

## **QUERY LETTER**

### **RE: The Last Cadillac**

*One summer 'down the Jersey Shore*

I grew up in Jersey Shore summers. My grandfather had homes in Seaside Heights and later, Ortleigh Beach. As kids, we'd be on the beach all day – and on the boardwalk all night.

Thirty years later, I visited “the shore” after residing in California. Nothing seemed to have changed. Time stood still. A few years later, now residing in Maine, Hurricane Sandy obliterated Seaside Heights. The terrible storm imagery triggered so many recollections of those good old days. The sights and sounds. The smell of boardwalk creosote augured with salt air and Coppertone. The old Italian guys my grandfather befriended, who'd give us rolls of quarters to play bumper pool in the “gin mills” he'd walk into and order drinks all around for his “goombahs”. I thought about the Italian families I grew up with and how different they'd been portrayed on TV and in movies – often as wise guys, hoodlums or MTV airheads. Hardly the kind and generous folks I knew. This story is about them, and an homage to my grandfather – my hero. Hop in, buckle up – a take a ride with me 'down the shore. Turn the music up ...

Anthony Joseph “Uncle Tone” Mancini is legendary on the Jersey Shore. A second generation Italian who came to this country with his parents at the turn of the century, and embraced the values upon him by his hard-working family. They prospered in the construction and lumber business and enjoyed the good life. Uncle Tone's problem is a faulty “ticker”, and after suffering a mild stroke, his family has a problem. How to keep him quiet and away from the hustle and bustle of the annual Cadillac raffle 'down the shore. His children Connie – the “baby” and the responsible sibling struggling with her vocation as a nun. Dino – “God's gift to women”, Rosalie whining through a divorce – and honorary family/lumberyard manager Angie who, with Connie is the glue holding the crew together. They promise to all pitch in – if Pop agrees that this be the Last Cadillac raffle. So begins the summer as the boardwalk comes to life, But uh-oh ... the boardwalk is in need of repairs – most especially in the nook that displays the shiny Cadillac. The new city manager, Tom, is a by-the-book operator – until he learns how things work in New Jersey.

The story is pure 'Jersey heart-and-soul. A solid soundtrack of oldies. Although I wrote it as a movie, I see it as “a party”. A project that might incorporate New Jersey notables in “cameo” roles. A Seaside Heights City Council meeting populated by former NJ politicians; Bill Bradley, Christy Todd Whitman, Jon Corzine. What if “the cheeseman” were Frankie Valli singing (a 4 Seasons tune) while slicing mozzarella at the deli? Or the Cadillac salesman (only three lines) were (current) NJ Governor Phil Murphy? What if a well-connected producer were able to entice Bruce Springsteen or Jon Bon Jovi to executive produce – or even direct? Here's one: casting Tony Danza (age 68) as Mr. Mancini? His daughter, Lucy (age 37) as Connie? What if producer/director Danny Devito (a Jersey Shore native) were to put this together. “A TAXI reunion”? Think of the pre-production ticket sales to “baby boomers” alone!

This whole production could be organized over a few pizzas. I'd just need a table with folks who would readily recognize that smell of boardwalk creosote, salt air, and Coppertone ... with anchovies.

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The Last Cadillac is properly registered with the Writer's Guild East SP #1249160