

The System

By

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FADE IN:

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Pen writing on thick paper: #1 Sassy Sally.

EXT. TRACK - DAY

Horse hooves trotting on dirt.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Pen writing: #3 Piping Piper. #4 Cassius Hay. #5 My Lil Pony.

Ashes drop on the thick stock of paper. The WRITER'S hand brushes them away with his cigarette still between his fingers.

The writer picks up a glass of scotch sitting beside a laptop. He wipes the condensation ring from the table with a towel. He places the now empty glass back on the table.

Pen writing: #7 Some Like It Clot. #8 Going for broke.

He stops writing and looks over the list.

WRITER

Okay.

A LARGE MAN wearing a black leather coat walks toward the writer.

LARGE MAN

That's it? What about the other two?

WRITER

Too close to call. The system only works for sure things.

The large man takes the list, folds it, and places it in an envelope. He places the envelope in his inner coat pocket. A gun is under his coat.

The large man drops a bundled stack of cash on the table in front of the writer and walks out the door.

(CONTINUED)

The writer extinguishes his cigarette in an ashtray on the desk. He walks toward the window overlooking the city skyline. He places his hands on his lower back and arches backward to stretch.

The writer stops mid-stretch. He looks at the sky in the distance. Ominous clouds.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

A HEAVY MAN opens the envelope and reads the list.

HEAVY MAN
What's this?

LARGE MAN
It's the list.

HEAVY MAN
I know it's the fucking list. Why are there only 6 fucking names? We have 8 races today.

LARGE MAN
The guy says these are the only sure winners today.

The heavy man reads the list again.

HEAVY MAN
(chuckles to self)
Sure winners, huh? Put 10 on each.

The heavy man hands a large bundle of cash to the large man.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Frantic, the writer sits at his desk and changes the weather variable in a statistical spreadsheet on his laptop. The results change. Different winners of each of the races. The unexpected rain has changed the statistics. The list is wrong.

The writer re-writes a new list. He grabs his overcoat and runs out the door.

INT. TRACK BET STATION - DAY

The large man stands in line to place a bet. He has the old list and a bundle of cash.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

The writer recklessly drives his car while weaving in and out of traffic. No use. He's stuck behind a wall of cars.

INT. TRACK BET STATION - DAY

The large man is at the betting window. He places the bets.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

The writer has abandoned his car. He runs on wet streets toward the distant horse track.

EXT. TRACK - DAY

Horse hooves race on wet mud.

V.O
Down the stretch they go!

INT. GRANDSTANDS - DAY

The writer races to the top of the grandstands overlooking the finish line.

V.O
And the winner is...

FADE OUT.

END.