
Bernard Porcellato

“Trade is much superior to piracy. You can rob and kill a man but once, but you can cheat him again and again.”

— Louis L'Amour

You grew up in Springfield as the son of a carpenter. Your mother felt that a man's schooling was very important and was even involved in a campaign to institute mandatory public education. As such, she spent most of your childhood trying to keep you in school and tried to make sure you didn't neglect your schoolwork. She failed.

You were never much of a bookworm and by age sixteen you'd pretty much given up on high school. You realized that getting ahead in this world was all about who you knew, not what you knew. So you decided to get into politics. Back then Robert O'Reilly ran things, and he made sure to take care of his own. This meant that it was going to be hard for an entrepreneuring young Italian gentleman like yourself to make it in his (Irish) political machine.

But you were up for the challenge and you had a good head on your shoulders. So you got to work making connections, learning the system, helping people out whenever you could, accumulating favors (you never can have too many favors), etc. You were pretty good at working the system and you advanced slowly but surely. The not Irish thing kept getting in your way, though.

For that reason, you were very happy when Leon Cumani started making a difference on the Springfield political scene. It was your big chance to break out from O'Reilly's Irish elitism. You'd learned a lot about election fraud working for O'Reilly. Ballot stuffing, voter intimidation and the like had all been important to the success of the O'Reilly political machine. You figured you could take some of this knowledge and put it to work for Leon's organization.

It was enough to get you an in. You were still by no means a big shot but the people who knew you recognized your competence and, as you suspected, Leon's organization wasn't going to hold you back because of your heritage. Things were going well for you. Your network of connections was building. You did a lot of good for the organization and rarely had to ask for anything back. All in all, things were going pretty well.

Then one day you heard that your mother had been taken to a hospital with serious injuries. As it turns out, she had a dope problem and was very addicted to morphine. Furthermore, she'd gotten very deep in debt to some very bad people to keep feeding her habit. Apparently, she'd gotten to the point where she couldn't possibly pay them off and they decided to (unduly forcibly) suggest that she somehow find a way. She was scared and didn't know what to do.

You weren't really sure how to handle the situation. You certainly didn't have the money to pay them off nor did you have access to the muscle to intimidate the guys. But you figured you knew a lot of people and could probably swing something. After all, what's the point of a guy knowing people if he can't even help out his own mother. So told her not to worry and that you'd talk to some people and have it taken care of.

Despite the confidence you'd feigned to your mother you weren't really sure how to begin. This wasn't a small favor. You were going to need somebody in the big-time to help you out here. So you decided to take a chance and try and talk to Leon. You weren't even sure he knew who you were and figured it'd be really tricky to get him to help you.

Luckily for you, he had heard of you and was impressed with some of what you'd accomplished for him. In fact, he'd been considering giving you a promotion within the organization and felt that now would be the perfect time. The 1914 mayoral election was coming up and Leon had aspirations to put his own man, Frank Anderson, up against the current mayor, Andrew MacDermot, who was squarely in O'Reilly's pocket. He wanted you to be his point man for coordinate ballot-stuffing, etc. Naturally, you took the job. The entire operation was a stunning success. You personally voted for Anderson fourteen times and you weren't even the high scorer for the day. Sure enough, by the time the polls closed, Anderson had won.

As for your mother, it also turned out that Leon didn't care very much for the drugs either (after the trouble it got your poor

mother in you completely agree). He said he'd take care of it and you'd owe him a favor. Sure enough, those guys never gave your mother (or anyone else) for that matter any problems ever again.

Needless to say, after you helped coordinate Anderson's stunning victory, you were in really good with Leon. Furthermore, with Anderson's election Leon found himself pretty much running the town. This meant you were sitting pretty as one of the top associates of the boss of Springfield. Not a bad place to be.

It's been seventeen years since then. Anderson is still in office. You've now voted for him thirty-eight times in five separate elections. You've seen the rise of prohibition. You've seen the rise and now the fall of Al Capone in Chicago. All the while you've managed to retain your place as one of Leon's top people.

Now you are what people refer to as a go-to guy. You're in the business of solving problems. People come to you with a problem and you get them a solution. For a nominal fee, of course. After all, a guy's got to eat. And drink, and gamble, and occasionally show a lady a good time. Occasionally, you'll do someone a freebie. You like to be everyone's helpful "Uncle Bernie." Of course, you do make sure that they understand they owe you a favor because you never can have too many favors.

You know everybody and you can get anything. Except dope, of course. After what you've seen your dear departed mother go through, you've sworn never to touch the stuff. Fortunately, since Leon always agreed with you on this one, it never caused you any business problems. The Cumani organization has always steered well clear of any of that hooey. You remember Leon once flipping out when he found out that somebody had set up an opium den next to one of his speakeasies. He did not want that dope associated with him, and more than that, the place was in one of the neighborhoods he watched over. Leon took it upon himself to personally go down there and oust them. You're pretty sure they left, well, limped out of, Springfield for good.

Then there was the matter of the Austrian a few weeks ago. You usually try to keep an eye out for anyone who might be trying to start pushing dope in this town and a few weeks ago you found something. It seems that there was a guy by the name of Joseph Bauer who started up smuggling Turkish hop straight from Europe. You mentioned the matter to Leon and suggested he deal with it. Well, the cazzo woke up dead a couple of days later so it looks like Leon carried through. Still, it would be good to know if this is a new setup or just one schmuck.

Of course, now Leon's gone, may he rest in peace. He was a good man and he treated you well. You should do your part to see that he's well remembered and appreciated by the rest of the organization. It looks like his oldest son Tommy will be taking over the family business so you might want to have a talk with him about keeping the family well clear of the dope scene. You know a lot of people out in Chicago have been going that route lately. But that still doesn't make it right. The Cumani family doesn't need to touch that shit. That's the way Leon would have wanted it and that's the way you're gonna make it be. Besides, your now dear departed mother, may she rest in peace, would turn over in her grave if you didn't make that happen.

But that's enough reminiscing for now. Time to get your mind back into the present day. There are these two kids named Eduard Rosa and Vincent Morrison. Eduard is the son of your cousin Maria so you feel a little bit responsible for him.

One day the two of them came to you looking for some cheap liquor. This was pretty easy to do and since Eduard is your blood relation you were happy to help them out. After all, a guy's got to take care of his own. You didn't ask too many questions about what they wanted it for and that might have been a mistake.

Apparently, Vin had a this highly dubious business idea. If he'd told you about it at the outset, you might have stopped them, but well, you're in the habit of respecting other peoples' privacy. Perhaps this isn't the best policy with kids who might be getting in over their heads.

But you digress. Vin works delivering milk in the mornings, and Eduard paints houses on an irregular schedule, so both of them have too much free time. That's the first problem. The two of them got this "brilliant" idea to run an afternoon speakeasy. That's the second problem. Now they needed space to make this happen and they didn't come to you for it. That's the third problem. Instead, they went and rented out the basement of a nightclub own by this guy called William O'Rourke, and set up a makeshift bar, some card tables, and some dice. Now, the plan didn't go as badly as it by all rights should have until, one day,

O'Rourke's son, Tim, showed up one afternoon with a few of his buddies to pick a fight. You still aren't too clear on the details of what happened next but apparently Vin decked Tim and somehow managed to shoot one of his friends. He gets marks for his initiative, but loses double that for his forethought. They managed to get out before the coppers showed up, but the whole incident left O'Rourke really pissed. O'Rourke is a pretty big time player. Not quite as big as Michael Gavin, the mick who took over after O'Reilly, but pretty big. And the word on the street is that he's calling for both Vin and Eduard's heads. Needless to say, they are in a real bad spot.

Naturally, they came to you for help. Since you spotted them the hooch and didn't bother making sure they weren't doing something stupid with it, you feel partly responsible. Well, okay, not that responsible. I mean, you can't hold a man responsible for the actions of everyone who he does business with, but on the other hand, a guy has gotta take care of his own and you are Eduard's mother's cousin.

So you talked with Leon. He'd always had a soft spot for young people, and he decided he didn't want O'Rourke blowing his lid over the whole thing, but he wasn't going to offer his outright protection. He at least tried to give Eduard and Vin a little breathing time while O'Rourke cooled off a bit. Then he died. It looks like O'Rourke (and everyone else) is holding off from acting until after the funeral, out of respect for the dead. But now the funeral is over, and you hear O'Rourke hasn't calmed down, and Eduard and Vin are up the creek again.

Fortunately for you (and for them you suppose), you've got just the thing.

When you heard about Leon's passing and that the funeral would be out here in Impunity, you started thinking. Maybe there was an opportunity you could take advantage of out here. Not that you mind paying your respects to the dead and Leon certainly was a good man. But you've got to keep thinking in the here and now. Leon would have wanted it that way.

At any rate, you've got an opportunity to come out here to this near ghost town in the middle of nowhere. Most people would have considered this a burden, but you realize it's an opportunity. That's one of your big secrets. There aren't really in problems in the world, only unrealized opportunities.

So, anyway, you did a bit or research into the town of Impunity and here's what you found out.

Impunity used to be a mining town back when Leon grew up here. In fact, his father was a miner. But the mine shut down around twenty years ago, and the town has been on the out ever since. Now it's down to just a couple hundred people. Subsistence farmers mostly. No real money in the place. However, when you looked into why the mine was shut down, things started to look a little bit fishy. The public story was that the mine had dried up and there wasn't any iron left; however, a little research into the details has lead you to believe otherwise.

The mine was owned and operated by the United States Steel Corporation until 1908. In that year, an investor named Eric Shumaker took out a huge loan and bought it out for what was deemed at the time to be a ridiculous sum of money. Nearly fifty percent more than what most people thought it was worth. Within months he had to close the place down publicly stating that the mine was running dry. By all accounts, it looked like he'd just lost his shirt. Then during the next year he starts buying up all the property being abandoned by the out-of-work miners at rock bottom prices. Finally, on July 9, 1909 Shumaker turns up dead from a gun shot wound to the head in the study of his house in an apparent suicide.

Well, this all struck you as kind of weird. A guy goes into hock up to his eyes to buy a mine and four months later it tanks. Then what does he do? Well, he spends a year buying up local real estate and then offs himself. That doesn't make much sense. Until it occurred to you that something might have happened on that particular day to drive him to it. So you decided to look up the headlines from the local paper for July 9, 1906. Sure enough, the headline read, "Illinois Central Railroad to Reroute New Rail Line Through Greenridge."

Suddenly, it all made sense. Greenridge is a small town about twenty miles out from Impunity and there was a railroad that was built through there a little over twenty years ago. Shumaker must have been involved in a real estate scam. He probably had an inside line that the track was going through Impunity, so he borrowed everything he could to buy out the mine and shut it

down. With no mine, property values would plummet and he could buy up land cheap. Then when the railroad was built values would sky rocket and he could reopen the mine and own most of the land in an entire town. The only problem was, the line didn't go through Impunity. It went through Greenridge. When Shumaker found out this was happening, he knew he was ruined. Unwilling to live with the shame, he took his own life just like all the guys that jumped back in '29.

So, where's the opportunity? Well, if all that's true, the mine drying up was a sham. There's probably plenty of iron in there and you'll bet you could buy it and reopen it cheap.

Leon had always wanted to take part of the family legit. Legitimate business would both give you a way to launder money and place to put people who you owed a job, but who weren't, for whatever reason, cut out to live the gangster lifestyle. Of course, you also appreciate the idea as it connects to your own line of work. You start getting involved in some legitimate industry and you'll make all sorts of useful connections, especially with the unions. And if you get into iron mining, you can hit both steel workers and miners. That's the sort of branching out that's gonna help you go places.

So what do you need to do to reopen the mine? Well, first off, you need to make sure that there is actually anything left in there. This sounds like it's going to involve a bunch of crawling around abandoned mine shafts and possibly missing important business opportunities. Besides, you don't even know where the damned thing is. Maybe you should make someone else do it and tell you what they find. In fact, this sounds like it might be an excellent way to keep Vin and Eduard busy and out of trouble.

Once you've established that the place is worth reopening (assuming it is), you'll need four things to actually make this business venture real: the title to the mine, mining equipment, miners, and someone you can trust to manage it.

Getting the first one is easy. After Shumaker kicked the bucket and didn't leave any heirs, the local county government assumed ownership of the mine and the land it's on. They've got the title on file at the town hall and they'll be more than happy to transfer it to anyone who shows up with enough money.

Mining equipment is also just a question of money. Unfortunately, it's a question of a lot of money. You had a contact in Chicago that could have got you this sort of thing, but he went down with Capone. As it stands, you'll either need to buy the stuff legit at exorbitant prices or find another way to get it cheaper. You expect it will take \$15,000 to outfit the mine with mining equipment legally.

As for the miners, in a depression like this, that won't be hard. If you can manage to get the other things in line, a few well-placed help wanted ads should solve this problem nicely.

Last of all, you need someone you trust to run the thing. You can't run it yourself because you've got too many things to take care of in the city. You don't want to turn it over to some foreman you've never met before because you'd quickly lose too much control. This is where Vin and Eduard come into the picture.

O'Rourke is pretty sore over them, but he's the sort of man who'll listen to reason. Especially if it comes from a man named Ben Franklin. The way you see it, these kids made him look real bad and cost him a bunch of money. You figure you can cut him a deal where he'll never see the two of them in Springfield again and you'll get him back some of his money. Then you reopen the mine and the two of them stay here in Impunity running it for you. You pay off O'Rourke not to chase them out this far and everyone lives happily ever after.

The only catch is that you need to talk the two of them into leaving the city and not going back for a good long time and you need to come up with a bunch of money. You should try to sell Tommy on this idea. He should definitely have the cash to front much of it and, after all, he's going to benefit from it ultimately. Besides, it's what his dear departed father would have wanted.

The other key to this deal is keeping everything real hush-hush until you actually have the deed. If you're right about the mine, there could be plenty of other people who suddenly develop an interest in it. Sure, no one's done anything about the mine for the past twenty years, but the town of Impunity has suddenly got a lot of attention and there are a bunch of rich and powerful people wandering around today. If any of them get tipped off to this opportunity, you could have some serious competition.

You're particularly worried about that mick Gavin. You're pretty sure he's still sore about you ousting his people from power back in 1914. Not that you think he's going to come gunning for you or anything. If he wanted to do that, he'd have done it by now, and besides bumping you wouldn't put the micks back on top anyhow. On the other hand, if he found out that you were interested in the mine, he'd probably buy it out from under you just to prove that he could.

One last thing, there's this guy by the name of Jack Forester that you've been hiding from Gavin as a favor for Leon. It seems he did something to piss off Gavin and Gavin decided to send out for him. Except Jack found out about this in the nick of time and went to Leon for protection. You see, Jack has a sister named Susan who was Leon's mistress for the last few years, so Leon would naturally be willing to help him out. Naturally, Leon came to you to hide the guy and you've been keeping him out of sight for the past few weeks. The funny thing is, the night Leon kicked it, Jack vanished. You have no clue where he is and, as near as you can tell, neither does anyone else. Apparently, Jack didn't trust Tommy to keep looking out for him. You haven't told Tommy about Jack's disappearing act yet, because you didn't want to trouble him so soon after his father checked out, but, now it might be time to bring him up to speed on the situation.

One last, last thing. When you're not working on any of the above, you should try to keep your eyes open for opportunities to be somebody's helpful Uncle Bernie. If you can do something useful for somebody, you can usually make them feel like they owe you a favor and you can never have too many favors.

Notes

- You were born in 1878.
- Your friends call you Bernie or sometimes Uncle Bernie.
- You like to hear yourself talk. If you think you can get someone to listen to you, you love to tell back-in-the-day stories. You especially like to talk about how you rigged the 1914 election.
- You are the sort of person who knows everyone. As such, your contact list contains, well, everyone. Not all of them will recognize you.
- You have \$4,000 to fund your own endeavors or help other people. This represents your own personal slush fund. You shouldn't waste it but you are free to spend any or all of it if you feel it will further your goals. The GMs will get you this money just before game start.
- A man named Athony Pesotta runs the family's bootlegging. He runs three clubs around town. One of them got busted Tuesday night. No one is quite sure how it happened but somehow the feds got tipped off to the place and staged a raid. All of your people got out okay, but the place was shut down and all the hooch seized.
- Tony's three clubs are The Juniper Lounge (119 School Street in Springfield), The Vermillion Club (84 Broadway in Springfield), and The Silver Fox (800 Parker Avenue in Springfield). The Juniper Lounge was the one that was busted on Tuesday.
- You know where Tony's secret still is (a warehouse located at 14 Lakeside Street in Springfield). You know this because you know everyone. You are probably not supposed to know this. If Tony knew you knew this, he might get mad. In the event that Tony turns up publicly dead, you could convince the people who run the still to deliver his alcohol according to your directions. In order to do this, you need a) Tony to be publicly dead (if in doubt ask a GM), b) to spend \$4,000 in bribes to Tony's underlings and c) to survive game. If you meet all three criteria, the ability works as follows:
- The still has a stock pile of 500 gallons of gin, 500 gallons of whiskey and 500 gallons of vodka. Given an address in Springfield you can deliver as much alcohol as you like (up to the limits of what you have above) to the address post-game, assuming nothing prevents this (e.g. you die, the still is raided etc.).
- You should not interpret the above to mean you want Tony dead (you'd rather have him run things and not need to deal), but that you can help the family out if he does die.
- You know a doctor who can perform an off-the-record abortion. If you find someone who desires this service, you can arrange it post-game (assuming you are both alive and still willing).
- You know a priest who will annul almost any marriage if you ask him to. If you find someone who desires this service, you can arrange it post-game (assuming you are both alive and still willing).

- You know some bootleggers from outside the family who owe you a favor. If you know an address in Springfield, you can make up to eighty gallons of whiskey show up there post-game.
- You know someone with access to black market weapons. If you know an address in Springfield, you can make a case of 10 Tommy guns show up there post-game for a fee of \$1,000.
- You know a realtor in Florida who has a very nice place in Miami available. For \$2,500 you can have it rented out for somebody for a year. It is reasonable to assume that this person will be safely hidden from any Illinois law enforcement or criminal organizations that might be hunting them unless the organization is explicitly informed to look for them in Miami.
- You know the heads of the Springfield branches of both the AFL and CIO. You can set up a meeting with either of them.
- There is a teamster who owes you a big favor. You can get him to ship one large (non-human) object anywhere in the country.
- You know a fence that deals with artwork and jewelry. You can get approximately twenty percent of an item's value by moving it through him.
- You know the editors of both major Springfield papers. You can have one non-major story not published for a bribe of \$2,000.

Goals

- Find the mine and check it out. If it looks valuable, drum up enough money to buy it.
- Either find a source for mining equipment or get enough money to buy it legally.
- Convince someone to manage the mine for you, preferably Eduard and Vin.
- Talk to Tommy and make sure the family stays out of drugs.
- Try to be everyone's helpful Uncle Bernie and convince people they owe you favors.

Contacts

- Leon Cumani (deceased): The former boss of the Cumani crime family. He's the man who made your career take off. He'll be missed.
- Thomas Cumani (Vance Walsh): Leon's son and heir apparent to the Cumani organization. You have much to discuss with him.
- William Cumani (Xavid Pretzer): Billy is Tommy's younger brother. He's got a broad named Hillary Fillman that's usually hanging around with him.
- Hillary Fillman (Julia Suggs): This broad that's always hanging around Billy. Rumor has it that she's an... um... "working girl," to put it politely.
- Debora Weinstein (Karen Czaplicki): Leon's daughter. Apparently she had a gambling problem a while back. (See below under Benjamin Weinstein).
- Benjamin Weinstein (Don Ross): Deb's husband. He was one of Leon's top enforcers and hit men. Very competent, very deadly. He single-handedly foiled a hit on Leon back in '22 (supposedly took two Tommy guns and walked down the street spraying fire at the assassins). That's how he won Deb's hand in marriage. A few years ago, Benjamin came to you to borrow a good deal of money. Being who he is, you had no qualms about loaning it to him, but you were curious what it was for. After some surreptitious digging you discovered that Deb had racked up some pretty hefty gambling debts. Benjamin paid you back eventually, as you expected. However, you've decided to be wary about Deb's expensive habits. Despite her being Leon's daughter, there's only so many times you can cover up for somebody before you just have to let them learn a lesson on their own.
- Athony Pesotta (Janice Walsh): Runs the family's bootlegging. A good, solid, dependable guy with a good, solid, business sense. It's too bad what happened to his place on Tuesday.
- Eduard Rosa (Dennis Perepelitsa): The son of your cousin Maria. Kind of an punk, but at least he's an enterprising punk. And seeing as how he's your relation, you should probably try to help him out of his jam.
- Vincent Morrison (Stephanie Paige): Also kind of an punk. But if you're helping one of them out, you might as well help the other one. Besides, he's a big guy. He'll be good for keeping things under control here once you get the mine open. To

give him a chance to show some responsibility, you asked him to help run the makeshift bar you set up at the Inn.

- John Barcelione (Doug Freedman): Also known as Johnny the Tooth. One of Leon's goons. Good dependable guy. Seems to have already signed on with Tommy. Supposedly he's got a thing for chivalry.
- Susan Forester (Lori Swan): Leon's mistress. Nice girl. She kept the boss happy in his later years. You should try to be nice to her. Leon would have wanted it that way.
- Jack Forester (not in game): Susan's brother. The guy you were hiding from Gavin for Leon until he split on you in the middle of the night.
- Philip Rickson (Jason Rownd): An FBI agent. He's been on the take with Capone for a number of years. You've heard he's pretty reliable and, since Capone is up the river now, he's probably looking for work.
- Laura Hailey (Gail Freedman): She's an assistant DA from Chicago, and a columnist for *Time* magazine. You spoke with her briefly when she asked to attend the funeral. She assures you she's not looking into the family. That remains to be seen. See, a lawyer is only a tool, like a gun. You're just not sure which way this one is pointed.
- Nick Carpenter (Nicholas Lugo): A loser with a gambling problem. He's basically a nobody, you're not really sure what he's still doing hanging around. You hope it's not to ask you to borrow money. You lent him half a large six months ago and nearly had to break his knees to get it back. There's no way you're giving him a dime now.
- Michael Gavin (Cheryl Ann Costa): A big time Irish mobster. The successor to O'Reilly. Apparently after this Jack Forester fellow. Also runs a few casinos around town and sometimes stocks them with Cumani alcohol.
- Melissa Gavin (Paige Phillips): Gavin's daughter. Pretty girl... for a mick.
- Daniel Nicholson (John LaRoche): One of Gavin's men. Also known as Danny the Nail. Real tough guy. Rumor has it they call him "the Nail" because he killed some poor sap by driving a nine inch railroad spike through the guy's skull with his bare hands. Then he dragged the body off to a nearby railroad crossing and nailed it to the tracks.

Memory/Event Packets

- 05968

Bluesheets

- none

Greensheets

- none

Abilities

- Knock Out
- Assist
- Wound

Items

- .38 "Lemon Squeezer" Revolver *Starts loaded.*
- 4,000 Dollars *See the GMs before gamestart.*
- 65 Dollars

Stats

- Combat Rating: 2