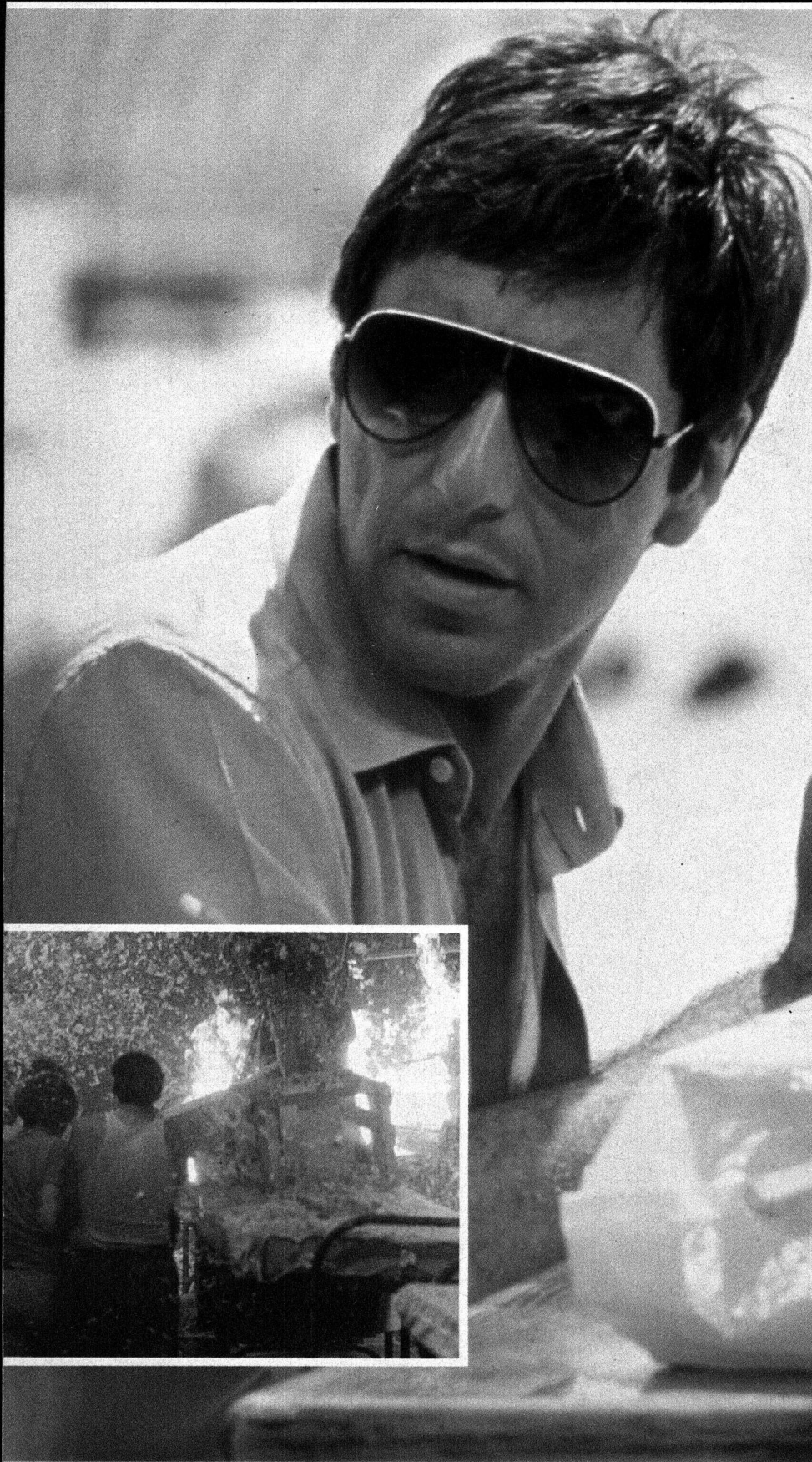




things were so strong they almost overwhelmed everything else. In **Scarface**, the characters and story are so strong that everything falls into a natural balance."

Story and character have not been DePalma's strong points, according to movie critics. Janet Maslin of the *New York Times* wrote that his "endless emphasizing of his technical skill takes its toll on *The Fury's* already weak plot." Even devoted DePalma partisan Pauline Kael of *The New Yorker* conceded he was "not a great storyteller."

Other critics drubbed him for the particularly sadistic nature of his cinematic violence, especially with regard to women. But DePalma says that in comparison to his other films, **Scarface** is fairly tame.

"It's quite dramatically violent, but not visually violent like my other films. Here the killings are mostly done with shootouts — though the shootouts are quite startling, there's no question about that. But there are no people being sliced up or things like that." **Scarface** is the American dream. The American dream gone crazy a little bit, but still the American dream," he chuckles.

Scarface deals with the injustice built into the American system, a theme that is probably its one tie to DePalma's other movies, and a subject about which DePalma feels strongly.

"No matter how you go about things, no matter how hard you try to combat it, we live in a system that eventually turns everything into a product. I loathe that fact, but it also fascinates me to some extent."

Hollywood, according to DePalma, is the epitome of that "crafty, commercial, capitalistic" world. "The key to the [Hollywood] system is 'What's his price? How can he be had? How can we get him interested?' Film-makers are considered products to be bought and sold, not artistic creators. That's why I avoid Hollywood like the plague.

"I'm really excited about this movie. I like to see exciting movies myself and this is an exciting movie, like one I haven't seen in quite a while. It's exciting the way *American Graffiti* was exciting, the way *Star Wars* was exciting, the way *The Godfather* was exciting, the way *Last Tango in Paris* was exciting. It's one of those movies.

"To get people in the theatres, you have to give them something they can't get on television or video games. It has to have that extra something I think **Scarface** offers." ●