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Actor Alex Rocco, Moe Greene from “The Godfather,” Dies at 79

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Rocco, with a movie career spanning over half a century, played a casino owner in “The Godfather” who desperately refused offers made to him by the mobster Corleone family and paid for it with a bullet in the eye.

The actor went on to win an Emmy in 1990 for his role in television comedy “The Famous Teddy Z.”

Rocco was born Alexander Federico Petricone in 1936 in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and faced trouble in his adolescence after getting involved with youth gangs.

During this phase, Rocco was arrested for getting in a gang fight, but after he avoided sentencing, he opted for a change of scenery and moved to California where he became a waiter.

Once in Los Angeles, Rocco studied acting under Star Trek legend Leonard Nimoy, who chipped away at Rocco’s strong Bostonian accent and passed down to him all his experience and knowledge, as Rocco explained it.

The actor debuted Russ Meyer’s 1965 film “Motorpsycho!” and six years later uttered the most famous line of his career: “Do you know who I am? I’m Moe Greene!”

The phrase became his “biggest ticket anywhere,” as he used to say.

Finding a promising niche, he was often casted in gangster films, such as “The Friends of Eddie Coyle.”

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