JOE: Braced yourself.
FRANK: Yeah...y'know...I'm a real sucker for hard luck stories.
Fay's always tellin' me that I should learn to stay away from these guys. She was sayin' the other night...
JOE: What'd this guy want?
FRANK: What?
JOE: What'd he want...this fella that talked to you?
FRANK: He gave me this story...About how he'd been on a bat. How he was broke and needed some money to clean up before he went home.
JOE: Uh huh.
FRANK: But he makes it real plain that he doesn't want a handout. Nothin' for nothin'.
JOE: What'd he mean by that?
FRANK: That's when he showed me the package.
JOE: The package.
FRANK: Yeah.
JOE: What package?
FRANK: The one he was carryin'. Y'see before this...I couldn't see it. Then he showed it to me. All done up in tissue paper...ribbon and all. Paper was kinda dirty...like he'd been carryin' it for a long time...Ribbon was a little tired but there it was.
JOE: Yeah.
FRANK: He asked me if I wanted to buy it.
JOE: The package.
FRANK: Yeah Joe...well, what was in it. He asked me if I wanted to buy that.

JOE: What was in it?

FRANK: Well, he took off the paper and opened the thing up. Inside's a brand new electric razor...brand new...worth twenty-fives...twenty six dollars.

JOE: Uh huh.

FRANK: He said he'd let me have it for 20 bucks.

JOE: Just because he needed the money.

FRANK: Yeah. Well, happened that I didn't have twenty bucks. So I told him I couldn't make a deal.

JOE: Then he left huh?

FRANK: No Joe...now you wanted to hear about it...lemme finish.

JOE: Yeah.

FRANK: We talked back and forth for a little bit. Guy finally said that I looked like I had an honest face.

JOE: That's a new approach.

BEAT

FRANK: Joe.

JOE: Sorry.

FRANK: Finally get so that he says he'll let me have the razor for fifteen bucks. So I bought it.

JOE: That's how you cut your face up huh...with the new razor?
FRANK: In a way. Y'see I had to buy some blades last night and since I had the new electric...I didn't do it. Only thing I had in the house was a blade a week old. Got up this morning and plugged the electric in...what'dya figure happened?

JOE: Nothin'. It didn't run.

BEAT

FRANK: How'd you know?

JOE: The same thing happened to Murphy over in Robbery last month. Big Laugh around here. You were one of the guys who laughed the most.

FRANK: Yeah...I remember now. Miserable.

JOE: He know about this yet?

FRANK: I dread the moment Joe. I dread the moment.

SOUND: DOOR OPENS OFF.

NELSON: Friday Smith.

JOE: (UP) Yeah Skipper.

NELSON: (OFF) See you guys.

JOE: (UP) Right.

SOUND: JOE AND FRANK WALK ACROSS THE OFFICE AND INTO NELSON'S OFFICE.

NELSON: Close the door....

SOUND: DOOR CLOSE COUPLE MORE STEPS.

NELSON: Sit down. (BEAT) What happened to you Smith?

FRANK: Long story skipper.
NELSON: Y'can tell me later. Want you guys to take a look at this.

SOUND: HE THROWS A FOLDER ACROSS THE DESK.

JOE: What've you got.

NELSON: Just saw Chief Brown on the way in. He's gettin' pressure from the corner pocket. They want this thing cleaned up.

FRANK: What is it Joe?

NELSON: Last few weeks, car stripping's taken a big jump. Not the usual line of stuff. Not just happening in certain neighborhoods. We've got reports there from the valley... Hollywood...Wilshire...all of the divisions. Same thing's happening all over town.

JOE: Yeah.

NELSON: Talked to the boys in the Sheriffs office. They're gettin' it. Same in Burbank...Beverly Hills...Santa Monica.

FRANK: How 'bout the stuff that's stolen. Any of it show up?

NELSON: Not that we can find. All the usual outlets have been checked. None of the loot can be bought.

FRANK: Any special kinda things that're being taken?

NELSON: Let him see those reports, Joe...

JOE: Yeah...here.

FRANK: Thanks.
NELSON: Take a look. We're not messin' with kids in this thing.
Way the victims tell it...this gang can break into a
locked car and lift the radio in under ten minutes. They
can pull all four wheels off a car in under six minutes.
Insurance companies are screaming. They've already gotten
to the Police commission. Chief Brown told me this morning
he didn't care how we did it but he wanted it stopped.

JOE: We're on your side...where do we go?

NELSON: Up to now the investigation's been handled pretty much by
the divisions. From here in it's in your laps. Use as
many men as you need. Just bring the thieves in. You're
not working on anything now are you?

JOE: No sir. Just winding up the Gibson thing. Couple of reports
to finish. Should be through by noon.

NELSON: Turn the reports over to somebody else. I want you to
start on this thing right away.

FRANK: Okay.

JOE: Right skipper.

NELSON: Anything you need...let me know.

SOUND: JOE AND FRANK GET UP AND WALK TO THE DOOR.

JOE: We'll check you later.

NELSON: Right.

SOUND: DOOR OPEN
NELSON: (LITTLE OFF AT DESK) Oh Smith.

FRANK: Yeah.

NELSON: You look pretty bad...why don't you get an electric razor?

(END SCENE 1)
1 JOE: 8:11 A.M. Frank and I asked one of the other men in the
detail to finish up the reports on the case we'd just
finished, and then we started through the statements we'd
gotten from Captain Nelson. From them we got a pretty
good idea of how the car stripping ring was operating.
There seemed to be a definite plan for the thefts. Most
of the stolen articles were in the luxury class. Only
radios were taken from Cadillacs and Lincolns. Heaters
were stolen from Chrysler, and special hub caps from
foreign cars were listed among the stolen property. We
had the Staats office make a run on the M.O. we could
piece together, but their information led us nowhere. In
none of the reports was there a possible description of
the thief. The times the cars were stripped and the
locations where the burglaries occurred made it apparent
that it was a large scale operation. For the next two
days, we talked with the victims. We double checked the
time of the thefts, and the movements of the victims
immediately proceeding the car stripping. We asked about
people loitering in the vicinity of the parked cars. None
of the drivers who'd been victimized could supply us with
any more evidence than they'd given in their statements.
Friday, June 16th, we checked the list of recent parolees
from State penitentiaries and work farms looking for
ex-convicts who been involved in cases of car stripping.

(MORE)
The list of names we came up with were checked out, but they led us nowhere. In the meantime, the pressure from citizens groups in the city had gotten worse. At the end of the first week we'd been working on the case, the value of stolen articles reached about 500 dollars a day. Additional officers were assigned to patrol the streets. Radio cars doubled the number of field interrogations they normally made and although several arrests were made, the possibles picked up apparently had no part in the in the activities of the organized ring. On Saturday, June 24th, we got a call from an ex-convict. He asked us to come out to his garage and talk to him.

SOUND: STREET B.G. OFF.

AL: C'mon back here fellas. We can talk while I finish up.

JOE: Okay.

SOUND: THEY WALK TO THE BACK OF THE GARAGE.

FRANK: Quite a place you got hero Al.

AL: Yeah...I been pretty lucky. Got just about all I can handle now and the way business is goin....I'm gonna have to take on some more help.

JOE: How many men you got workin' for you now?

AL: Two full time. Saturdays...I gotta couple of kids who come in and help out with the wash jobs.

SOUND: STEPS STOP.
AL: (CONTINUING) We can talk here. Pull up a couple of those chairs.

JOE: Yeah.

SOUND: CHAIRS PULLED UP.

AL: Rag there on the bench if you wanna wipe 'em off...they get a little dirty standing around.

JOE: It's okay Al...what d'ya wanna see us about?

AL: First off, I wanna tell you guys that I appreciate the way you treated me when I fell. I'll never forget it. Real nice.

FRANK: Don't worry about it Al.

AL: I read in the papers where you're gettin' a lot of heat on the stripping goin' around.

JOE: Yeah.

AL: I just wondered how you were doin' on it.

JOE: It's goin' slow. Why? You know anything?

AL: I got a couple of rumbles. Y'know...it's hard not to hear 'em.

JOE: Uh huh.

AL: I heard that none of the stuff's been shoved...that right?

FRANK: We haven't seen any of it.

AL: Way I get it...you aren't about to. Say...hand me that socket wrench will you?

SOUND: FRANK TAKES A COUPLE OF STEPS.

FRANK: (LITTLE OFF) This?
AL: Yeah.

SOUND: FRANK COMES BACK ON.

FRANK: Here y'go.

AL: Thanks.

SOUND: AL LEANS OFF MIKE A LITTLE AND WE HEAR HIM FIT THE WRENCH TO A BOLT AND TIGHTEN IT.

AL: (EFFORT) Fella came in here a couple of days ago. I knew him before. Said he wanted to do business.

JOE: Yeah.

SOUND: AL STRAIGHTENS UP AND PUTS THE WRENCH ON THE CEMENT FLOOR.

AL: Asked me if I was interested in some good buys in used radios.

JOE: Uh huh.

AL: I told him I might be if they were good. He said these were the best. All G.M.s....Then he gave me the price. When I heard that, I knew somethin' was off.

JOE: What was he askin'?

AL: Told me he could deliver 6 Cadillac radios for 28.50 apiece. I asked him where he got 'em.

JOE: What'd he say to that?

AL: Told me it wasn't any of my business. Said where he got 'em didn't make the radios play any different.

FRANK: What makes you figure he might be in on the operation we're after?

AL: I told him that if he could make deliveries at that price, I'd want a lot more than a half dozen.

JOE: Yeah.
AL: He said he couldn’t supply 'em. Said that he only could spring six. I asked him if he was workin' alone. He told me "no." I figured I oughta give you guys a call. Might be somethin' for you.

JOE: You said you know him.

AL: Yeah ... from before. Say ... you guys like a cold beer?

JOE & FRANK: No...no thanks. Etc.

AL: Mind if I have one? Kinds hot.

JOE: Go ahead.

SOUND: AL TAKES A COUPLE OF STEPS OFF AND WE HEAR HIM OPEN OLD TYPE ICE BOX. HE TAKES A CAN OF BEER OUT AND WALKS BACK ON.

AL: Boy ... this smog sure is rough. Day get's a little hot and you really notice it. Sure you guys don't want a beer?

JOE: No.

SOUND: AL PUNCHES A COUPLE OF HOLES IN THE CAN AND POURS THE BEER INTO A GLASS.

AL: Never could drink it out of a can...Seems to taste better in a glass.

SOUND: HE TAKES A DRINK OF THE BEER.

AL: Good.

JOE: Yeah...now look Al...who was this guy?

AL: I wanna do you a favor. After the way you helped me out, I'd like to return the favor. But I don't wanna turn fink.

FRANK: You haven't given us much we didn't know. Without they guy's name, we're not steady any.
JOE: C'mon Al.


JOE: Know where we can get in touch with him?

AL: Haven't got the slightest idea.

FRANK: He say he was gonna come back?

AL: Not right out...but he will.

JOE: Why d'ya say that?

AL: Way I got it figured...he's got a hold of some hot radios...he's holdin' out on somebody. Not too many places he can shove 'em. He'll be back.

JOE: Can you come down and look at some muggs?

AL: Yeah as soon as Tom gets here.

FRANK: When'll that be?

AL: What time you got now?

JOE: (LOOKING AT HIS WATCH) It's 10:52.

AL: Tom'll be rollin' in 'bout 11 or 11:15.

FRANK: This Manny Phillips...that his real name?

AL: Far as I know.

JOE: He ever fallen?

AL: Yeah...did time at "Q" for G.T.A.

JOE: He on parole?

AL: I dunno...I think he made it free like I told you...I don't know him real well. He used to hang around.

JOE: Never had much to do with him.

AL: Uh huh.