightened.

"He didn't feel very well and he felt bad and said something was coming down," Young later recalled in court testimony. The young dancer said the incident also left her rattled and afraid for her own safety, so she decided to leave Pastore and the life they had together. The next day a girlfriend drove Young to the airport and she left town, never to see Pastore again.

Whatever had unsettled Pastore was a bad omen. Vitale later told investigators that he had barely a day's notice that Carmine Franzese was going to "take care" of Pastore in the apartment above Massino's deli on Fifty-eighth Road. Vitale was told to complete his regular rounds selling coffee and donuts from one of Massino's mobile lunch wagons and then return to the deli.

Dutiful as ever, Vitale drove back to the deli the next day after the workday and met Massino. It was done, Massino told his brother-in-law, who then climbed the flight of stairs to the empty apartment. There was blood all over the floor of the little kitchen and the cabinets. Even the refrigerator had some spatter inside. However, there was no body in sight since it had already been moved to a dumpster a few blocks away on Rust Street. Picking up some towels that had been left in the apartment, Vitale later told the FBI he used them to soak up the blood and wipe down the cabinets. When finished, he took the blood-soaked towels, put them in a bag, walked around the corner to another dumpster, and tossed them all away. Good job, Vitale remembered Massino telling him.

It was on June 1, 1976, outside 58-77 Fifty-seventh Avenue in Maspeth, literally around the corner from Massino's social club and deli, that Pastore's body was found. Massino told police he had last seen his old friend on May 19. Since he said he was a family friend, Massino went with Pastore's half-brother, Richard Dormer, to identify the decomposed body. Dormer threw up in the morgue after the body was shown.

Massino would always deny he had any role in the killings of Pastore and Borelli, although Vitale would insist his brother-in-law told him he fired two shots into Pastore's face. So in less than a year Vitale had graduated from Massino's trusted gofer, by his own admission to investigators, to an accomplice in two homicides. Since the Pastore killing seemed to have been a strictly personal situation, it is doubtful Massino improved his standing with the crime family in having it arranged. But the Borelli killing was another matter since it ingratiated Massino with Castellano, the rising power and soon-to-be boss of the Gambino family, and it showed to both the Bonanno and Gambino clans that Joe Maspeth was a man who could do a piece of work. With Rastelli in prison and the Bonanno family in a state of tension over its leadership, it was not a bad time for Massino to develop alliances and to earn his stripes as a crime family member. But there is a point where gangsters, no matter how careful, get into trouble and Massino was no exception.

CHAPTER 6

“I Don’t Do Nothing”

On the morning of March 11, 1975, Salvatore Taboh went to his job as a truck driver in Manhattan at around 7:00 A.M. so he could grab some breakfast before he started his work shift at the Hemingway Trucking terminal. By the time he clocked in at 8:00 A.M., Taboh had been fed and was then able to answer a call from the dispatcher to get his assignment for the day. There was no real surprise at that time because Taboh got his usual rig, tractor-trailer number 897.

The Hemingway terminal was on Leroy and West streets in lower Manhattan, an area where a lot of trucking firms marshaled their rigs. Taboh warmed up his tractor—the part of the rig with the engine—and hooked it up to the trailer part that contained myriad number of packages of merchandise. Pulling out at about 8:30 A.M. from the terminal area, Taboh drove uptown to his first stop at Twenty-seventh Street between Fifth Avenue and Broadway. He parked his rig and went upstairs to make the delivery. Since he was early and the business that was supposed to accept the package wasn’t open, Taboh went to the next office where a woman who was working agreed to accept the item. Taboh went back downstairs to retrieve the package. He couldn’t find it because the entire tractor-trailer was gone, the whole thing, package included. Just like that.

While rushing over to a nearby phone booth, Taboh spotted a police car and told the officers what had happened. The cops called in the stolen rig and Taboh then called his dispatcher to report what

had happened. The time was about five minutes to 9:00 A.M. He couldn't have left the truck for more than five or ten minutes.

Across the East River in Queens, FBI agent Patrick Colgan was in his official bureau car when he got a radio transmission about the stolen Hemingway truck at about 9:20 A.M. Colgan was in Queens a lot because he was part of the FBI truck hijack squad and he knew that the borough had become a haven for hijackers. Though higher-ups in the FBI didn't think cargo theft was a big racket for the mob, street agents like Colgan thought otherwise. Queens in particular was a hijacker's paradise with John F. Kennedy International Airport and numerous trucking terminals, notably in Maspeth. Associates and members of the Gambino and Colombo crime families saw hijacking as a relatively low-risk crime with the potential for quick cash. One of the most prominent of reputed truck thieves, Colgan knew, was a big guy from Maspeth who had some businesses by Rust Street. Playing an educated hunch, Colgan, a five-year veteran of the agency, quickly drove to the area where Rust Street intersected with Grand Avenue. He knew the number and name on the truck he was looking for.

What luck. At around 9:45 A.M. Colgan spotted the very Hemingway rig he was looking for parked on Rust Street, just north of the Maspeth Avenue intersection. Driving by the truck, Colgan noted its license plate number, A80808, which corresponded to the radio report. There was no one in the driver's seat and the rig was pointing north. Colgan parked his car about 150 feet away from the stolen vehicle. His car was pointing south. Colgan waited.

About twenty minutes after parking, Colgan saw a man walk out from a street by the nearby Clinton Diner and walk over to the waiting Hemingway tractor-trailer. The guy was Raymond Wean, a denizen of the Maspeth world of hijackers who just so happened to be on probation for a conviction on a federal hijacking charge. The time was about 10:15 A.M., less than an hour after the apparently befuddled Taboh noticed the truck missing in Manhattan.

The rig was driven a short distance north on Rust when it sud-

denly made a U-turn and headed south, passing Colgan, who got a good look at Wean's face. The FBI car fell in behind the truck rig and followed it a short distance until it came to a stop light. It was then that a blue Cadillac pulled up to the driver side of the tractor cab and Colgan noticed two men occupying the car talk with Wean. After the Hemingway rig turned right on to Grand Avenue, Wean parked it, got out, and started to walk away. He was a big, imposing man who stood well over six feet tall and weighed about 300 pounds. Wean was a working man with hands the size of ham hocks. Colgan pulled up to him, got out of the FBI car, and arrested Wean for possessing the stolen truck.

"I was not in any truck, I was just simply walking down the street," Wean responded.

"Well, I not only saw you get out of it, I saw you get into it," Colgan answered.

"Give me a break, I'll do anything. I am on parole in the Eastern District," Wean pleaded.

Wean's wrists were so big that Colgan couldn't put handcuffs on the suspect. So he ordered Wean to sit in the FBI car and not try to escape. As Colgan was placing Wean in the bureau vehicle, he noticed the blue Cadillac drive by. The agent's eyes locked a glance with those of the driver, who seemed to instantly recognize that Colgan was with the FBI. A startled Joseph Massino then drove away in the Cadillac.

As he later told a federal judge, Colgan also recognized Massino as the man who was known to the FBI as a truck hijacker and fence of stolen property. Actually, among the FBI agents Massino was not known as a strong-armed guy who would stick a gun in a driver's face. Rather, he was known to investigators as a middleman, a broker of stolen commodities. Street agents working the hijack world said Massino was known to specialize in ground coffee, liquor, and clothing. So when Colgan suddenly saw Massino appear around the Hemingway truck, it raised suspicion that he was involved with the theft of the vehicle.

Massino should have kept on driving away. Instead, he came back and was himself arrested. The Hemingway incident then became the first time in Massino's life that the federal government had nabbed him. Granted, the Hemingway heist wasn't the biggest crime around. The trailer was filled with blankets and clothing. But it led to Massino's first federal indictment. What also made the case noteworthy was that it was the only time Massino would ever take the witness stand in his own defense, perhaps the only Mafia leader of note to ever do so in his career. By testifying, Massino won a dismissal of the first serious set of charges ever lodged against him.

Massino and Wean, who lived in Whitestone, were indicted by a Brooklyn federal grand jury in 1975 on charges that they conspired to receive 225 cartons of merchandise stolen from an interstate shipment contained in the Hemingway truck. They were also both charged with possessing the stolen shipment. In addition, Massino, because of his drive by and return to the scene when Wean was being arrested, was charged with trying to hinder Wean's apprehension. Records show both men made bail, with Massino posting a \$10,000 bond secured by one of his business properties.

Massino's lawyer was Eugene G. Mastropieri, a city councilman who also practiced law (as city rules allowed). Court records show that Wean's and Massino's cases were severed, meaning one would be tried without the other. Wean went to trial first.

It was close to Thanksgiving in 1976 that the Brooklyn federal judge Edward Neaher impaneled a jury in Wean's case. By that time the case had been simplified even more because prosecutors had decided to drop the conspiracy charge and just try Wean on the one count of being in possession of stolen property. The government used Colgan and some other FBI agents, as well as the truck driver, Salvatore Taboh, as their key witnesses. There was some suspicion among the agents that the driver might have given up the truck too easily and thus was complicit in the crime. But that was never proven. In reality, the credibility of the agents was crucial for the case; the defense attorney, Robert Weisswasser, attacked Colgan in

his opening statement as an "out right fabricator, a liar, a perjurer." The defense would also make an issue of the fact that the agents didn't immediately dust the keys found in the truck cab for fingerprints.

Weisswasser's tactics of attacking law enforcement didn't work. The jury quickly found Wean guilty of the charge of possession of the two hundred and twenty five cartons of stolen property found in the truck.

For Massino, the situation became more interesting. Judge Neaher held a hearing to determine a rather fundamental legal issue: was Massino read his Miranda rights when he was arrested on March 11, 1975? If the agents didn't properly Mirandize him, then his statements during the arrest would be invalid and that could destroy the case against him. Since the groundbreaking U.S. Supreme Court ruling in the *Miranda* case in 1963, law enforcement officers were under an obligation to tell defendants a series of warnings, among them that they had the right to remain silent, that anything they said could be used against them, and that they had a right to have a lawyer appointed to represent them if they couldn't afford to pay for one. The giving of the warnings had become elementary for all agents and cops but sometimes there were screw-ups or the circumstances were ambiguous, all of which led to so-called suppression hearings being held by the court.

Suppression hearings often boil down to a defendant's version of events being pitted against those of the arresting officers. On February 10, 1977, Massino himself took the witness stand before Judge Neaher in the Brooklyn federal court. Since Mastropieri had brought the motion to get his client's statements tossed out as evidence, it was Massino who testified on direct examination.

Massino's testimony was fairly brief. He remembered being arrested by Agent Colgan on March 11, 1975, and then asking why he was being taken into custody.

"What did he say to you and what did you say to him at the time he placed you under arrest?" Mastropieri asked.

"I told him, 'What am I under arrest for,' and he said, 'You will find out.' He handcuffed me and put me in a car and they took me away," Massino said.

In the car, Massino said he sat with two other agents but said they didn't advise him of his rights. At FBI headquarters in Manhattan near Sixty-ninth Street Massino said some agents gave him some paper but he pushed it back to them, unread.

"Did he ask you to sign that paper?" Mastropieri asked.

"No, he did not," replied Massino.

"You heard the testimony over the course of the last two days," Mastropieri finally said. "At any time were you given your rights by any one of the agents that testified here in court?"

"No, I was never given my rights," answered Massino.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Jonathan Marks then asked Massino if he knew before the arrest date that he had a right to remain silent if asked questions by the FBI.

"Only from watching television," said Massino.

"Well, did you understand that you had a right to remain silent?" Marks pressed.

"I was never told of it," Massino replied.

While a person may know, even from television shows, about the Miranda rights, the law remains clear that the arresting officers or agents have to explicitly advise a defendant, no matter how widely known those warnings have become in popular culture. By insisting that he had never been warned as required by Miranda, Massino was saying the FBI had screwed up on something fairly significant.

Marks continued to press Massino, showing him a document that court records indicate may have been either a standard form that listed the Miranda warnings or perhaps a waiver of the right to be Mirandized. But Massino stuck to his story and said that while he remembered an agent shoving a piece of paper at him at the FBI offices he didn't read it.

"How long did you have that piece of paper in front of you," asked Marks.

"Just put it in front of me. He says, 'Look at it.' I said, 'I don't look at anything. I don't do nothing,'" Massino said.

FBI agent Richard Redman, who rode in the bureau car with Massino back to Manhattan, gave a different story. Massino was not only advised of his rights in the car but also he said he understood them, Redman testified. During the drive to the FBI offices, Massino said he knew Wean for over twenty years and explained that the reason he drove away when Colgan spotted him in the Cadillac was that "I had to take a shit and I told him [Colgan] I would go and come back," said Redman.

At the FBI offices, according to Redman, Massino turned chatty and told the agents they really had Wean good when they caught him with the truck. When asked why he drove his Cadillac alongside the truck as Wean was driving, Massino responded that he had to tell his friend that the FBI was following him and "I had to shout at the dumb fuck because he didn't hear me," Redman remembered Massino saying.

In essence, Massino testified that he was never given his Miranda rights by the FBI. The government contended that Massino volunteered the remarks he made to Redman and the other agents and so the Miranda rule didn't apply. In the end, Judge Neaher said that since the agents had continued to question Massino after he said he didn't want to talk and wouldn't sign the form the court would suppress any statements Massino made the day he was arrested. Since the government's case rested largely on Massino's statements, there was little evidence remaining, so prosecutors moved to dismiss the indictment against Massino. The case was tossed out, and Massino was in the clear.

When Neaher ruled in Massino's favor, the big man from Maspeth was known as a hijacking leader to the FBI. But it appears that Massino's status as a made member of the Mafia (his induction is believed to have occurred in 1976 or 1977) was still under the radar at that point. This was true even though, as Vitale later recalled, Massino had been involved in the Vito Borelli and Joseph Pastore killings.

However, Wean was now a two-time loser in federal court and Neaher sentenced him on March 10, 1977, to three years in prison. Wean had some serious thinking to do. Life on the street and hanging around with Massino in Maspeth had not been good for him, especially since he had three young kids, a wife, and an ex-wife. There had to be a better way to get by in life.

CHAPTER 7

Power Play

On an afternoon in 1977, a group of about a half-dozen adult men stood outside a restaurant on Mulberry Street in Manhattan's Little Italy. To a casual observer, the group was doing nothing in particular. Sometimes one of the men from the crowd would sneak a look inside. But for the most part they hung out, which was not unusual for the neighborhood.

Mulberry Street had been the spine of this Italian neighborhood for decades. Italian immigrants as far back as the mid-nineteenth century had populated the area and the immigration continued well into the 1900s, attracting its fair share of Mafia members and associates. Ethnic neighborhoods like Little Italy provided a base of support, through people and cooperating merchants, for the Mafia. The clannish nature of the streets, where dialects of Italians from Naples, Sicily, Calabria, Genoa, and Tuscany textured the conversations, gave some assurance that outsiders like police would stand out and be spotted.

The men outside the Casa Bella Restaurant on Mulberry Street were keeping a lookout not only for cops but also for any signs of danger that might threaten the people inside. Among the inside crowd on this particular day were Carmine Galante, the recently freed Bonanno crime family captain, and Mike Sabella, another captain who just so happened to own the place. Guard duty in Little Italy to protect a high-echelon mobster like Galante could be nerve wracking. Even though he was armed, Bonanno soldier

Benjamin "Lefty Guns" Ruggiero, one of the men in the group outside Casa Bella, seemed to constantly fidget. Thin faced, lean, and always exhibiting a sense of nervous expectation, Ruggiero knew political undercurrents were at work in the family, and since Galante was hated by many mobsters, at any moment he could turn into a target of opportunity for his rivals. Since he was part of Galante's security detail, Ruggiero could find himself in a gun battle in which he was expected to protect the man at all costs.

One of the other men standing in the crowd outside Casa Bella with Ruggiero was a trim, muscular man who looked the part of an aspiring street hood, although he wasn't armed. Curious about what was going inside, he peeked through the window. He spotted Galante's bald head and trademark cigar as he talked with Sabella and a few others. Ever since Galante had attended the Palermo meeting in 1957 with Joseph Bonanno, he had been popular with the Sicilian men who he convinced to immigrate. These heroin-dealing Zips, as the Sicilians were called, were some of the only people Galante felt comfortable around. Everybody else could wait outside.

The curious thing about the man who peered inside Casa Bella was that even though he had all the trademark looks of a wanna-be mafioso—the gold chains, rings, and stylish sports clothes—he was actually the furthest thing from it. Known to Ruggiero as "Donnie Brasco," he was actually Joseph Pistone, an undercover agent for the FBI. He was damn good at what he did.

It was in 1976, having already done a few stints with the FBI in short undercover assignments, that Pistone and his supervisors wanted to exploit the possibility of a deeper penetration of the underworld. The decision was made for Pistone to go undercover in New York City as Donnie Brasco, a jewel thief who could make a score. After establishing some connections with the Colombo crime family, Pistone made the acquaintance in March 1977 of Ruggiero and Bonanno soldier Anthony Mirra at Mirra's place, the Bus Stop Luncheonette on Madison Street, a few blocks east of Little Italy. A cold killer, Mirra had become a feared man in the crime family because of the ease with which he committed murders.

Pistone started off handling some stolen property for the mob, and in the process he gleaned intelligence information about the Bonanno family hierarchy for his FBI handlers. Where possible, Pistone pretended to move stolen property for his unsuspecting mob cohorts but actually turned it over to his FBI handlers. In turn, the agents gave Pistone some government cash that had been earmarked for the investigation so that he could turn it over to his wiseguy connections. This not only allowed Pistone to show that he sold the stolen property but also to build more credibility with his mob connections.

With luck, patience, and lots of bravado, Pistone became a close friend of Ruggiero and began to gather plenty of evidence for the FBI. But, unknown to Pistone, his fellow agents were carrying out a separate intelligence gathering operation in lower Manhattan that also targeted the Bonanno family.

Local social clubs, storefronts with windows emblazoned with signs saying "members only," were sprinkled around Little Italy and seemed to exist only as convenient meeting places for the mob. The Bonanno family had one club incongruously named Toyland Social Club at 94 Hester Street, which was run by Nicholas Marangello, the underboss of the crime family. Marangello had poor eyesight and needed thick glasses, which earned him the monikers "Eyeglasses" and "Nicky Glasses." He had started out at the age of fifteen with a juvenile delinquency record, and by the age of nineteen he was sent to Sing Sing Prison for a ten-year term for robbery. By the time he was forty-three years old, and with a few more convictions under his belt, Marangello was in charge of some extensive gambling operations run by the Bonanno family.

The FBI set up continuous surveillance of the Toyland club, and what they discovered was that the club was like the set of some mob movie. The club was used not only by the Bonanno crime family but also by the other families, particularly the Colombo and Gambino clans. Hidden FBI cameras took hundreds of photographs to document the mobsters who showed up. Intelligence gathering operations such as the Toyland probe are started to find

leads that might later prove useful in future investigations. For instance, a wiretapped conversation might reveal to police that two mobsters agreed to meet at Toyland on a particular day to plan a crime. If surveillance confirmed that meeting, the resulting photographs might later prove useful as corroboration. But until then, the surveillance reports, known in FBI jargon as form "Ninety-twos," and photographs from the Toyland investigation resided in government files in the hope that someday they would prove useful.

Pistone didn't know it at the time, but some of his visits to Toyland and to other crime family hangouts in Manhattan, were captured by the FBI cameras. Pistone would later learn that security was so tight about his undercover role that surveillance agents and police had him picked as a mob associate known only as Donnie Brasco. Having established good rapport with Ruggiero and other made members of the Bonanno family, Pistone in 1977 was soon treated like one of the guys.

"I knew most of the regular wiseguys down on Mulberry Street, not only Bonannos but guys from other crews," wrote Pistone in his autobiography. "I was given the familiar hugs and kisses on the cheek that wiseguys exchange. I could come and go in any of the joints I wanted."

So by the time Pistone had stood with Ruggiero and others outside Casa Bella to watch over Galante in the summer of 1977, he had also rubbed shoulders with a lot of other Bonanno members. Among them was the thirty-four-year-old Joseph Massino, who Pistone viewed as a rising star in the crime family. With a growing pasta belly and broad shoulders developed through his teenaged years as a lifeguard, Massino cut an imposing and intimidating figure. Surveillance photos of that period showed Massino with a head of thick, wavy black hair as he stood outside the Holiday Bar on Madison Street, just across from Tony Mirra's luncheonette. Massino was also spotted at Toyland with his brother-in-law, Salvatore Vitale, Carmine Franzese, and, of course, Marangello.

By now, Massino was no longer just Joe from Maspeth. In fact, having proved to the mob that he was an earner, Massino moved

uptown—so to speak—buying a home on Eighty-fourth Street in Howard Beach. By then, he and his wife had their youngest of three daughters, Joanne, and it seemed right that his family move to a newer, more modern home than he had on Caldwell Avenue. As a made member, Massino's place in the family was assured, assuming he didn't screw up or insult the boss.

In the summer of 1977, with Philip Rastelli in prison, law enforcement officials began to consider Galante the effective boss of the family. Rastelli, it seemed to police, had more or less given up on trying to fight for the top spot, even though he retained the loyalty of Massino, Marangello, and a substantial number of other captains and soldiers. Galante was a more ruthless character who was known to quote Plato, Augustine, and Descartes; he also had been diagnosed as being psychotic by prison psychiatrists.

Galante's main mission revolved around his attempt to build the crime families' narcotics operations. After having spent nearly fifteen years in prison for trafficking in heroin, it might have been that Galante would be gun shy about peddling narcotics again. But drugs, particularly heroin, had become lucrative markets for the Mafia and intelligence reports placed Galante in the middle of things. He traveled to Florida to cement deals with drug dealers and reportedly reached an agreement with Harlem's drug kingpin, Nicky Barnes, to have heroin distributed in the predominately black community. With Carlo Gambino's death in 1976, there really was no old-time Mafia leader to stand in Galante's way when it came to narcotics.

If there had been any doubts that Galante was considered to be one of the preeminent leaders of the Mafia in the city, they were dispelled by a front-page article in the *New York Times* on February 20, 1977, which trumpeted his rise to power with the headline: AN OBSCURE GANGSTER IS EMERGING AS THE MAFIA CHIEFTAIN IN NEW YORK. While Rastelli had his loyalists like Massino, Galante had a small army of Sicilian cohorts who populated Knickerbocker Avenue in East New York, a part of Brooklyn that had become a magnet for the young men who migrated from Sicily. It was the Sicilians, who were lead by Salvatore "Toto" Catalano, a puffy-faced, dark-

haired immigrant baker, who formed the backbone of Galante's heroin operation.

But as might be expected, Galante let power, or his perception of it, go to his head. The heroin operation was lucrative, yes, but Galante wanted more. Police believed he started to covet the operations of the other crime families, particularly in the emerging territory of Atlantic City, which had been under the purview of Philadelphia's mob boss Angelo Bruno. The Sicilians on Knickerbocker Avenue had been Galante's workhorses with heroin, but his greed was fueling their disloyalty. Something had to give.

Police surveillance can be very good at spotting Mafia characters holding meetings and monitoring prison visits, but the substance of those meetings may be unknowable, if at all, for years. Such was the case in the months before July 1979, when officials noticed a steady stream of visitors to Rastelli at the federal penitentiary in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. News reporters were leaked the names of some of Rastelli's visitors, and they included some prominent Bonanno crime family members: Nicky Marangello, Steven "Stevie Beef" Cannone, Philip Giaccone, Frank Lupo, and Armand Polastrino. There was also mention made in those reports of a Bonanno soldier who had attracted little media attention until that point. He was identified as "Joseph Messino" and was said to be among a number of emissaries for Rastelli while he served his sentence.

Rastelli needed his contacts with the outside, otherwise he had little chance of asserting any sort of power and control over the Bonanno family. Mafia bosses could be incarcerated but rarely were they unable to exercise some leadership. Looking back, it might have seemed from the headlines that Galante had the upper hand in the family, but Rastelli was not to be discounted. In fact, the imprisoned mafioso had sources of strength and resources that even Galante didn't know about.

Knickerbocker Avenue in East New York had plenty of Italian restaurants and coffee shops. Since Galante had much of his business with the Sicilian wing of the Bonanno family, he could sometimes be found dining or taking his espresso in one of the many

small establishments where the Zips congregated. Joe and Mary's Italian American Restaurant at 205 Knickerbocker had the added benefit of a small garden at the back where diners could take their repast amid tomato plants being raised for the salads.

On the afternoon of July 12, 1979, Carmine Galante entered the restaurant for what police said was a bon voyage party for owner Joseph Turano, who was leaving shortly for a vacation trip to Italy. Galante arrived shortly before 2:45 P.M. with his Sicilian immigrant bodyguards Baldassare Amato and Cesare Bonventure, a nephew of the old Bonanno crime family underboss John Bonventure. To get to the patio dining area, Galante's entourage went through two inner dining rooms, where some other diners were having a fish dinner. The artwork on one of the walls was a cheap reproduction of Leonardo da Vinci's renowned work *The Last Supper*.

Galante sat with the two Sicilians at a table in the patio area covered with a tablecloth embossed with a floral design. He wore slacks and a light polo shirt and sat in a wooden chair with a curved back. Turano joined Galante at the table, as did Leonardo Coppolla, Galante's forty-four-year-old friend and bodyguard. Some wine, fruit, and rolls were brought to the table. Galante lit one of his ubiquitous cigars.

A blue Mercury pulled up in front of the restaurant and three men got out. Witnesses remembered them vividly because they all wore masks. They also noticed that one of them had a sawed off, double-barreled shotgun, another carried a regular shotgun, while the third seemed to be carrying a handgun, at least one and possibly two. The time was fixed by the witnesses at 2:45 P.M.

The three masked men went straight through the restaurant to the patio area. One of them, someone later recalled, shouted out, "Get him, Sal." Boy, did they ever.

A shotgun blast from one of the assailants hit Galante in the chest while another shot hit him in the face, blowing out his left eye from its socket. Coppolla was also shot and died instantly. Turano was hit as well, as was his seventeen-year-old son, Johnny. The killers exited with the same cold efficiency with which they entered.

Two crash cars had sealed off Knickerbocker Avenue and the hit team made a high-speed departure from the scene with no trouble.

Galante died immediately where he fell. The blast had knocked him out of his chair. His cigar remained tightly clenched in his jaw, while his right arm was bent at his side and the left hand was drawn up across his chest as if he were soundly asleep. The elder Turano was mortally wounded and would never make it out of the hospital emergency room. His son survived. Meanwhile, Amato and Bonventre got away unharmed, a fact that didn't go unnoticed by the police.

At 4:08 P.M., teletypes in newsrooms around the city spat out an urgent bulletin: "Reputed Mafia Chieftain Carmine Galante and an associate were shot dead in an Italian restaurant in Brooklyn, police said." That was all it took for reporters and editors to launch into a frenzy of coverage. GALANTE EXITS IN (MOB) STYLE: GODFATHER BLOWN AWAY AL FRESCO IN B'KLYN, said the *Daily News*. News photographers snapped sensational shots of Galante's corpse splayed on the patio, complete with his bloody eyeless socket. Cops finally took a plastic table cloth and draped it over his upper body to give him a last bit of dignity and an escape from the prying cameras.

The photo of the blasted Galante that showed him dying with a cigar clenched in his teeth was sensational. But the police investigation that followed seemed to raise some suspicion that perhaps a cop had placed the cigar in his mouth to make it look good, especially for the news photographers who resourcefully went to neighboring rooftops and took the crime scene pictures. However, Kenneth McCabe, one of the detectives who investigated the case, later said that the medical examiner determined that Galante had indeed died with the his last smoke clenched in his jaw.

There was a lot of law enforcement speculation about Galante's killing. Undercover FBI agent Joseph Pistone wasn't in New York City when Galante was killed but was instead in Florida taking part in a related undercover probe in which he and other agents were running a nightclub as a way of attracting the mob's attention.

Pistone only learned of Galante's death after he received a telephone call from his mobster friend Lefty Ruggiero. As Pistone later testified, Ruggiero was coy in giving away information.

"In the first conversation Ruggiero had asked me if I had read the New York papers, and I told him no, I didn't. I had not at that point," Pistone said during his testimony in the famous 1985 Pizza Connection trial. "And he instructed me to go buy a New York paper, he said, 'You'll be in for a surprise.'"

Pistone picked up the papers and saw the news about Galante and said he eventually made his way back to New York later in July 1979, where he visited Ruggiero at his club on Madison Street. It was at that point, Pistone said, that Ruggiero said that with Galante out of the way there were going to be big changes in the Bonanno family.

"He said now that Galante had gotten whacked out that Rusty Rastelli was going to be the boss of the Family," Pistone recalled. That shouldn't have come as a big surprise since Rastelli had been the only other power in the family capable of challenging Galante.

According to Pistone, Nicky Marangello and Michael Sabella, two Galante allies, were also on the hit list to be murdered but some people intervened, and instead they were demoted—Sabella to the rank of soldier and Marangello removed as underboss—Ruggiero said.

There were some other changes reported by Ruggiero: among them was the fact that Joe Massino had been elevated to the rank of captain. This was a major promotion, coming a mere two or three years after Massino had been initiated as a mob member, and was a clear indication that his stock was greatly on the rise in the Rastelli regime.

But while Pistone was told what the promotions and demotions would be, he apparently wasn't told by Ruggiero the how and why of Galante's killing. At least in the early months and years after the Knickerbocker Street slaughter, the FBI and police believed that the Galante hit was sanctioned by the Mafia Commission because

such extreme action of killing a boss needed high-level authorization. Evidence quickly emerged to support the theory that the Commission was involved. Within a half-hour or so after the killing, NYPD surveillance teams saw a number of Bonanno captains such as Steven Cannone, Bruno Indelicato, and Dominick "Sonny Black" Napolitano go to the Ravenite Social Club on Mulberry Street, where they greeted and kissed Gambino crime family's aging underboss Aniello Dellacroce.

Police and FBI agents who studied the tape of the Ravenite gathering were alerted to what they believed was the butt of a gun sticking out from Indelicato's waistband. That meeting was a sign to some of the agents that the other crime families (i.e., the Commission) were involved in signing off on Galante's assassination. It is also important to remember that the Bonanno family was essentially being monitored by the Commission for years since the ouster of Joseph Bonanno. Finally, some years later an associate of the Colombo crime family testified that family boss Carmine Persico told him he had voted against Galante's murder but that the heads of the Gambino, Lucchese, and Genovese crime families had okayed the plan.

But from where did the plot to kill Galante emanate? The idea it seems came from Rastelli. With Massino and Napolitano as allies and using them as emissaries to other loyalists, Rastelli put together a pure Machiavellian power play. Galante may have been a ruthless killer in his own right but he had alienated many and his drug dealing had won him the contempt of some of the heads of the other families. In the end, Galante wasn't the boss but was living out what one FBI agent privately confided was a Napoleonic complex—Bushwick style. His Zip allies like Amato and Bonventre, knowing where the true power lay, set him up at the restaurant. Rastelli showed that he was the true boss and loyal captains like Massino, who one mobster later testified was actually outside the restaurant when Galante was shot dead, assured him the leadership.

The wake for Carmine Galante was at a small downtown fu-

neral parlor on Second Avenue in Manhattan. His funeral was also modest. Like some other mobsters, Galante was buried at St. John's Cemetery in Queens, a burial ground run by the Diocese of Brooklyn. Over the years, famous crime bosses like Joseph Profaci, Vito Genovese, Carlo Gambino, Aniello Dellacroce, John Gotti, and even Philip Rastelli were interred there. They repose either within the immense cloister building or very near it in private mausoleums and well-tended graves that are tourist attractions. Sprigs of palm sometimes adorn them.

Galante is buried nowhere near the cloister building. Instead, his small grave is on the southern fringe of the cemetery, just yards from the busy Metropolitan Avenue. A modest granite stone with the carved image of Christ and the Sacred Heart marks the spot. "Love Goes on Forever," reads the inscription, along with the simple words "Beloved Carmine." It is very easy to overlook.

CHAPTER 8

The Three Captains

The most noticeable thing about the three-story building at the intersections of Graham and Withers streets in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, was the pigeon coop on the roof. When he needed time away from the street or the business in his social club on the first floor, Dominick "Sonny Black" Napolitano would retreat to the rooftop to be alone with his birds. Surrounded by his clutch of racers, Napolitano could take stock of the world and plan his moves as he looked out over the street scene outside his club, the Motion Lounge.

By 1980, there was a lot Napolitano had to think about. Both he and Joseph Massino had come out on top in the latest internecine struggle within the Bonanno crime family. They both had the ear of boss Philip Rastelli and were considered among the major captains of the family. They had been the imprisoned crime boss's conduit to the outside and records show that Massino had made a number of visits to the Lewisburg Penitentiary when Rastelli was housed there. Under the crime family reshuffling that went on after Carmine Galante was killed, Napolitano took over most of the crew of soldiers that had been run by the demoted Michael Sabella. Among those who were put under Napolitano was Benjamin "Lefty Guns" Ruggiero.

Since he got out of state prison, Napolitano jumped back into the swing and ran his Brooklyn crew—Massino had one of the Queens crews—through deals involving stolen gems and artwork pilfered from JFK International Airport. Ruggiero had hooked up with a guy Napolitano had begun to admire as a newcomer who

had proved to be a good earner for the family. It was a new face introduced to him by Ruggiero. This new guy was known as Donnie Brasco.

Aside from an unthinkable breach of FBI security or dumb slip up, there was no way Ruggiero could have known that Brasco was really undercover FBI agent Joseph Pistone. So when Ruggiero introduced Pistone to Napolitano, the FBI was in the process of tightening the noose on the Bonanno captain. The agency was doing that in ways Pistone didn't even know about. Other agents in the FBI had planted listening devices in a number of Bonanno social clubs and among those targeted was the Motion Lounge, the non-descript meeting place at 120 Graham Avenue where Napolitano held court. Not that Massino's haunts escaped such surveillance since a bugging device was also placed in his J&S Cake Social Club business in Maspeth on Fifty-eighth Road.

As fate would have it, Napolitano gave Ruggiero the option of being under Joe Massino, but Ruggiero decided to stay with Napolitano. It was a fateful choice because had Ruggiero chosen to go with the beefy guy in Maspeth, Massino's fortunes might have turned out much differently. But at least in the early days of 1980, Napolitano had done well with Pistone. The undercover agent had been able to steer Napolitano into an arrangement with Florida's crime boss Santos Trafficante. It was a deal that gave Napolitano a great deal of clout and put the Bonanno family into a nightclub in Florida known as the King's Court Bottle Club. It was actually an undercover business being run by Pistone's fellow agents in the Miami and Tampa offices of the FBI. Not only was the FBI watching Napolitano's deals in New York but also had him covered in Florida.

With Rastelli in prison, the Commission appointed an acting street boss, Salvatore "Sally Fruits" Ferrugia, to run things on a day-to-day basis. Of course, Napolitano was flying high, making connections with Trafficante. But Salvatore Vitale and others believed it was Massino who was the real power on the street in the crime family, the guy with the resources to make things happen. It

soon became clear on the street that Napolitano and Massino were going through their own dance for power in the crime family.

"Sonny and Joey are feuding," Ruggiero told Pistone at one point, "because Sonny's got more power. So Joey's got an unlisted telephone number now. He ain't talking to anybody because of this feud with Sonny."

Just who had more power in the family depended on who you talked to. Massino could have just as easily taken an unlisted telephone number thinking it would deter surveillance. No matter what kind of power plays Massino and Napolitano were carrying on with each other, there was a more serious political undercurrent in the family, one that even the demise of Galante had not resolved. While Rastelli was considered to be the boss of the family, some of his captains began to view him as ineffective. His continued incarceration had denied the family a full-time boss and instead left it to the ministration of a caretaker, Ferrugia, who was no match for the dominant personalities of Massino and Napolitano. Eventually, Nicholas Marangello, the family underboss, and Steven Cannone, the consiglieri, took over as a committee running things while Rastelli was away.

Three captains in particular became disenchanted with this leadership, and they began to make noise. It was the kind of stuff Massino got wind of. One day in his social club near Rust Street Massino confided to Vitale the troubling news that the three capos—Philip Giaccone, Alphonse "Sonny Red" Indelicato, and Dominick "Big Trin" Trinchera—were actually plotting to take over the entire Bonanno operation.

"Rastelli is a bum," was what the three captains had been saying about the incarcerated boss to justify their actions.

Vitale, who was only a crime family associate at that point in the early 1980s, had met Giaccone, who was known by the moniker "Phil Lucky." In the early days, Giaccone had actually been Massino's captain before the man from Maspeth won his promotion after Galante's death. Trinchera was another obese mobster who

was close to 300 pounds. Indelicato's son, Anthony Bruno Indelicato, had been one of the three men suspected of doing the actual shooting of Galante in 1979.

Massino, Vitale told investigators years later, didn't tell him much about the plotting but did say that the Commission had intervened when the rumors became rife and decreed that there should be no bloodshed. The other Mafia families decided that everybody should wait for Rastelli to get out of jail and then work out the problem.

"Work it out among yourselves, no gun play," was how Vitale characterized the Commission's dictate.

That seemed to hold things in check for a while. Apart from Massino and Napolitano, the incarcerated Rastelli could count on the support of Cannone and Ferrugia. On the other side, the three captains were backed by the top Sicilian Cesare Bonventure and his Zip associates from Knickerbocker Avenue. With the Sicilians in their corner, the three captains were not to be trifled with, particularly since they had the support of Vincent "the Chin" Gigante, the Genovese family boss and his powerful Westside contingent. Had the Sicilians had their way, they could have pushed Salvatore Catalano, the heroin dealer, as a candidate for boss. In fact, for about a week Catalano was pushed forward as the boss. Catalano had been a made member of the Sicilian Mafia; therefore, under the arcane code of the American Mafia he could not become a boss in the United States: "You were either all Italy or all United States" as one mafioso put it. It also didn't help Catalano that his command of English was not that good.

Well wired with his own informants in the other crime families, Massino picked up rumors that the peace would not hold. Police later learned that a Colombo crime family member—Carmine Franzese, who had a close personal relationship with Massino—passed along the tip that Giaccone, Trinchera, and Indelicato were stocking up on automatic weapons to carry out a putsch against Rastelli and his supporters. Because the other side was loading up, the

Rastelli faction had to do something. The Sicilians in particular had a reputation for being bloodthirsty and disloyal, factors that made them potent adversaries. A preemptive strike was needed.

As Vitale later told investigators, Massino turned to his old friend on the Commission, Gambino boss Paul Castellano, as well as Carmine Persico, head of the Colombo crime family. Their advice to Massino was simple and straightforward: Do what you have to do to protect yourselves. When Vitale heard that from Massino, he fully understood what the message from the Commission had been: Kill the three capos. That things had come to this point had troubled Massino, who believed, according to Vitale, that weakness on the part of Marangello and Cannone had allowed the three captains to think they could flout the crime family's administration.

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The thing about Mafia social clubs in New York City was that it was usually a safe bet that they would always have something going on. The clubs were thrones for the powerful and those who sought an audience with the kings of La Cosa Nostra. The clubs were also venues for planning, meeting, or just simply talking over a cup of espresso. Police and federal agents got into a habit of watching the comings and goings at the clubs much like Kremlinologists studied the lineup of Moscow's May Day parades for signs of where the power lay in the Soviet Union to discern who was up and who was down in the mob.

In Maspeth in 1981, any FBI agent worth his or her salt knew that Joseph Massino held court at the J&S Cake Social Club on Fifty-eighth Road. If any agent had no particular assignment but wanted to check out the boys in Massino's orbit on a particular day, a swing by J&S Cake wasn't a bad way to spend the time. You never knew what you would find.

It was at about 5:05 P.M. on May 5, 1981, that Special Agent Vincent Savadel decided to make a run by the Massino club in his government-issued sedan. He had already swung by another Massino hangout at 58-14 Fifty-eighth Avenue and jotted down one li-

cense plate when he went around the block to Fifty-eighth Road. Just as Savadel drove by, he spotted Massino coming out of the two-story building in the company of what he later reported were "several white men."

The body language of Massino and his associates seemed to convey that they were going someplace, Savadel thought. The agent drove a short distance to the corner on Rust Street and, figuring the Massino crowd was going to drive away, waited in his car.

It wasn't a long wait. A brown Cadillac came out from Fifty-eighth Road and made a-right turn, northbound, on Rust Street. As the car passed him, Savadel noticed that there were at least four people inside. It was a car that had been outside Massino's social club.

Moments later a dark red, almost maroon-colored, Buick also came out from Fifty-eighth Road and made the same turn, following the Cadillac. As the car passed Savadel's parked FBI vehicle, the driver looked at the government agent. Savadel's and the driver's eyes locked on each other. The driver momentarily gazed at Savadel with a perceptive lingering glance that signaled recognition. Savadel also knew who he was looking at: Joseph Massino.

Making a U-turn, Savadel followed both cars north on Rust. Massino seemed to be looking in his rearview and sideview mirrors, checking out the FBI car. The two cars accelerated and then Massino's vehicle pulled on to the wrong side of the two-way street until he was next to the Cadillac. Savadel noticed Massino gesturing with his hands and talking. Then Massino gunned his accelerator and took the lead, with the Cadillac following.

Traveling fast on the back streets, Massino's car disappeared from sight, leaving Savadel to follow the brown Cadillac as it entered the Long Island Expressway going eastbound. The Cadillac quickly exited on to Maurice Avenue, leaving Savadel to continue eastbound on the expressway. As he did so, he glanced at the Cadillac. The men inside the vehicle looked at him as well.

Savadel couldn't follow the Cadillac because of traffic. He had also lost Massino's vehicle in the high-speed drive from Rust Street.

The agent had no idea where the men were all going that evening when they launched into their sprint with the cars. Still, the agent remembered what happened. There was no telling when the car chase might become important.

After peeling off from the car chase, Savadel called the Bonanno investigators at the FBI operational center that was located not too far away in Rego Park. He related what he had just seen, likening Massino and company's driving antics to a "fire drill." What did it mean? Nobody in the office knew for sure. Instinctively, Special Agent Charles Rooney, who was working one aspect of the Bonanno crime family involved in major international heroin deals, scribbled down what Savadel had reported on a small Post-It note and stuck it on a chart in the office. You never know when all those gyrations with cars might mean something, he thought.

It was also on May 5, 1981, that Donna Trinchera spoke with her husband just as he left the couple's Brooklyn house. There was a meeting he said and he was going to it. The thin, blond woman didn't question her spouse too much. It was a meeting, that's all, he said. She expected him to be home at some point.

In fact, it was the third such meeting Trinchera and his two friends had gone to in recent weeks. One had been at the Ferncliffe Manor and the second at the Embassy Terrace at Avenue U and East Second Street in Brooklyn. Nothing had been resolved at either sitdown. The third meeting of the Bonanno crime family administration was set for the early evening hour at a social club in Brooklyn on Thirteenth Avenue. Since it was a conclave of the upper echelon of the crime family, neither Trinchera nor the two men he arrived with, Philip Giaccone and Alphonse Indelicato, were armed. The rules were that an administration meeting meant that no one packed a weapon, the better to avoid hotheaded reactions that might get out of hand.

But the three captains had always suspected that a meeting could be a death trap, so they took precautions. The night before the Embassy Terrace meeting the three captains, plus Alphonse Indelicato's son Bruno, stockpiled some guns at a bar owned by Frank

Lino, an acting Bonanno captain, about two blocks away. In case the three captains were killed, Lino and Bruno Indelicato were told to retaliate and kill as many of the opposition as possible.

Unarmed, the three Bonanno captains walked to the building for the third meeting. They were followed by Lino. Nobody in that little group seemed to notice a fair-haired young man from Maspeth sitting in a car a block away with a walkie-talkie. If they had, it wouldn't have seemed so strange since Duane Leisenheimer was always around Joseph Massino, who had every right to be at an administration meeting. Trinchera rang the doorbell.

Inside, the sound of the bell let the men who were waiting know the visitors had arrived. Four of them were standing in a closet, and when they heard the bell they pulled ski masks over their heads. The closet door was open just enough so that those inside could see Trinchera walk in first to the big meeting room. He was followed by Giaccone. Then came Indelicato. He was the key. When the men saw Indelicato come into the room, they knew what they had to do. They had been told earlier that if Indelicato didn't show up it would be a regular meeting in the room. If he did show up, well, that would be that.

The three men, plus Lino, had come to the meeting to take a third stab to see if the bad blood and tension with their family could somehow be lessened. Everybody in their world knew that the Bonanno family had a power struggle so the meeting was called to iron things out. Joseph Massino had wanted it and the three captains who had arrived knew that he was a formidable power, a man with the clout to call everybody together. They, too, wanted to talk. Lino would be their witness.

The three late arrivals saw in the big room those who were followers of Massino and the other powerful captain Sonny Black Napolitano. Naturally, Massino was there. So was Joseph Zicarelli from New Jersey, known as "Bayonne Joe," and Nicola DiStefano, whose fights of yesteryear had earned him the sobriquet of "Nick the Battler." There was also a Sicilian gangster named Antonio Giordano, as were several other members of the crime family high

echelon. Scanning the small crowd, the three captains would have noticed, perhaps oddly, that Napolitano wasn't there.

Gerlando "George" Sciascia spotted Indelicato in the crowd and ran the fingers of one hand through his hair. For the others in the closet that was the prearranged signal that meant they could start.

The four men in masks burst from the closet. One had a Tommy gun, another a shotgun, and two carried pistols. Two of them ran to guard the exit door. Vito Rizzutto, turned to the three captains.

"Don't anybody move, this is a holdup," said Rizzutto.

Seeing the masks and the guns, Trinchera, Indelicato, Giaccone, and Lino reacted. They knew at that instant that their worst suspicions had been realized. They had been lured into a trap. Their survival instincts kicked in with a suddenness that surprised some in the room. Trinchera made guttural noise and charged the assailants.

Unarmed and unassuming, the three luckless men had nowhere to turn. Rizzutto and Sciascia opened up with a shotgun and pistol. Trinchera lost part of his abdomen in one blast. Indelicato tried to run out the exit but fell just short of the door when another shotgun blast hit him. Sciascia came over, pulled out a pistol, and shot him one more time in the left side of the head. Giaccone was lying dead in the big room.

Lino, the last man to enter the killing zone, turned around when the shooting started and in the confusion of those early seconds ran right past the two men who were supposed to seal off the exit. There was no stopping him. He moved so fast there was no use trying to follow him.

The shooting was over in seconds. There was blood and viscera all over the big room. Besides the gunners, the only one left standing in the middle of the chaotic scene was the big man himself, Joseph Massino.

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Early the next morning, May 6, 1981, FBI agent Charles Rooney returned to his office on Queens Boulevard in Rego Park. Many of the agency's organized crime squads worked out of the modern

steel and glass building. It was a convenient location for them because so many of the targets of investigations lived and worked in Queens, Brooklyn, and Long Island. The location provided the agents with easy highway access to those areas. The office also housed several pen registers, devices that were able to note whenever a particular telephone was called or was being used to place a call. Pen registers were not wiretaps, so the FBI didn't need a warrant to tie them into a particular telephone number through the telephone companies.

Rooney was in his office by 8:00 A.M. All of a sudden, the pen registers started to click on, sounding like a bunch of electronic crickets. Then they started sounding like a bunch of adding machines as they quickly typed out on paper the telephone numbers that each of the monitored lines was calling. Since each machine had been linked to a particular telephone number in the Bonanno investigation, it was clear that the targets in the case were busy calling each other.

But what were they calling each other about? Rooney and his fellow agents could only watch in amazement as the machines recorded the various telephones making and receiving calls.

One of the machines registered calls on the telephone at Massino's J&S Cake Social Club. But without listening into the call the FBI could only guess what Massino and the other investigative targets were talking about. For all they knew, he might be taking a lot of orders for ham sandwiches. But Rooney and the others surmised it was something much bigger than that to make the pen registers so hot.

The pen registers were one of three strange clues Rooney and the other FBI agents noticed over the next three days. Another tantalizing lead for Rooney came from Pistone, who telephoned his fellow agents with the information that Benjamin Ruggiero, having dropped out of sight for a few days, had called him to say "everything is fine, we are winners." Then Rooney learned that an associate of the Bonanno family, Antonio Giordano, had been checked into Coney Island Hospital with a bullet wound. To Rooney, the fact that

Giordano, a resident of Bushwick, in northern Brooklyn, would take himself to a hospital in the southern part of Brooklyn seemed odd. An FBI agent visited Giordano, who was suffering from paralysis after being shot in the back. The wounded man insisted to the agent he was shot in a traffic altercation. It was a story he stuck with.

Though seemingly disparate incidents—the frenzy of activity on the pen registers, Ruggiero's comment to Pistone, and the shooting of Giordano—they appeared more than just coincidental to Rooney and his FBI colleagues on Queens Boulevard. Something clearly had happened in the Bonanno crime family. But what?

Rooney found one more thing to puzzle over. An FBI surveillance team had photographed Massino outside the Capri Motor Inn in the Bronx the same day the pen registers went crazy. Massino was in the company of Vito Rizzuto, a Bonanno captain from Canada, and George Sciascia, another Bonanno member from Canada. Also present was Gianni Liggamari, a major Bonanno family drug dealer from Sicily. The Canadians were heavyweight Mafia members in a country where the Bonanno family long had representation. That Massino was meeting with them at a time of so much tantalizing intelligence only served to increase Rooney's curiosity.

CHAPTER 9

The Inside Man

Dominick Trinchera, Philip Giaccone, and Alphonse Indelicato didn't know they were going to die when they walked into the social club on May 5, 1981. But undercover agent Joseph Pistone certainly had enough indications that at least Giaccone was a target. Benjamin "Lefty Guns" Ruggiero had told Pistone that Giaccone was the object of a hit attempt as early as April but that it had been called off. The thinking was that all the three captains should be killed together.

In later court testimony, Pistone recalled that on April 23, 1981, Ruggiero explained that it was Dominick Napolitano and Joseph Massino who had put together the planned hit. Because of that, said Ruggiero, the Commission had assured both captains that Philip "Rusty" Rastelli would be the absolute boss. On top of that, Ruggiero told Pistone, the Sicilian Zips had come over to Massino, assuring that the Rastelli loyalists would have crucial support in the coming showdown.

Ruggiero dropped some more hints, Pistone later recalled, when he told the undercover agent that the three captains (who were still alive at that point) had lost the power play for the crime family. The deal had been ratified by the Mafia Commission, Ruggiero indicated.

"They lost, and they lost nationwide. New York, Miami, Chicago, they lost nationwide," Ruggiero told Pistone, cryptically.

"Rusty was the boss," Ruggiero added, referring to Rastelli.

In recounting later on the witness stand and in his book of the

deadly days around May 5, 1981, Pistone said that when Ruggiero suddenly went missing, another FBI agent reported that informants were saying the three captains—Trinchera, Giaccone, and Indelicato—had been assassinated. It took about ten days but Pistone got called by Napolitano for a meeting at the Motion Lounge. What he learned there would answer the questions Charles Rooney and the other FBI agents had been puzzling over ever since their pen registers went hyperactive on May 6, 1981.

Pistone remembered a calm Napolitano sitting at the bar. There were the usual associates at the club: Jimmy “Legs” Episcopia and John “Boobie” Cerasani. Pistone also noticed a tall, stocky, thick-handed guy who had been around Massino a lot. His name, Pistone would later learn, was Raymond Wean.

After some greetings, Napolitano and Pistone sat alone at a card table in the club room next to a small pool table. Napolitano told Pistone that the three captains had indeed been murdered. There had been one complication though. Indelicato’s son, Anthony Bruno, was still around and the information the mob had was that he was running around in Miami, coked up and bruising to avenge his father. If Pistone found him in Florida, Napolitano said, just have him killed.

“Be careful, because when he’s coked up, he’s crazy,” Napolitano told Pistone.

Pistone later recalled that Wean left the club shortly after Pistone entered and made a telephone call to the FBI relating how a strange guy named “Donnie” had appeared and seemed very friendly and close to Napolitano. Wean made the call to his new best friend. He was Patrick Colgan, the FBI agent who had arrested him and Joseph Massino six years earlier over a hijacked load of clothing on Grand Avenue.

The problem for Wean though was that after his 1977 federal conviction he just couldn’t stay out of trouble. Nassau County police picked him up on a felony charge and if convicted again Wean would have been a three-time loser and facing more jail time. As he

cooled his heels in the county lockup, Wean's common-law wife reached out to Colgan.

"He likes you. He trusts you," Wean's wife told Colgan, as she pleaded with the agent to visit her lover in jail.

Out in Nassau County Wean knew that his only ticket out of a long prison term was to cooperate. He knew a lot about the Bonanno crime family and Massino, Wean said. He also didn't want to die in jail, a distinct possibility since Wean had already suffered from a heart attack.

"I'll cooperate and testify," Wean told Colgan. "I will go up against Joey."

Wean became an informant. He did so because Joe Massino had never really taken care of him. Wean had done some serious jail time for being a part of Massino's hijacking operations and in all of those years away from his family, one former FBI agent recalled, the lady love of the big-bodied truck robber never got anything from his Maspeth crony to ease the financial crunch. One of Massino's failings was that he didn't take care of the people he climbed the backs of in his steady rise as a gangster. It would be something that would come back to haunt him.

But before Wean could do anything, he had to make a \$100,000 bail in the Nassau County case, a sum that he had no way of raising. To make Wean's release possible, Colgan and an assistant U.S. attorney from Brooklyn took the unusual step of testifying at a special secret court hearing before a state court judge about Wean's intended cooperation and the need for a lower bail. The court agreed to lower the bail to \$40,000. Because the FBI wasn't going to post the bond, Colgan suggested to Wean that perhaps his parents could raise the cash. Wean contacted his elderly mother and father, and they agreed to help him. He made bail.

With a grateful Wean on his side, Colgan said he wanted him to try to hang around Massino and see if he could secretly tape him. But as it turned out, Wean spent more of his time around the Motion Lounge because Massino had told him to make himself

useful to Napolitano, Pat Colgan later recalled. It was clear to many in the FBI at this point that Massino was the up and coming power in the family and he really didn't need to run around with a street guy like Wean. Neither Wean nor Pistone knew of their separate roles in what would soon become part of a nightmare for the mob. While the FBI had known almost immediately about the killings of the three captains, no corpses had surfaced. That changed on Sunday, May 20, 1984.

Ruby Street in eastern Brooklyn literally straddles the borough's border with Queens. It is an area of old detached houses and surrounding vacant spaces where tomato plants grow by the roadside. There is the feel of a forgotten neighborhood, a No-Man's Land in a city of over 8 million souls. It is also a place for secrets.

At the intersection of Ruby and Blake Avenue was a fairly large vacant lot that like most neglected spaces in the city became overgrown with weeds. Kids liked to play in it and did so on that particular Sunday in May. They were looking to amuse themselves when they noticed a peculiar object sticking up from the dry soil. It was a human hand, and from the looks of things it had been hastily buried. It was as if whoever did the burial didn't care if the corpse was found.

When the police arrived, they discovered the rest of the partly decomposed body of a man who had been buried about two feet down. The corpse was wrapped in a tufted blanket used by moving companies to protect furniture, and a police officer who responded to the scene noted there was a rope around the body's waist. The corpse was clothed in an orange t-shirt, tan dress slacks, and brown cowboy boots. The body had two tattoos on the left arm: a heart pierced by a dagger and an inscription that read "Holland 1945 Dad." The dead man was wearing a stainless steel Cartier watch and had in his pocket a leather Gucci key case that contained keys to a Volvo.

Three gunshot wounds were found: two in the body and one in the head. The fatal shot appeared to be one in the back that had punctured the aorta. Though the body had suffered from some de-

composition, one of the forensic experts injected some fluid into the shriveled fingers—a standard practice—so that fingerprints could be taken. The medical examiner took a few days but after a relative showed up to look at the body it was quickly confirmed that the corpse in the vacant lot was that of Alphonse “Sonny Red” Indelicato. One of the dead captains had been found.

CHAPTER 10

Up on the Roof

What a fuckup.

Dominick “Sonny Black” Napolitano had no other way of describing what had happened at the Ruby Street lot.

Neither Alphonse Indelicato’s body nor those of any of the other dead captains was to have been found. But here it was, not even three weeks after they had been killed and the corpses were starting to surface. That was not supposed to be, Napolitano told his crew members, if Massino had done the job right.

The finding of Indelicato’s body raised concern that the corpses of Dominick Trinchera and Philip Giaccone would also surface. If that happened, it would lead to more leads that could, even with the state of forensic science in 1981, provide evidence that could implicate the Bonanno faction, which had engineered and carried out the murders. Massino, police later learned, had farmed out the disposal of the bodies to the Gambino crime family, which did a sloppy job.

Disconcerted over the discovery of Indelicato, the Bonanno family became nervous. As the earlier episode with the pen registers in the FBI Rego Park office indicated, the agency needed to get some good wiretaps and to plum informants for clues. Joseph Pistone had been able to glean information showing how the Rastelli faction had clearly won the day, but there was still the need to gather more intelligence.

It also became clear to FBI officials that Pistone’s long-running tenure as an undercover agent within the crime family was coming

to an end. The politics of the family still remained dangerously unstable. Massino and Napolitano were vying for the job as the powerful captain in the family and it was evident there was friction between the two even though they had both won the backing of the Commission for Rastelli. Massino was also very wary and looking closely for signs of informants.

Napolitano had not just given Pistone a contract to kill Bruno Indelicato on a whim. The Bonanno captain had come to trust the undercover agent and became impressed with his ability to earn money through the King's Court Bottle Club in Florida, not knowing it was an FBI undercover company. By 1981, the books of the crime family, so to speak, were being opened again for new members and Napolitano told Pistone he was going to propose him for membership. The plan was for Pistone to be proposed to become a made member shortly after boss Philip Rastelli came out of prison later in the year after serving his sentence for the lunch wagon extortion case.

Napolitano didn't keep secret his plan to have his buddy Pistone become a made member. He talked about it openly. As Salvatore Vitale later told police, he and Massino learned of the plan to elevate Pistone during a visit to Napolitano's Motion Lounge. Vitale had driven Massino to the club on Withers Street in Williamsburg, where his brother-in-law got out of the car and approached Napolitano. It was clear from the body language of the two captains that they were having a heated conversation, Vitale noticed. Massino seemed very upset.

Walking away from Napolitano, an angry Massino returned to the car where Vitale was waiting.

Napolitano wanted to "straighten out" the brash newcomer Donnie Brasco, a fuming Massino told Vitale. What especially bothered Massino was that Brasco would be proposed for membership before Vitale. It also seemed odd to Massino, indeed imprudent, that Napolitano would even think about submitting this fellow Brasco's name for mob membership after only knowing him for a couple of years, Vitale recalled. It takes years of close association

with someone for mob bosses to feel comfortable with a man before proposing membership. Brasco had rocketed into contention almost overnight and no one knew if he even did a "piece of work," meaning had a hand in an actual killing sanctioned by the crime family. Massino and Napolitano already had some friction between them and now there was the added problem of Brasco being favored over the ever loyal Vitale.

Though Pistone later said that he saw benefits to the FBI having one of its agents serving undercover as a made member of the Mafia, the law enforcement agency saw things differently. Killings from the Bonanno factionalism had spread to those outside the crime family when two other mobsters believed to have been friendly with Alphonse Indelicato were murdered. Things were getting dicey. The decision was made to pull Pistone from his undercover assignment at the end of July 1981. The man known as Donnie Brasco to the men in the world of the Bonanno crime family would cease to exist. Joseph Pistone would then resurface in his true identity on the witness stand.

Court records show that Pistone, as well as another FBI agent, Edgar T. Robb, who was known by the street name of "Tony Rossi," were officially pulled from their undercover roles on July 30, 1981. Robb had worked as the undercover agent at the King's Court Bottle Club in Florida, the place Napolitano and Benjamin Ruggiero had conducted business in and believed to be their racket. Pistone wanted to tell Napolitano himself about his true identity, but that was one final role he wouldn't play. FBI officials decided the Bonanno mobsters in New York had to be told of Pistone's true identity, by other special agents. Napolitano, Ruggiero, and any others involved with Pistone were to be told he was a government agent and not an informant because it was believed it would help safeguard Pistone from retribution.

"Our belief, again based upon experience, was that while members of La Cosa Nostra have readily killed any number of 'informants' or 'stool pigeons,' they would not threaten the lives of undercover FBI agents," said one of Pistone's supervisors.

Despite the high stakes in criminal investigations, FBI agents and police often developed working relationships with the mobsters they targeted. Not only did the agents of law enforcement come to know their targets but also the mobsters themselves saw the investigators as a form of brethren. Mobsters knew the cops had a job to do and for the most part respected them, particularly if they did the job well and treated the people they targeted with some respect. In return, the wiseguys in the crime families reciprocated the simple courtesies and respect they received.

On July 30, 1981, three veteran FBI agents took a trip to Williamsburg and parked not far from the Motion Lounge. Together, special agents Doug Fencl, Jim Kinne, and Jerry Loar, all dressed in summer blazers and suits, went to the building at the corner of Withers and Graham in Williamsburg, which housed the Motion Lounge. Fencl rang the bell to Napolitano's apartment on the second floor. Napolitano screamed out, asking who was calling.

"Doug Fencl, I need to talk to you," the agent said.

"Come up," said Napolitano.

Once inside the apartment, Fencl sat with Napolitano around the dining room table. The agents asked Napolitano if he knew Donny Brasco and Tony Rossi and he said he did. Fencl then told Napolitano that they were FBI agents.

Fencl pulled out a picture of Pistone, Robb, and other FBI agents. The photo showed a smiling Fencl and a total of four other men including special Agent Loar posing against a wood-paneled wall that had been brightly lit by the camera flash. It wasn't a very arty shot. To the left of Loar stood Pistone in a striped polo shirt and his hands clasped in front of him. Pistone seemed almost expressionless in the picture but looking closely you could see the slight suggestion of a smile on his face. That man in the short-sleeved shirt, Fencl told Napolitano, was an FBI agent.

Napolitano kept his cool and said he didn't know Pistone but that if he did meet him in the future he would know who he was and that he worked for the FBI. Fencl also told Napolitano that he could have a potential problem with his gangster friends for bringing

both undercover agents into Bonanno crime family business. Fencl pulled out his business card and offered it to Napolitano, just in case he needed it.

"You know better than anybody I can't take this," said Napolitano. "I know how to get a hold of you if I need to."

The agents left the lounge and were captured on film by an FBI camera as they crossed Withers Street.

Though he had been cool and collected when Fencl told him who Pistone was, Napolitano quickly jumped into action after the trio of agents left. His crew members, Ruggiero, John Cerasani, and others were called in for a hasty meeting and told what Fencl had said. There was disbelief. On one wiretap a crew member was overheard saying that the FBI must have kidnapped Bracco (Pistone) and then forced him to pose with the agents in the picture Fencl had showed Napolitano.

According to Pistone, Napolitano and his crew kept the disclosure to themselves and began to look for him, putting out feelers in Florida and Chicago but came up blank. Pistone was of course off the street and would no longer be found in the old haunts of his alter ego Donnie Bracco. Napolitano knew that he had to inform the powers that be and he made several other calls. One of those calls was to Massino, another was to Paul Castellano. Rastelli eventually got word in prison.

In the hours immediately after the shocking disclosure that Donnie Bracco, the man he had been pushing for membership in the family, was really an FBI agent, Napolitano needed some time to himself. He did what he always did to escape and think. He went up to the roof where his pigeon coop was and looked out over Withers and Graham streets.

Surveillance photos caught a worried-looking man, his brow creased with deep frown lines, surrounded by pigeons. The winged creatures were the only living things Dominick Napolitano could really trust.

CHAPTER 11

Do It to Me One More Time

Anthony "Fat Tony" Salerno had long been a power in the Genovese crime family. By the summer of 1981, he was getting on in years—he was seventy years old—but still held sway as a major source of loan-sharking money in the garment district and a controlling force behind the crime family's gambling operations in central Harlem. Federal investigators considered him the boss of the Genovese family, although the real power was held by Vincent Gigante. Salerno was a front man, important in his own right, but still just a front.

Salerno traveled around a lot, mainly between New York, Florida, and Las Vegas, places where he had legal and illegal business holdings. He had a large farm near the upstate New York town of Rhinebeck that he escaped to every Friday. But when he was in the city during the week, Salerno could be found at his social club on 115th Street in Manhattan. The Palma Boys Social Club was another one of those nondescript places where mobsters knew they could find their bosses and associates. The origin of the name was obscure, it was possibly an allusion to the Spanish word for *palm* or a bay in Majorca. In nice weather, Salerno, who wore a wide-brimmed hat, would sit outside the club with one of his trademark cigars clamped in his mouth. He walked with a cane for assistance.

After Joseph Pistone had surfaced in his true identity as an FBI agent, bureau officials knew that there was a great incentive for the Mafia families in New York to prevent him from testifying any way they could. Pistone had collected a great deal of evidence against

the Bonanno family. The depth of his unprecedented penetration of the mob, his FBI colleagues believed, was an embarrassment to many if not all of the bosses of New York's five families. At least one informant had reported that pictures of Pistone and Edgar T. Robb had been circulated to Mafia families throughout the United States. To let the mob know that Pistone and Robb were federal agents, the FBI decided to talk with leaders of each Mafia family. The object of the talks was simple: Pistone and Robb were federal agents, and any attempt to harm them would bring the wrath of the government down on those who tried.

One of the mobsters approached for a little chat was Salerno. Agents found him at the Palma Boys club, seated in the back at his habitual table. He had on a suit and tie and was smoking one of his ubiquitous cigars. The agents told him they were investigating some mob homicides, notably the deaths of the three Bonanno captains, and that the bureau also didn't want Donnie Brasco (Pistone) harmed.

Salerno was a little perplexed about why the FBI was worried about the disappearance and death of three mobsters. The mob takes care of its own, Salerno told the agents. If the three captains were killed, they probably deserved it, he added.

Though a gruff talker, Salerno understood what the agents were saying about Pistone.

"Nobody is gonna hurt Donnie Brasco," Salerno assured the agents.

Salerno didn't hold the Bonanno crime family in high regard. That became evident after he was heard on a bug placed in the Palma Boys club saying the family was a collection of drug dealers—"junk men" as he called them. So his remarks that the Genovese crowd wouldn't do anything drastic about Pistone seemed a sign to the FBI that the Bonanno family's penetration by Pistone wasn't going to result in any Mafia-wide hunt for the agent. However, it was another story with Benjamin "Lefty Guns" Ruggiero.

When Pistone first made his entrée with the Bonanno family, Ruggiero was in effect his mentor. A gangly man who seemed like Rodney

Dangerfield because he was always denied the respect he deserved for being a good soldier for the mob, Ruggiero took Pistone under his wing and taught him the ropes about mob protocol and how to make his way around mobsters. Pistone, through his secret law enforcement connections, was able to generate money for Ruggiero's associates, the most important being Dominick "Sonny Black" Napolitano. It was Napolitano whom Ruggiero decided to align himself with instead of Joseph Massino in the aftermath of the assassination of Carmine Galante. So, when Pistone's undercover identity was uncloaked, it was Ruggiero who felt particularly betrayed.

FBI sources in the mob reported that Ruggiero became obsessed with finding Pistone. One FBI informant said that Ruggiero stated that he was going to find and kill Pistone "if it was the last thing he did." Investigators took the threat more seriously when the same source said that Ruggiero was going to ingenious lengths to find out anything about Pistone that might help locate him. Since Pistone had stayed in a particular Holiday Inn when he visited Florida on undercover business, Ruggiero had contacts who would try to obtain through hotel records the telephone numbers "Donnie Brasco" called, said the source who was only identified as "Source A" in FBI court records. In a more ominous vein, the source said that he had actually seen one such telephone number obtained from a Holiday Inn in Miami Beach where Pistone had stayed. Ruggiero seemed obsessed with the search, and his only mission was to locate "Donnie" said the informant.

Throughout August 1981, Ruggiero worked feverishly trying to find Pistone, the man who had betrayed him. But where was Napolitano and what was he doing? Federal agents had picked up informant information that the powerful Bonanno captain had disappeared and might have been killed. But it was just as possible, investigators thought, that Napolitano had fled to either avoid arrest or the harm he might face from his mob brethren. In August 1981, nobody in law enforcement knew for sure what had happened to Napolitano.

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Sonny Black Napolitano said he had a meeting to attend and his girlfriend, Judy Brown, didn't press him for details. He gave her some of the jewelry he had—Napolitano favored expensive rings—and left her the keys to his apartment. He took his car keys because he had to drive. It was an evening in August 1981, just a couple of weeks after the Pistone bomb shell had landed on the world of the Mafia.

Napolitano drove himself to the parking lot at Hamilton House, a restaurant in the Bay Ridge section of Brooklyn. Known for its American cuisine until it closed in the 1990s, the Hamilton House was a central meeting place that was convenient to Staten Island because of its nearness to the Verrazano Narrows Bridge.

After parking, Napolitano spotted Frank Lino and Steven "Stevie Beef" Cannone. Lino was a short and stocky gangster who started his life in crime at the age of fifteen when he was a member of the Avenue U Boys, a south Brooklyn gang that did robberies and set up card games for money. A mere three years later, at the age of eighteen, Lino started doing crimes for all five New York Mafia families and finally in October 1977 he became initiated into the Bonanno family. Cannone was a high-ranked Bonanno member from Elizabeth Street in Little Italy who had done time in a federal penitentiary for narcotics in the 1930s. During the fallout in the crime family when Joseph Bonanno was effectively deposed, Cannone was allied with the Paul Sciacca faction. Considered the consiglieri of the family, Cannone could be found spending his hours at the Toyland Social Club in lower Manhattan.

With Napolitano and Cannone in his car, Lino drove from Hamilton House over the Verrazano to Staten Island. Occasionally, Lino checked his rearview mirror to see if a van was following his car. It was.

Getting off the highway on Staten Island, Lino drove to the house of the father of Ronald Filocomo, a mob associate whose previous employment as a state correctional officer denied him the chance to become a made member of the Bonanno family. Still, Filocomo did what he could for the crime family and on that par-