

Scene extract:

**Vincent Vice's**

**Rainbow**

A Short Story

By Caspar Walsh

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It's all about telling a story. You know ... what they call ... narrative. Like in the movies. Beginning

middle and end.

There are two obvious ways to tell you the final story of 'Vincent Vice'. There's this one ... you know starting from ...

- 'ello, my name's Vincent Vice and I've got a thirty three year hard as nails reputation to uphold.

And this one, my favourite, for getting the audience, you know, involved.

- Imagine you are a clapped out gangster called say, Vincent Vice on account of your *Goodfella* style punishment for putting plonkers heads in bench vices to a) squeeze the truth and b) let the naughty gangsters know who's boss. Vincent was good at woodwork. Got a certificate. Worked as a joiner. Built a house. Found a wife. Then one day he lost a big boys game of bar room pool to a thug named Reg the Veg. Vince didn't pay up. His house, wife and pineapple the dog, got torched. So Vincent goes all *Get Carter* and systematically burns down Reg, anyone who knew him and on the off chance, played him at pool.

So here we are. Wednesday the 22nd of November 1964. Cold and dark. And you, that is Vincent, are in trouble.

You're not a bad looking feller. Big. Chiselled. *Henry Cooper* with a *Brylcream* bounce of black hair. You like the way you look, one for the ladies and all that but on account of your 'mad as 'arry' behaviour of late, you need a change ... for the better. Some *structural* metamorphosis to your current facial narrative.

Enter Serge Lafronze. Plastic surgeon to the stars of stage and screen. You know, like *Diana Doors*, *Dirk Bogarde*, *Tommy Steel*. Now, Serge is without a doubt a man of great talent and he was well on the way to the top when he lopsided one of *Carla Fontaine's* tits in a rush job. Word got around he didn't work well under pressure and he was cast out of Soho inside a week. So he had to look for new clientele. Which led him shamefully to the seedier underside of Peckham Rye's underworld. Transforming London's most wanted gangsters into anything but themselves. A nice line in cut and slice from the medieval darkness of his dingy basement surgery.

All went well save one thing - Serge couldn't entirely let go of his former success. Changing *his* crooks into the stars *he* had always dreamed of working on - on the other side of the Atlantic oceans

rainbow. Hollywood idols and happy ever after.

So here you are in London. No wife, no house, no dog, no prospects. Seven grand in your pocket and a ferry booked Dublin.

Scene 1. Exterior. Night. We move slowly down a wet, empty street. Continue on down the basement steps. We see a man, waiting at a closed door. The door opens. In the doorway another man dressed in a blood red surgeons gown, trimmed with a lilac border. A pink cigarette juts from his left hand pluming blue smoke. Vincent Vice enters.

Scene 2. Interior. Surgery. A space not unlike *Ma Bate's* cellar. One crackling bare light bulb -100 watts. A chair. Leather straps. Head support. Rope. On the wooden arms of the chair what you make out to be scratches. You sit and scan the room. Then you see spot the glitz. The Glamour. Framed photographs of the stars before and after. What *Dirk Bogarde* looked like prior to his stunning good looks. *Miss Doors*. *Mr Steele*. Serge Lafronze sits behind his desk. He leans forward and clasps his elegant fingers together and prepares to speak.

- First things first sweetie. Money.

-Will it urt.

- Course it will darling. You've got to suffer for your art. We all do.

-Wot like Van Gog. Loppin' is ear off an all that.

- I will be *lopping* no one's ear off dear.

- No mate, and you can leave me boobs out in all.

- Mr Vice, I may have messed up a few faces in the past but I am still recognised as the first London master ... of facial transformation.

Serge gets gruffly up and heads for the drinks cabinet. He comes back, snaps a lager top down on a small table for Vincent, then delicately places a *Babysham* on his desk for himself.

- So Mr Vice. Who is it you'd like to be ... exactly.

-Wot?

- I have three idols for you to choose from.

Serge removes a gold plated scalpel from behind his ear and begins the delicate, dangerous process of removing unseen filth from beneath his sharp, long nails.

-You can have anyone you fancy. In my case *Clarke Gable*.

- What the bloody 'ell you on about. Everyone knows your from Clapham. Giving it all the ladi dah airs and graces. I need a face job, palin and simple.

The bare lightbulb crackles.

- Look I'm not a checkout out girl in the a supermarket for the slash and burn darling. I may only do gangsters now, but I still command at least some respect from those who appreciate my art, my craft. The choice is yours. Three idols left. Two men, one woman. Tell me what you want or I'll decide for you. If you don't like it, you can take your lager top and seven hundred quid, and bugger off out of my house.

Vincent is taken aback at the attitude from of the camp surgeon sitting in front of him. Time is ticking. He doesn't have a lot of choice right now.

-What about autographs.

-Sorry.

- People asking me for autographs?

-You'll just have to do what all idols do darling. Disguise yourself.