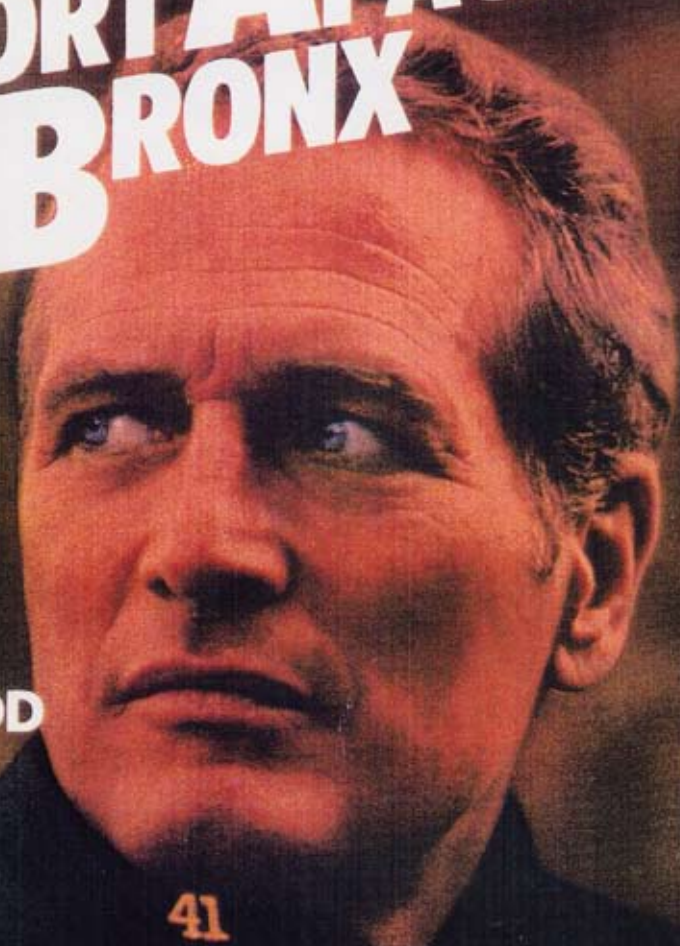


# FORT APACHE THE BRONX

A  
Novel by  
**HEYWOOD  
GOULD**



They were only rookies...

Two green cops blown away on the killer walkways of New York. Fort Apache, The Bronx...the 41st Precinct where nobody ever gets a second chance, and most don't even have a first. Now the Force is on the prowl under a tough new captain who is determined to shape up this last command for losers where life is mean and death is often murder and where the law of the jungle is the only law.

TIME-LIFE FILMS PRESENTS A DAVID SUSSKIND PRODUCTION

**PAUL NEWMAN** in  
**FORT APACHE, THE BRONX**

Starring **EDWARD ASNER** KEN WAHL • DANNY AIELLO  
RACHEL TICOTIN • PAM GRIER and KATHLEEN BELLER  
Produced by MARTIN RICHARDS and GILL CHAMPION

Written by HEYWOOD GOULD

Music by JONATHAN TUNICK

Directed by DANIEL PETRIE

Executive Producer DAVID SUSSKIND



ISBN 0-446-95618-X

# **FORT APACHE, THE BRONX**

**HEYWOOD  
GOULD**



*Tolmitch Press*  
*Santa Monica, CA*

## Chapter 1

### June, 1974

Patrolman John J. Murphy was passed out in the bathroom of Sammy's Rendezvous the night three stick up men killed his partner. He was lying face down near the urinal, luxuriating in the coolness of the tile against his cheek, waiting for the room to stop spinning so he could go back out and knock that wise ass Houlihan right on his ass. Only a minute or two more, just until the sirens moaned out in his brain. Then he'd take a long, ecstatic piss, and he'd be fine. But first he sank into a blissful, gurgling snooze.

Houlihan, Murphy's partner, was still on his feet, a VO and ginger buried in his ursine fist, betting that nobody in the bar or in the whole fucking Bronx including that faggot in the bathroom knew the only man in the history of baseball to win the MVP award two years in a row. Houlihan was a massive Irishman with forearms as thick as nun's ankles. The memory of the schoolyard was still in him after thirteen years on the job, and he had fooled many a skinny purse snatcher with his agility. Liquor went into him like into a bottomless pit, making him garrulous, generous and as every bartender in the Bronx acknowledged with a sigh of relief good-natured. Houlihan had never lost his temper: it was too terrible to imagine what would happen if he did.

They came in quietly, and stood by the cigarette machine as if trying to make up their minds. Two skinny Puerto Rican dudes with field jackets and berets, and a pasty-faced white kid with tattoos crawling up and down his arms. Nobody noticed them, there was no reason why they should, Sammy's was two blocks away from the 40th precinct on 138th Street. It was known throughout the

Bronx as a cop hangout. In the thirty years it has been open there had never been a stick up. Every heist guy knew there was no money in cop hangouts. Besides, why hit Sammy's when there were at least three fat bars in the same area. You had the Cabana Club where all the big smack dealers hung out; Little Anthony's, which everyone knew was a numbers drop for most of the neighbourhood. And there was the after hours on Third Avenue, which charged six bucks at the door, and three bucks for drinks, not counting the loose joints and grams of coke that were sold by the score every night. Why hit a bust out saloon where there was no real bread, and where every customer at the bar might turn and cut you down in a fusillade of off duty fire? It just didn't make any sense.

That was why when the Spanish cats opened their jackets, and leveled sawed offs at the bartender, announcing a hold up, everyone in the place immediately got very quiet and very frightened. This was irrational and unprofessional, which meant it was dangerous. There were two other cops in Sammy's aside from Houlihan. One of them had left his off duty pistol locked in the trunk of his car because he always got a little suicidal when he'd been drinking. The other had his in the pocket of his coat, which was on a hook only a couple of feet away. He spent the next few minutes waiting for the right moment to jump for it.

It took the white boy a little while to get a nine millimeter automatic out of his belt. "Careful you don't shoot your dick off," one of the Spanish cats said to him. "Don't worry about me, motherfucker," he screamed. The guy was flying. Downs, or maybe angel dust. Every cop in there knew his story. The white kid, the punk, trying to make points with his Spanish brothers. Mouths got dry and pants got wetter as he kicked everyone off their stools, and made them lean over the bar while he went through their pockets. A kid with tattoos like that. If he had any

kind of rap sheet at all, and you knew he did, he could be pinned in a minute. That was bad. If he was crazy enough to finger himself he was crazy enough to do something worse.

One of the Spanish cats stood by the door while the other went behind the counter, and emptied the cash register. The white boy went down the bar picking up the change and the wallets. The three were about to leave when he turned on Houlihan.

“Hey, this motherfucker’s a cop,” he screeched. “I know this motherfucker. He was there in the forty-first precinct the night they broke my arm...”

Oh Jesus. The guy was locating himself at the Four-one with a broken arm. Hospital records, mug shots, the kid was incriminating himself. Which meant that he might have a brainstorm, and decide to wipe out all the witnesses.

“You a cop?” he said.

“See if he’s got a piece,” the cat by the door said.

The white kid started to pat Houlihan down. “You’re a cop, man. I can smell you.”

Houlihan shook his head. “I drive a truck,” he said.

“Don’t bullshit me,” the white kid yelled. He jumped back and slammed Houlihan on the side of the head with the barrel of the gun. Houlihan hardly winced, but stood looking calmly into the kid’s eyes. Later, everyone agreed that if he’d gone down holding his head, begging for mercy, swearing that he wasn’t a cop he might have come through it. But Houlihan had never been knocked off his feet by anybody. And he wasn’t about to go on his knees for some whacked out mutt with a gun.

“Drop your pants, motherfucker,” the white kid said, slamming Houlihan with the gun again.

Houlihan let his pants drop to the floor. “

“See,” the white kid yelled, triumphantly, swooping

down and ripping Houlihan’s off duty pistol out of his ankle holster. “I told you.” His voice rose hysterically. “A fucking cop!”

He jumped around in front of Houlihan, and shot him in the face with a nine millimeter. The right side of Houlihan’s head blew off: The white kid was splattered with his blood. Houlihan stared into his face still gripping the bar. The kid screamed and shot him against , but Houlihan held on stubbornly. He was holding on minutes later when Murphy staggered out of the bathroom rubbing his eyes, and shouting gleefully, “Ernie Banks you dumb bastard, the Chicago Cubs, ’52 and ’53.” Then as if he’d been waiting for his partner, Houlihan crumpled to the floor, his huge corpse settling in a puddle of blood.

## Chapter 2

They made it tough for Murphy. The Homicide detectives kept him for hours repeating the same two sentences: "I was drunk. I didn't see anything." They kept him sitting in that saloon staring at his partner's blood, and then, even worse, at the chalk outline of his body the forensic guys traced on the floor.

They weren't looking for leads because there would be no problem getting the perps on this case. The three were known "cowboys", small time heist guys who stick up four or five places a night. They'd been on the rampage, hitting a gas station and a bodega before they came into Sammy's. Their last stop had been a White Castle on Fordham Road where the white kid had shot the security man. Total take for a night of four robberies and two homicides, eleven hundred and thirty-eight dollars. The detectives had dozens of good descriptions plus a stoolie had already made the three guys supplying names, addresses. The search would become even more simpler by morning when the white kid turned up in a vacant lot on Eagle Avenue with thirty stab wounds, his partners having decided the take was too small, and the risk too great to have him around. The cops wanted to build a case against Murphy, and the other two guys who'd been there. They wanted to prove negligence, cowardice, anything that would fix culpability. There would be an investigation by the Internal Affairs Division, the unit charged with policing with the policemen. They wanted Murphy, and he knew it.

They made him stay while they dusted and photographed, the forensic guys searching diligently for pieces of Houlihan's skull, which they wrapped in cellophane bags. Finally, at four in the morning, when they got tired of asking him the same questions they let

him go. He drove all the way out to Mineola in a daze. The liquor had long since ebbed away, but he was still in a stupor. Houlihan's dead, he kept telling himself. He was supposed to feel grief and pain. He felt nothing.

It was only when he pulled up in front of his house, saw the light burning in the bedroom window and knew his wife would be waiting to berate him for coming home drunk, to threaten to pack the children up and go if this continued, then later to beg him to please call his brother Vincent, the priest, before this problem got out of control, that he began to tremble so violently he couldn't even light a cigarette, and threw himself down on the floor and cried for his dead partner.

They called Murphy down to Borough Headquarters next day to see the Internal Affairs officer. He was a squat, barrelchested Lieutenant named Connolly with a hard, unwavering look. He sifted through Murphy's folder as he questioned him.

"I find it hard to believe a man could get so drunk he wouldn't even be awakened by the sound of gunfire?"

"I had my head next to the toilet Lieutenant," Murphy said. "The running water must have drowned out the sound."

Connolly looked at him with disgust. "You know there is another explanation," he said. "You could have come to while the hold up was in progress, and decided it would be safer to wait it out in the bathroom."

So that's what those sonsabitches were going to try to put over – cowardice. "Lieutenant if I'd been awake in that bathroom I would have come right out smoking," Murphy said. "Maybe more guys would be dead today, me included, but that's what I would have done. And if I'd have been sitting at the bar when those mutts came in I would have gone to war with them right away. Maybe everyone in the joint would be dead, but that's what I would have done. I know that, so I don't have to convince you or IAD or the

Department or anyone else. As a matter of fact it's lucky for me I got drunk. I think I'll get drunk more often..."

Connolly went through Murphy's folder

"I'm told you come from a real illustrious police family," Connolly said. "Both your brothers are Lieutenants..."

"Don't hold that against me," Murphy said.

Connolly's expression didn't change. He wasn't going to be charmed, or bullshitted, oh no, not him, not this righteous bastard, "Your father's a retired Sergeant. Thirty-five years on the job. Think you'll put in that much time?"

"If I keep hiding in bathrooms I've go it made," Murphy said, getting up.

"Sure, sure, go ahead and give me the finger," Connelly said with quiet anger. "You think I'm full of shit, that IAD's full of shit, too. I could crucify you, put you on the rubber gun squad until we find out if you're an alcoholic, or even if your drinking habit could possibly interfere with execution of your duty. I've got a lot of power in this job, and I got it because there are people who believe that a police officer has to be better than everybody else."

"Why?" Murphy said. "Because he makes more money? Because he has such a wonderful job so rewarding and fulfilling that he leaves the precinct bursting with love for humanity? You tell me what's so great about being a cop that makes it necessary for a cop to be so great. And while you're thinkin' it over I'm going over to a wake for a real great guy, my partner for seven years. Why don't you come with me. You can tell his wife and four kids how great it is to be a cop."

Murphy walked out of the offices without being excused and right downstairs to McChesney's Tavern where he proceeded to get plastered in full view of most of the Borough brass. He'd been drinking vodka for the last few years, screwdrivers, vodka-tonics. He liked the way

it sneaked up on you. You didn't get drunk with vodka, you got mugged. One minute you were eloquent and charming; the world had never looked so rosy. And then suddenly it was three hours later and you were picking yourself up off the floor. And your partner was dead.

Murphy gripped his glass tightly. His vision blurred. He didn't dare check himself out in the mirror because he knew he was crying. He vowed then and there that he'd never drink anything stronger than beer for the rest of his life.

*To purchase the full book click:  
[www.heywoodgould.com](http://www.heywoodgould.com)*

