

SOOTY & SWEEP: THE GODFATHER

\$SOOTYGF

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Sooty & Sweep: The Godfather

Every puppet has a master.

Logline: A shy yellow bear inherits his father's shadowy empire of rigged children's parties and must decide whether to settle scores with his barking consigliere or walk away before the final curtain call.

Synopsis

In the velvet-curtained back room of a fading variety theatre, elderly glove-puppet Don Harry lies dying after a botched children's birthday booking. He passes the "family business"-a network of protection rackets over toy shops and forced encores-to his quiet son Sooty. The bear's first duty is to reassure rival glove families that the shows will continue.

Hot-headed dog Sweep, acting as consigliere, urges immediate retaliation against the panda clan who arranged the hit. Sooty, true to form, answers only in whispers and the wave of his tiny wand. He attends a sit-down disguised as a Punch-and-Judy rehearsal, where he magically "fixes" the panda boss's broken strings-permanently.

As bodies of felt and stuffing pile up between matinees, Sooty grows colder. During the theatre's final gala performance, he arranges for Sweep to be left on stage alone while rival puppets close in. The dog's frantic barking is drowned by the children's delighted applause. Sooty watches from the wings, wand lowered like a gavel.

In the closing image he gently pulls the red curtain shut from inside the office, the theatre now silent except for the soft click of the wand against the brass ring. The show, as they say, must go on-without him.

Tone & genre

Pitch-black comedy of manners masquerading as a solemn mafia epic; the solemnity of *The Godfather* performed by literal children's toys. The humour lives in the straight-faced gap between operatic crime and glove-puppet innocence.

Look

Desaturated 1970s Eastmancolor stock, heavy cigarette smoke and footlights; tight anamorphic close-ups on felt faces and tiny black eyes, wide masters that dwarf the puppets inside baroque proscenium arches.

Characters

- SOOTY: Soft-spoken bear whose silences and wand flicks carry more menace than any shouted order.
- SWEEP: Loyal but volatile dog whose excited yaps double as both comic relief and death sentence.
- HARRY CORBETT: Weary black-gloved patriarch whose final whisper is half bedtime story, half contract killing.
- SOO THE PANDA: Glamorous usurper whose painted smile never reaches her button eyes.
- MATTHEW CORBETT: Reluctant human stagehand caught between the strings and the bullets.

Screenplay

FADE IN:

INT. BACKSTAGE OFFICE - NIGHT

A single bare bulb swings above a dressing table. Old HARRY CORBETT, hand inside a limp bear puppet, lies on a chaise longue surrounded by wilting flowers and half-drunk milk bottles. SOOTY, the yellow bear, sits upright on a stool, motionless.

HARRY

(whispering through the puppet's mouth)
Sooty... the bookings... they stop for no
one.

Sooty nods once. Harry's hand slips out; the bear slumps. Sooty catches him, folds the limp glove neatly, and places it on the table like a contract.

CUT TO:

INT. THEATRE BAR - LATER

SWEEP, a scruffy grey dog glove, paces on the bar top, knocking over tiny shot glasses of orange squash.

SWEEP

They hit us at a five-year-old's party! We
look soft!

Sooty, now wearing a miniature black tuxedo bib, sits in shadow. He raises the wand. A single sparkler flares.

SOOTY

(whisper)
We'll make them an offer... they can't
refuse.

Sweep freezes, tail stiff.

CUT TO:

INT. PUNCH & JUDY BOOTH - DAY

A children's party in full swing outside the striped booth. Inside, the panda boss SOO lounges on a miniature throne of building blocks. Sooty enters alone.

SOO

Your old man's parties are finished, bear.
We control the encores now.

Sooty stares. Slowly raises the wand. Soo's strings-literal threads-tighten. Her painted smile cracks. She slumps forward onto a whoopee cushion. The children outside roar with laughter.

Sooty exits without a word.

CUT TO:

INT. DRESSING ROOM CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Sweep waits, excited.

SWEEP

Boss, that was beautiful! What's next?

Sooty hands him a folded programme. On it: "Final Gala - Sweep Solo Encore".

SWEEP

Me? Alone?

Sooty nods, already walking away.

CUT TO:

INT. MAIN STAGE - NIGHT

Footlights blaze. Sweep bounds onstage to canned circus music. From the wings, shadowy rival puppets raise tiny Tommy guns made of rolled newspaper.

The first volley of corks and glitter hits Sweep. He barks in panic, spinning. Children clap and cheer, thinking it's part of the act. Sweep collapses in a heap of stuffing.

In the prompt box, Sooty watches, face unreadable. He lowers the wand. The curtain begins to fall.

INT. DON'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Sooty sits behind the old desk. He reaches up, grasps the heavy red velvet curtain cord that runs through the room like a noose, and pulls.

The curtain closes fully, blotting out the stage lights. Only the wand's faint glow remains, then fades to black.

FADE OUT.