

JOE MORELLI (25-45) Hard boiled criminal out of a 1930's film--menacing and serious.

NICK
(to Morelli)
All right... shoot!
(then realizing the
double meaning, he
corrects himself)
I mean... what's on your mind?

MORELLI
You don't need to tell me you're
tough. I heard about you.
(He puts the gun in
his overcoat pocket)
I'm Joe Morelli.

NICK
I've never heard about you.

MORELLI
I didn't knock Julia off.

NICK
All right - you didn't.

MORELLI
I haven't seen her in three months.
We were all washed up.

NICK
Why tell me?

MORELLI
I wouldn't have any reason to hurt
her. She was always on the up and
up with me. But that dirty little
Nunheim -- he got sore cause I
clicked with her and he didn't, so
he put the finger on me.

NICK
That's all swell. Only you're
peddling your fish in the wrong
market. I've got nothing to do
with it.

MORELLI
(his intense
excitement)

increasing)
Listen. "Studsy" Burke told me
you used to be O.K. That's why I'm
here. Do they....

NICK
(in a tone of polite
enquiry)
How is Studsy? I didn't know he
was out of stir.

MORELLI
(conversationally)
He's all right. He'd like to see
you. But listen... What's the law
doing to me? Do they think I did
it, or is it just something else
to pin on me?

NICK
I'd tell you if I knew. But I'm
not in this. Ask the police.

MORELLI
(sarcastically)
That'd be very smart. That'd be
the smartest thing I ever did. Me
that a police captain's been in a
hospital three weeks on account we
had an argument. The boys would
like to have me come in and ask
questions. They'd like it right
down to the end of their blackjacks.
Now I come to you on the level.
Studsy says you're on the level.
Be on the level.