

Angels with Dirty Faces

ROCKY

Hi, Jerry. What do you hear? What do you say? I'm glad to see you.

JERRY

Good to see you.

ROCKY

You know I was thinking about your boys and the old neighborhood and I kept thinking about you and me doing the same thing 20 years ago.

JERRY

With Father Boyle.

ROCKY

Yeah. Remember the time when we slipped the music of "Merry Oldsmobile" into the hymnbook?

JERRY

How could I forget it?

ROCKY

How did it go?

JERRY

(Singing) Lead, kindly light

JERRY AND ROCKY

(Singing) Amid the encircling gloom

Lead thou me on for the night is dark

And I am far from...

(They laugh and can't finish the song)

JERRY

We certainly did a lot of crazy things in those days.

ROCKY

Certainly did. Certainly did. And how is the gym for the kids coming along?

JERRY

Yes, well I haven't got the money to build it. Except this, and it's not mine.

ROCKY

That's quite a lot. Say, where did you get a hold of that?

JERRY

Where did you? Here, Rocky. Thanks, but I can't accept it.

ROCKY

What's the matter with you? You silly or something? That ain't mine.

JERRY

I know it isn't. That's why I can't take it.

ROCKY

What is this? You come in here, you flash this wad on me and knock me over. Then try to tell me the dough is mine. What's it all about?

JERRY

You've got a great poker face, Rocky. But don't forget, I've known that face for a long time. I know you forced Fraizer to get you \$100,000. Everybody knows it.

ROCKY

What's the difference where the dough came from? First place, Fraizer owed it to me. It's mine. Second, it's a lot better you get a chunk of it than him. And suppose the dough is hot? Nobody knows that but you and me.

JERRY

That's just it.

ROCKY

Oh, come on. Don't be such an angel. You want to get the center built? Go ahead get it started!

JERRY

I want to get it started but I don't want to build it on rotten foundations.

ROCKY

Oh, don't be a sucker!

JERRY

All right, Rocky. Supposing I take the money. And kid myself that it's a means to an end. Well, it isn't. Never will be. Inside the center, my boys will be clean, and outside they'd be surrounded by the same rotten corruption and crime and criminals. Yes, yourself included. Criminals on all sides for my boys to look up to and revere and respect and admire and imitate. What earthly good is it to teach that honesty is the best policy when all around, they see that dishonesty is a better policy? The hoodlum and the gangster is looked up to with the same respect as the successful businessman or popular hero. You, and the Fraizers and the Keefers and all the rest of those rotten politicians you've got in the palm of your

hand. Yes, and you've got my boys too. Whatever I teach them, you show me up. You show them the easiest way. The quickest way is with a racket or a gun.

ROCKY

Well, it's is so, ain't it?

JERRY

Yes, it's so. God help us. You see Rocky I thought I could solve my problems and problems with my boys, which, after all, they are, form the bottom up. But I can't do it. I've got to start from the top down.

ROCKY

Yeah? How?

JERRY

I'll tell you how. I'm gonna use your case of kidnapping Fraizer as a crowbar to pry open and uncover this cesspool. I'm gonna force the law, corrupt or not, to prosecute and bring to light of day this entire filthy affair. There's gonna be a lot of people stepped on, Rocky and if you happen to get in the way I'll be sorry, but you'll be stepped on just as hard.

ROCKY

All right, Jerry go to it. But you've got as much chance of getting an indictment as I have of getting into Bible Society. You'll find nobody cares about the whole thing. You'll find them laughing at you. End up on a blind alley. But go ahead kid. And if I'm in your way, why, keep on stepping just as hard.

JERRY

For being honest and for old times' sake. Rocky, there's one favor I'm gonna have to ask you. Maybe I won't be able to return it.

ROCKY

Well, go ahead. Anything you say.

JERRY

Soapy and those kids, give them a break, will you? Don't offer them any more money. Don't encourage them to admire you.

ROCKY

All right. I'll do that.

JERRY

Sure, you will.

SCENE