



# Daddio's gone baddio

Michael Chiklis doesn't do goofy roles anymore — his wife won't let him

By MICHAEL GILTZ

**A**CTOR Michael Chiklis wanted to provide a comfortable life for his family. That pushed him into accepting work, any work — mostly bad roles in bad projects that convinced Hollywood the once-pudgy star of ABC's "The Commish" was a minor talent.

Appropriately, it was the support from his family that convinced Chiklis to walk away from the easy money destroying his career.

"I didn't even have access to the B scripts, you know?" admits Chiklis, newly reborn as the corrupt, bend-the-rules-to-clean-the-streets Detective Mackey on FX's hit drama "The Shield" (Tuesdays at 10.)

That's a bold admission for an actor who spent five years on "The Commish" and on the NBC sitcom "Daddio."

Chiklis even helped the one-man show "Defending the Caveman" set a Broadway record by starring in it for months. But his career is littered with forgettable flicks and TV series — not to mention "breakthroughs" that held him back in the eyes of Hollywood.

Chiklis scored a coup by starring as John Belushi in movie version of Bob Woodward's controversial biography "Wired." Establishment Hollywood hated the book — and the subsequent movie — believing it focused too harshly on Belushi's drug habit and ignored his talents.

After the film came out, Chiklis found himself shunned by casting agents and couldn't even get in the door for auditions for more than a year. (It didn't help the movie itself flopped.)

Then, though he was far too young and flatly turned down by one network, Chiklis gained weight to play the much older role of the commish. Problem? Everyone thought of him as a pudgy, older character actor instead of a leading man.

"It's been a very, very difficult road," Chiklis says. "One of the reasons I went back to Broadway was because I was very frustrated right after 'The Commish' about the level of things that were being sent to me and the things I had access to."

"Daddio" I honestly liked and I primarily did it for my daughters. I

thought it was a solid family show and it would be great for my little girls.

"The Three Stooges [a TV movie in which he played Curly] was more of an acting gig. But again, I'm playing the uh... the fat buffoon."

He and his wife finally had a heart-to-heart about what Chiklis was going to do. Even when he got work, it wasn't making him happy and certainly wasn't helping



Chiklis did "Daddio" for his girls.

his career.

"I really have to credit my wife again," Chiklis says, "because it's not just about her saying: 'Get in the gym and get in shape.'"

"She basically said, 'You're not taking another gig until you get the right gig.'"

"I said: 'Michelle, that could become very uncomfortable in your situation' — because I'd made a good living my whole career. "To her credit, she said: 'I don't care about that. We'll get by. We'll do whatever we need to do as long as we're together. You need to do this for your own soul and your career.'"

"That's an amazing woman, to do that." As fate would have it, he didn't have long to wait before winning the lead in "The Shield," a show that set a record for the highest debuting series in basic cable history — putting FX on the map for viewers and Chiklis on the map as a leading man with unexpected depth.

So what would happen if his bad-guy character Detective Vic crossed paths with the easygoing Commish?

"The Commish would make it his life's ambition to get Vic," laughs Chiklis.

Michael Chiklis has been reborn as the corrupt, bend-the-rules-to-clean-the-streets Detective Mackey on "The Shield."

