

R O U L E T T E

by

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*"The deepest defeat suffered by human beings is constituted by the difference between what one was capable of becoming and what one has in fact become."*

-Ashley Montagu

*"Guns, fun, weed and speed/ The only three things I'll ever need."*  
-Tommy Watts, lead singer of *Restraining Order*

FADE IN:

At first, it's all a blur. A spinning rush of red and black. As we pull away, the object becomes a ROULETTE WHEEL.

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)  
Albert Einstein once said: "You cannot beat a roulette table unless you steal money from it."

The BALL gets tossed in and with a WHOOSH, we chase after it. Zooming around the wooden surface like a race car on a track.

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)  
As usual, Albert's got it right. Roulette is a sucker's game, a palooka bet, a shotgun marriage of chance and superstition. It's where you go at the end of the night, when you've lost almost everything, and your only option left is to lay it all down, bet big... and take your last shot.

KA-BLAM! Bullets SLAM INTO THE WHEEL, sending the ball flying, as SCREAMING AND GUNFIRE roar in and we widen to...

INT. THE BELLINI - NIGHT

...a full fledged GUN BATTLE on the casino floor. Screaming crowds, exploding machinery, poker chips flying through air.

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)  
These are the stories of three men's last shots. Three that tell one. There was the Writer...

We WHOOSH below a gaming table, where a 30-SOMETHING GUY in Buddy Holly glasses hides, covering his head, whispering...

WRITER  
...this... isn't... happening...

Bullets SMASH into a slot machine, spraying quarters at him, he lets out a shriek as we WHOOSH TO...

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)  
...the Rockstar...

...a tubby, long-haired MAN IN HIS 40'S, spinning through the crowd, frantically looking for something, screaming out:

ROCKSTAR  
 Foreigner! Foreigner!!!

BOOM! A shot ZOOMS past his ear, across the room, and blasts through the wall. We WHOOSH through the bullet hole, into...

THE CASINO'S THEATER

Where a panicked crowd scrambles out. On stage, a BALD STAGEHAND desperately yanks at a bullet-smashed WINCH LEVER.

BALD STAGEHAND  
*Hold on up there goddammit!!*

He struggles with the winch, looking up at a large, curtain-shrouded BOX suspended above the stage, as we WHOOSH TO:

INSIDE THE BOX

...where a CASINO MAGICIAN is upsidedown, submerged in water, handcuffed, terrified, BEATING THE GLASS. A trick gone wrong.

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)  
 ...and, there was me: The Magician.

Bubbles SPEW from his mouth, his eyes roll into his head, but the man's voice remains calm and reasonable as ever.

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)  
 Anyway, as I was saying: in roulette, when you win, you win everything. But when you lose...

The magician's body CONVULSES, grows limp...

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)  
 ..now that's a story unto itself.

...and we SMASH TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD: THREE DAYS EARLIER

From the darkness, we hear...

TOMMY (PRE-LAP)  
*Are you ready to rock, Las Vegas?!!*

INT. BELLINI CASINO, STAGE - NIGHT

A guitar chord RINGS and a spotlight FLARES to reveal... TOMMY WATTS: a middle-aged man stuffed into tight pants, chest-fur springing from a poofy-sleeved shirt.

TOMMY  
That's right, comin' at you  
straight from Milford, New Jersey,  
we are RESTRAINING ORDER!

Lights FLARE to reveal the most WASHED-UP 80'S BAND on God's green earth. Ready to wow the sparsely populated rocker-bar of the Casino That Time Forgot.

TOMMY  
I know some of you may be wondering  
where Foghat is. Sadly, they are  
still detained on lewdness charges  
for what happened at that Denny's  
in Victorville. But their  
misfortune is your good luck,  
'cause we're gonna rock this place  
'til the break o' dawn! Yeah!

HECKLER (FROM DARKNESS)  
Play the fuckin' song!

TOMMY  
(ignores him)  
This first one goes out to all the  
9/11 firefighters who gave their  
lives at Ground Zero. Here we go  
with "Ass Blaster!"

HECKLER (O.S.)  
BOOO! Play "Layin' Down Yo' Lady!"

TOMMY  
(sings over him)  
*They call me the Ass Blaster/you  
know that's who I be/any date you  
have with me gonna end predictably--*

HECKLER (O.S.)  
**BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!**

Tommy THROWS DOWN the mic.

TOMMY  
You got something to say, dipshit?

We WHIP-PAN across the bar, to find the heckler: KYLE, an obviously-underage twerp showing off for his FRAT BUDDIES.

BASS PLAYER  
(whispers from behind)  
Tommy, I'm begging you, don't do  
this, we need this fucking gig--

TOMMY

(ignores it)

Listen up, cockbiter! "Layin' Down Yo' Lady" is our big finale, which by virtue, means it happens at the end of the set! You don't see Don Maclean opening up with "American Pie", do you?

KYLE (O.S.)

You ain't Don Maclean, fat-ass.

TOMMY

*That's it!*

Tommy LUNGES off the stage, comes across the kid's table in spray of booze and broken glass, and POUNCES as... the action suddenly FREEZES and Tommy HANGS there mid-air until...

FRANKLIN GANTT (PRE-LAP)

Now that's nice. Real, real nice. See how he catches air? Who wants to see it again?

WIDEN to REVEAL we're watching security footage from...

INT. SECURITY ROOM - NIGHT

...a surveillance room. FRANKLIN GANTT, casino owner, in a suit that costs more than most people's vacations, sits by JAMAL JONES -- the security chief, who operates the tape.

FRANKLIN GANTT

He actually catches air. It's like one of those Orca whales jumping out of the ocean.

He plays it again. Nearby, Tommy sits with a black eye and bloody nose. The bandmembers are behind him, disgruntled.

TOMMY

All due respect, Mr. Gantt, he started it-

FRANKLIN GANTT

(holds up a finger)

Now here's my favorite part.

The footage plays on and Tommy continues his dive through the air as something strange happens: the frat kid GRABS Tommy's arm and WHIRLS him into a post - WHACK!

TOMMY  
 (winces)  
 Sir, if you'd just-

FRANKLIN GANTT  
 (finger up again)  
 Play that again. A couple of times.

Jamal goes back and forth. Whack! Rewind. Whack! Rewind.  
 Over and over again.

FRANKLIN GANTT  
 I love that! Whack! Right into  
 the pole! Again! Oh God, that's  
 beautiful. And do you know why  
 it's beautiful, Jamal?

JAMAL JONES  
 No sir, I don't.

FRANKLIN GANTT  
 It's beautiful because this rotund  
 piece of penguin-shit got his ass  
 beat by a 19-year-old kid -- ergo,  
 Mr. Underage Frat Boy cannot sue my  
 casino for millions of dollars.  
 (turns to them)  
 You rocket scientists are getting  
 your rate cut by 40%. Be happy  
 that's all. Now get the hell out.

The band sheepishly leaves as Gantt turns back to the TV.

FRANKLIN GANTT  
 Play it again. The part where the  
 kid kicks him in the nuts.

Jamal hits the play-button as we CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE IN THE HILLS - DAY

A movie poster of a female ninja kicking a guy in the nuts.  
 The title: NINJA SCHOOLGIRLS OF NANKING. We widen to...

...a pricey bachelor pad, adorned with B-movie posters  
 ("PUSSYCAT RAMPAGE" and "HA HA, YOU'RE DEAD.") The party's  
 over, drugged-up actors and wannabes passed out everywhere.  
 A cell RINGS and H.L. SHAPIRO'S eyes snap open.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 (phone to ear)  
 ...huh?...

SLAM! A split-screen cleaves the frame, revealing...

EXT. MULLHOLLAND DRIVE - SAME

...KEN FREIDBURG (30's, bear-like, jovial, tough as nails) speeding along in his Cadillac Seville, Bluetooth on.

KEN FREIDBURG  
H.L., my boy, you are one  
impossible sonofabitch to get a  
hold of. How's our baby?

H.L. BOLTS upright, we get our first good look at him: 30's, Buddy Holly glasses, a baby-faced boy-wonder gone to seed.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
Our baby's.. kickin' along, Ken.  
Real busy with it... as of late--

KEN FREIDBURG  
Eleven months.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
Eleven months? Feels like six.  
But it's all, uh, under control...

He's searching the floor for his missing pants.

KEN FREIDBURG  
Glad to hear that, H.L. 'Cause I'm  
coming over to read it in three  
minutes. Bye bye.

And hangs up, grinning to himself. H.L., stares wide-eyed... then freaks out. He PUNCHES the wall (which knocks the split-screen out of frame), and whirls into action, throwing out beer cans, shoving plates of coke into drawers, yelling:

H.L. SHAPIRO  
Okay, everybody, time to get up!  
Rise and shine, it's a beautiful  
day outside and I need all you  
assholes to go out and enjoy it  
like right now.  
(motions to a HOT GIRL)  
You -- you see any bottles,  
baggies, pipes, straws, coke-  
spoons, syringes, a ten-year-old  
boy from Thailand chained to my  
radiator, get rid of it. Two  
minutes, chop chop!



H.L. drops empty bottles of Patron out his back window, we hear a SHATTER and SCREAM.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 (calls out window)  
 Sorry!

And goes about sweeping up cigarette butts, when he sees the Hot Girl emptying a bag of pills down the toilet.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 ...what are you doing?!

HOT GIRL  
 You said "get rid of it"--

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 I meant *hide it*, I didn't mean--

HOT GIRL  
 Please, it's not like you ain't got  
 no *other* drugs around here--

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 I know, I just... really liked  
 those.

H.L. hustles guests out, saying his goodbyes. (*All of them.*)

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 That was fun, thank you, see ya,  
 drive safe, adios, aurevior,  
 sayonarra, arrivederci, aloha, get  
 the fuck out--

And SLAMS the door shut. Collapses against it, face first --  
*Jesus Fucking Christ.* Then...

KEN FREIDBURG (O.S.)  
 This doesn't exactly seem like a  
 healthy environment for our baby to  
 grow up in, H.L.

H.L. turns to see Ken Freidburg coming in through the back.

KEN FREIDBURG  
 I'm gonna ask you a question, and  
 if you bullshit me, I'll put you in  
 a headlock worse than that time in  
 high school when we tried to get on  
 the Judo team.  
 (beat)  
 How far along are you?

H.L. lets out a breath as we CUT TO:

INT. H.L.'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

SLAM! A thick screenplay lands on the desk. Ken scans the title page: GUNZ AND TITTIE\$ -- BY H.L. SHAPIRO.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
That's a, uh, working title--

KEN FREIDBURG  
(turn pages)  
Where the fuck's the rest of it?!

We see that the next page, and all the rest are, aside from some doodles, totally BLANK. H.L. gives a shrug, unworried.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
It's up here.

KEN FREIDBURG  
Up where?

H.L. SHAPIRO  
(taps his head)  
Right here, forming. Like raw clay.

KEN FREIDBURG  
H.L.--

H.L. SHAPIRO  
This stuff takes time, Ken. You think Jackson Pollock's agent was constantly hounding him like "Yo, where my fuckin'... splatters at?"

KEN FREIDBURG  
I'm gonna splatter your fuckin' head off this wall, you don't listen to me. Your last three movies imploded on their opening weekends. The trades are starting to say that H.L. stands for "Humongous-Fucking-Losses." Last time I saw a preview of yours in a theater, the audience started giggling and yelling things at the screen like "Choo Choo, here comes the shit-train." Somewhere, right now, *Uwe Boll* is laughing at you. These are dark times, my friend.

(MORE)

KEN FREIDBURG (CONT'D)  
 (opens his briefcase)  
 There's something you need to see.

Ken slaps a piece of paper down. H.L. reads it, then...

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 ...they wanna sue me?

KEN FREIDBURG  
 It's been nearly a year. The studio put down almost seven figures, they haven't seen a single page from you, and they're scared.  
 (beat)  
 Now here's what's gonna happen: they're gonna sue, they're gonna win, then you'll be a pariah, no one will hire you, and you'll probably have to blow that guy in the Bee costume at Telemundo if you ever want to work in TV again, and I will not be there to offer you a breath mint afterwards. Am I getting through here, Herbert?

H.L. pales, struck by the bee image. Ken puts a hand on him.

KEN FREIDBURG  
 I'm saying this as your friend. Stop deluding yourself. Get your shit together.

He stands up to leave. H.L. almost lets him go.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 Wait! Wait, Ken, wait...  
 (beat)  
 I'll get it done.  
 (off his look)  
 I'm gonna go to Vegas, I'm gonna lock myself in The Bellini, I'm gonna main-line a case of Red Bull, and I'm not gonna come out until the script is finished.

After a long beat, Ken shakes his head...

KEN FREIDBURG  
 H.L., my boy... you pull that off, it'll be fuckin' magic.

And on his words we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Backstage in the Bellini, a poster reads:

**THE MAGICAL DAVID EASTWICK -- PERFORMING TONIGHT**

**"NO VAULT CAN HOLD HIM!"**

Showgirls in sequins shimmer past the man himself: DAVID EASTWICK -- 40's, a little heavier and older than his poster shows, carries the weary bemusement of a man past his prime but still hacking away. He's the guy we saw drowning earlier.

DAVID EASTWICK

(winces)

Whoah, little tight there, Bob.  
I'm gonna occasionally need to,  
y'know, breathe...

BOB, a balding stagehand, tightens the strings on some kind of mechanically-rigged CORSET under David's jacket.

BOB

That might be easier if you would  
occasionally, y'know, *lose some*  
*fuckin' weight*, Dave, whaddya,  
fattening up for winter?

DAVID EASTWICK

(motions to his waist)

What are you talking about? I  
haven't gained any--

THUNK! Flowers ERUPT from David's sleeve into his hand.

DAVID EASTWICK

Jesus, Bob, I didn't trigger that.  
What if that happens on stage?

An attractive young assistant, ZOE, rushes to his side as Bob tries to reload the flowers.

ZOE

David-

DAVID EASTWICK

-sec, Zoe, little problem here, and  
we got showtime in five-

ZOE

Mitch isn't here yet.

DAVID EASTWICK  
What? Where the hell is he?

Bob shrugs, clearly not surprised.

BOB  
He doesn't show in five, I say we  
cancel. Contract says we get paid  
no matter what.

DAVID EASTWICK  
People paid to see the show, Bob,  
I'd prefer it if we didn't rip them  
off. Now, where the fuck is--

ROOOAAAAARRRRRR! From in the back wings, they hear the sound  
of a very pissed-off animal. David's face: *oh shit*. CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI HOTEL, CAGE AREA - NIGHT

MITCH EASTWICK: late 30's, handsome, almost a dead-ringer for  
his older brother David -- and at the moment, gagged, bound  
and face-to-face with a ROARING ALBINO TIGER. Its claws RAKE  
his shirt, almost drawing blood as he's YANKED AWAY...

MITCH (THROUGH GAG)  
MMMMMGGGG! MMMMMGGGGGGHH!

...and we see he's duct-taped to a STAND-UP DOLLY, hauled by  
a pair of heavy, suit-wearing, straight-outta-Bombay thugs:  
SUBASH and SUNIL. Ladies and gentlemen, meet the HINDI MAFIA.

(NOTE: they're not FOB's. They're hardcore gangsters. They  
just have accents that make them sound unfailingly polite.)

SUNIL (O.S.)  
(singing Meow Mix jingle)  
"Meow-meow-meow-meow, meow-meow-"  
(off Mitch's moans)  
...what is that you say, Mitch? "I  
do not want to become cat-food?"

SUBASH  
How do you like this, you are about  
to get a Siegfried pulled on you...

They push Mitch back towards the cage and the snarling cat.  
Sunil lifts the broomstick to hit the tiger again-

DAVID EASTWICK (O.S.)  
Do that again and you pull back a  
stump.

They WHIRL to see David in the door, with a prop sword in hand. Looking like he's heard this joke a couple times.

DAVID EASTWICK

...that's okay, though, you could always get a job on the pirate ship at Treasure Island. I hear they're looking for a Captain Hook.

SUNIL

Oh, this man is funny-

DAVID EASTWICK

By the way, it was Roy who got attacked, not Siegfried. Get it right, dipshit.

SUBASH

Pardon my inability to differentiate gay magicians. Cute suit, by the way.

DAVID EASTWICK

(grins)  
Why thank you, Sunil.

SUBASH

(points around)  
I am Subash. He is Sunil.

DAVID EASTWICK

Pardon my inability to differentiate gay mobsters. Wanna tell me why you're here?

Subash angrily makes for David, Sunil stops him with a hand on the shoulder. The more reasonable of the two.

SUNIL

Your brother owes us--

DAVID EASTWICK

--how'd it happen this time?

And we SMASH CUT TO:

INT. BACK ROOM, GAMBLING HALL - NIGHT

Mitch plays poker with some BAD DUDES, including Subash and Sunil. He tosses down a full house, the winning hand -- and responds with his usual restraint and cultural sensitivity:

MITCH

Nope, that wasn't an earthquake,  
boys, that was my cards hittin' the  
table! Vishnu can't save you now,  
shiteaters, this is *all mine*-

Mitch goes for the chips, when Sunil YANKS his sleeve back--  
revealing a MECHANICAL DEVICE (like David's) full of cards.

MITCH

Uh, yeah, that's... for a show  
later. Chill out, Swami--

WHACK! Subash STABS HIM IN THE HAND, he screams as WE CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, BACKSTAGE, CAGE AREA - SAME

David, grimacing, stares at Mitch's now BANDAGED hand.

DAVID EASTWICK

Great, now how the fuck is he  
supposed to be in my act with his  
hand like that?

SUBASH

Not our problem. The money he  
cheated belongs to Bhujbal  
Malhotra. Either he gets it back,  
or Mitch goes in the tiger's belly.

On cue, Sunil WHEELS MITCH FORWARD again, right towards the  
cage, as David puts an arm out, stops them. Wearily...

DAVID EASTWICK

I'll pay it. I always pay it.  
Just tell me how much and get the  
hell outta here.

SUBASH

Very well. The bill is \$62,000.  
(off David's W-T-F look)  
You know where to find us.

Subash JABS Willy with the broomstick one last time, then  
walks past David, daring him to do anything. David does not.  
Instead, he reaches into the cage, strokes the tiger until it  
stops growling. Then turns to Mitch and yanks out his gag.

DAVID EASTWICK

So, remember when we talked about  
"not doing stupid shit that gets us  
kicked out of Casinos?"

MITCH  
 That's why I did it off premises  
 this time...  
 (off his look)  
 You're judging me.

David shoves the gag back into his mouth and heads out to go perform, APPLAUSE and CHEERING rising as we CUT TO:

INT. CHERYL'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The cheering comes from a cheap TV set playing a WWE wrestling match. The Undertaker head-butts The Great Khali.

SPORTSCASTER (V.O.)  
 Oh! The Undertaker's playin' dirty!

We pull back to FOREIGNER, female, age 9, adorable. Watching avidly and eating Fruity Pebbles, although it's conspicuously not breakfast time. Through the windows, a car pulls into...

THE DRIVEWAY

...where Tommy Watts hops out of his beat-up 1985 Chevy Citation. He's done his best to clean himself up from the heckler-beating. Rings the doorbell, Foreigner answers.

FOREIGNER  
 Daddy!

TOMMY  
 Foreigner!

He SCOOPS her up onto his flabby torso as he comes in.

TOMMY  
 How's my little bundle of rock-and-roll? All packed up and ready to paint the town this weekend?

FOREIGNER  
 Uh huh! And I learned the words to your song!  
 (sings)  
*She ain't gonna tell me maybe!  
 Gonna get freaky with yo' baby!  
 Yeah, I be layin' down yo'--*

TOMMY  
 Whoah, whoah, yes, it's an awesome song, but let's not let your mom hear... what's *that*?



There's a scrape on her elbow. She shrugs it off -- *nothin'*. This girl is pure, pint-sized, white-trash tomboy.

TOMMY

C'mere, let's get you cleaned up...

We hear a FIZZ as we CUT TO:

THE BATHROOM

Peroxide FOAMS as Tommy cleans Foreigner's scraped elbow.

TOMMY

(off her wince)

...it's all right, baby, everybody gets boo-boos. Even daddy, like that time he had to fight Ted Nugent. How'd ya' get this, anyway?

FOREIGNER

Derrick Fisher was makin' fun of my name at recess.

TOMMY

That sumbitch. Remember how I told you to deal with stuff like that?

FOREIGNER

"Punch 'em in the nuts and make 'em eat sand."

TOMMY

Ex-actly. Did you do that?

(she shakes her head)

See, next time someone disrespects you, ya just gotta throw down and--

CHERYL (O.S.)

Tommy.

CHERYL (40's) his ex-wife, stands in kitchen. Bleached hair, a voice sponsored by Camel Lights, barely-veiled contempt.

TOMMY

Um... why don't you go watch TV for a bit, lemme' talk to your mom...

He kisses Foreigner's forehead. She heads out as we hear...

CHERYL (PRE-LAP)

Know what the root word of "alimony" is, Tom?

## IN THE KITCHEN

Tommy and Cheryl in a tense, quiet, talk.

CHERYL

...it's "money." Now where the hell is it?

TOMMY

See, uh, this *thing* happened and-  
(off her look)  
-you're definitely gonna get it within the next-

CHERYL

We're moving to Houston.

TOMMY

What? Wait, why? More importantly, ain't I got a say in this?

CHERYL

No, what you do have a say in, is whether or not you're gonna pay your alimony. But since that never happens, I need to go someplace I can afford.

(off his silence)

Know what your daughter's getting for dinner these days, Tommy? Breakfast cereal. That's how tight things are around here. Now, this weekend, I want you to do somethin' normal with her for a change, and when you bring her back, you better have what you owe.

(quiets)

I can't do this alone. You don't start pulling your weight around here, Tommy... we're gone.

Tommy nods. Hears her. Then takes a long look at Foreigner, obliviously watching TV... as a train of HOTEL BAG-CARRIERS suddenly pass in front of us and we're back in...

## INT. BELLINI CASINO, FRONT DESK AREA - DAY

...the Bellini lobby, where the bag-carriers haul H.L. Shapiro's plethora of suitcases. H.L. leads them, a little Napoleon marching to the MILITARY DRUM ROLL on his Ipod.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 (murmurs along)  
*...for I have seen the glory of the  
 coming of the Lord...*

For the first time, we get a good look at the Bellini: this was once THE spot to eat steak and watch Frank Sinatra forget his lyrics. Now it's an art-deco invalid, a relic of bygone decadence. H.L. makes for the glass elevators as we CUT TO:

INT. H.L. SHAPIRO'S ROOM - NIGHT

SNAP SNAP SNAP! H.L. locks his suite. SLAM! Sets down a case of Red Bull. ZIIIP! Computer case gets opened. CLICK! Opens his laptop, screen humming. He cracks his knuckles.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 (faces the blank page)  
 Okay you... prepare to be fucked by  
 the throbbing dong of my genius.

His hands go for the keyboard... then stop. He reaches again. Stops. Takes a deep breath and...

EXT. SMOOTHIE PENA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A door to a shitty apartment swings open, revealing SMOOTHIE PENA, a low-level drug pusher in a Santa Hat.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 I need drugs.

SMOOTHIE PENA  
 H.L., H.L., you gotta call me in  
 advance, man, this ain't cool.

Smoothie leads him into his drug-den/apartment, the air so thick with weed smoke you can practically chew it.

SMOOTHIE PENA  
 I ain't gettin' my shipment 'til  
 tomorrow. Shit's been hard since  
 that stuff with The Flash happened.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 Wait, who-?

SMOOTHIE PENA  
 This guy, my supplier, they call  
 him "The Flash"--

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 Why they call him "The Flash?"

Smoothie sighs -- *well, uh...* As we SMASH TO:

EXT. CRACK HOUSE - NIGHT

A run-down crack house. Moving in formation, a team of DEA AGENTS make for the door with a BATTERING RAM, take aim and--

DEA AGENT  
 POLICE! COMIN' IN!

...BOOM! They RAM the door as, at that exact same moment, a tall skinny black dude SMASHES OUT a front window, SPRINTS right past them, vaults off a squad car (hurdling some cops) and is halfway down the block by the time they turn around.

They just stare, dumbly, as he turns left and disappears between two houses. Meet THE FLASH. We SMASH BACK TO:

INT. SMOOTHIE PENA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

H.L. just stares at Smoothie.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 ...so this guy, he outran the cops?

SMOOTHIE PENA  
 No, he outruns the cops.

We SMASH TO: QUICK SHOTS of cops kicking doors down, and each time, the Flash smashes through a different window, escaping. A pot greenhouse - CRASH! A motel - CRASH! Even a trailer, where the Flash dives through a tiny bathroom window - CRASH!

INT. SMOOTHIE PENA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

H.L., still staring in disbelief.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 Wait -- if this guy gets away every time, where the hell are my drugs?

Smoothie looks pained, and we CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING, HALLWAY - DAY

Cops in riot gear wind down a hall, surrounding a door.

COP  
Vegas PD! Hands up!

They KICK down the door in time to see The Flash drop his X-Box controller and hurl himself out a window - CRASH - as...

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - SAME

...we FREEZE FRAME on him, in a shower of glass, once again eluding the cops, well on his way to freedom, as we hear...

SMOOTHIE PENA (V.O.)  
See, dude got so used to doing it,  
he sorta forgot where he was...

MATRIX-style, we WIDEN from the freeze-frame, to reveal a fire escape below him. Then a line of laundry. Uh oh...

SMOOTHIE PENA (V.O.)  
...and "where he was" happened to  
be the tenth floor of a building.

Indeed, The Flash is hanging above a 100 FOOT DROP, as...

INT. SWAT TEAM VAN - 3.5 SECONDS LATER

A TEAM COMMANDER in the SWAT van talks into his headset.

SWAT COMMANDER  
What do you mean he got away?  
Where the hell is he-

KABLAM! A huge "THE FLASH" SHAPED DENT caves into the roof of the van as we CUT TO:

INT. SMOOTHIE PENA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

H.L. considers this a moment. Then:

H.L. SHAPIRO  
Well, at least he left his mark on  
the world.

Smoothie blinks. Doesn't get it.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
So, being that your supplier has  
gone to the great track-meet in the  
sky... what can I get right now?

Smoothie ponders for a moment, then suddenly SMILES as if to say "hold onto your hat" and we CUT TO:

AN AQUARIUM

Where a big, fat, red-bellied TOAD sits in its glass cage. Smoothie and H.L. peer in, faces magnified by the glass.

H.L. SHAPIRO

Smoothie, I beg of you, tell me you are not trying to sell me a fucking amphibian in place of my drugs.

SMOOTHIE PENA

Not in place of -- is. The stuff in Mescaline that gets you high? Exact same stuff the Red-Bellied Borneo Toad's got on its skin. All y'gotta do is lick it.

(off H.L.'s bad look)

Hey, baby, you want the ride, you gotta buy the ticket.

H.L. looks away, hating this. Then notices, on the TV across the room, there's the TELEMUNDO GUY IN THE BEE COSTUME.

GUY IN BEE COSTUME

*Aiiee! Mi cabeza!*

H.L. pales, the ramifications taking hold as we CUT TO:

INT. THE BELLINI CASINO -- LATER

Stone-faced, H.L. carries a big glass cage through the Bellini. Inside, the TOAD seems unimpressed with its new surroundings. They pass by Zoe, the magic-show assistant.

ZOE

Cute pet.

H.L. SHAPIRO

("fuck off")

Thanks.

Now, instead of following H.L., we go with Zoe into...

THE BACKSTAGE AREA

...where the show's over, PA's breaking down the stage. Zoe comes into the dressing room, holds up a bottle of Peroxide.

ZOE

All right guys, one bottle of--  
what the hell are you doing?

We see it: David Eastwick is at the table, stitching up his brother's knife-wounded hand. Mitch, pleasantly loopy now, washes down painkillers with a swig of Heineken.

MITCH

David's playing doctor.  
(smiles)  
Wanna play Nurse?

ZOE

No thanks. I'm saving myself for  
Bob Barker.

MITCH

Isn't he dead?

ZOE

Exactly. Here.  
(hands over the peroxide)  
...ok, that's gross, I can't look.

She turns away. But turns back a second later, riveted.

ZOE

That's amazing, it actually looks  
like you know what you're doing...

DAVID EASTWICK

Years of experience. We couldn't  
afford doctors when we were kids.  
One time, this genius tried to  
steal the church's donation plate,  
Father Kruzynski ended up chasing  
him through a stained-glass door.  
Had to pull a two-inch shard of  
Jesus's halo out his ass.

MITCH

(off Zoe's laugh)  
Yeah, well, the good doctor here  
doesn't remember all the times I  
saved him from a good ass-whooping.

David nods; he remembers. Ties up the last stitch.

DAVID EASTWICK

How's it feel?

MITCH  
 (flexes his hand)  
 Like fuckin' "Robocop."

He tries to pick up his beer, drops it.

DAVID EASTWICK  
 Well, there's our first problem.

ZOE  
 ...what's the second?

Mitch and David share a worried look as we CUT TO:

INT. INDIA IMPORTS AND DELICACIES - DAY

A Bollywood musical plays on a TV inside Indian grocery-store/ restaurant where a fat, balding gent named BHUJBAL MALHOTRA sits, welcoming David and Mitch to his table.

BHUJBAL  
 Please, please, you must sit. Can I get you a gulab jamin? Mango lassi? The spinach pakora is quite good...  
 (they shake their heads)  
 You are missing out. Vegas Weekly just named us "Number One Hindi Vegetarian Food in Southeastern Nevada."

DAVID EASTWICK  
 You should get that framed. Your friends stopped by tonight, can we talk business?

BHUJBAL  
 Yes, yes, of course. Although strangely, I do not see a large bundle of money anywhere. Were you planning on writing a check, or...?

DAVID EASTWICK  
 I don't have it. Which you know. Which means there's something else you want. What is it?

Bhujbal smiles. There IS something else he wants. He motions-- *come*. David and Mitch follow him into...

THE BACK KITCHEN



...where old ladies stir enormous simmering kettles of daal and curry, completely ignoring Sunil and Subash as they wrap up a BLOODY BODY in cellophane on the floor. Various well-used torture tools (sledgehammer, pliers, etc.) lie about.

BHUJBAL

(motions to Sunil)

Show him.

They pull away the plastic on the body. David's turns away, nauseous. Mitch looks sort of fascinated.

MITCH

Man, you vegetarians don't fuck around, do you?

BHUJBAL

(ignores him)

You ask what I want, David? What I want is respect. The Italian Mafia? They get respect. The Russians? Much glory. The Yakuza? Everyone fears the Yakuza. But the Indians?

(shakes his head)

People don't even know we exist. Even the Armenian mob gets more respect, and Armenia is a tiny wart on the backside of Eastern Europe, one hundredth of the size of my country. Often I go to the Video Hut and ask myself: where is the Indian "Scarface?" Where hides the Hindi "Godfather?" When will I turn on my TV and see Indians robbing 7-11's instead of merely working at them? When?

(closes in)

I want to do something so big, David, that our name will be put permanently on the map.

DAVID EASTWICK

What does that have to do with us?

BHUJBAL

Maybe you don't have the cash...

(shrugs)

Maybe your employer does.

DAVID EASTWICK

My employer?

(sputters)

(MORE)

DAVID EASTWICK (CONT'D)  
 You mean the casino? You want to rob the fucking casino? Are you out of your mind? Do you know how much security the Bellini's got?

BHUJBAL  
 And for this reason, we need someone on inside.

DAVID EASTWICK  
 I do magic shows, Bhujbal.

BHUJBAL  
 Yes. And as they say, "no vault can hold you."

DAVID EASTWICK  
 I escape from vaults, I don't break into them. What the hell am I supposed to do? Rob them of \$62,000 to pay you off?

BHUJBAL  
 You are to rob them of millions. The \$62,000 is simply your share. I did not just dream up this morning while eating my ghobi paratha, David. You'll need help to pull this off. We're partners, are we not?

SUNIL  
 (calls from across room)  
 Bhuj! Look--

Bhuj looks over... because the guy on the floor is still alive. He SPASMS, trying to suck air through cellophane. Bhujbal rolls his eyes, grabs the SLEDGEHAMMER, swings it... and CRACK! Blood, bone, and brains SPRAY across his face.

BHUJBAL  
 (turns back to David)  
 This one's getting buried in the desert. If you think I am asking too much of you, David, I can always... what is your phrase? "Kill two birds with one stone?"

He grins, and flicks away the BLOODY TOOTH stuck to his moustache. David pales, looking at the pulverized man on the floor, getting the message loud and clear, as we hear...

MITCH (PRE-LAP)  
 Dude, this is great!

INT. BELLINI CASINO - DAY

David and Mitch, mid-conversation, walk across The Bellini's main gambling floor. The same place that, in three days, will be the site of a massive gun-battle.

MITCH

This is like a blessing in disguise! We plan it out, put together a team, rob the casino--

DAVID EASTWICK

--can you please refrain from saying "rob the casino" while we're, you know, *in* the casino?

MITCH

Okay, okay, I'm just saying, I don't see what the problem is. We make enough on this score, we're-

DAVID EASTWICK

We? Do you even know what you're talking about? We're not gonna make any money on this.

MITCH

He said we're partners. That means we get a cut too, right?

DAVID EASTWICK

What- No. Our cut pays off your debt, remember?

MITCH

Oh, right.

DAVID EASTWICK

More importantly, we're not doing this. Barring the moral issue that it's wrong--

MITCH

Remember what Mom used to say about that? Only *wrong* if you get *caught*.

DAVID EASTWICK

Mom also said that black people are afraid of water. Mom was fucking coo-coo.

MITCH

Dude, this place is a dinosaur.  
Security system's like fifty years  
old. How hard could it be?

DAVID EASTWICK

This place may not exactly be the  
Bellagio, but Franklin Gantt  
doesn't skimp on security. If he  
did, he'd be broke. Now look...

He points up at a boxy 80'S-LOOKING SECURITY CAMERA on the  
ceiling as WE WHOOSH into its lens...

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)

Those cameras aren't for robbers.  
They're for thieves...

...where we see the reflection of a huge BANK OF OLD,  
FLICKERING SURVEILLANCE MONITORS. We PULL BACK INTO...

THE SURVEILLANCE ROOM

...where LOTS of guards watch the monitors as...

DAVID EASTWICK

...they're looking for people  
trying to nickel and dime the  
casino, a buck here, buck there...

...one of the surveillance dudes points at a screen, and  
Jamal Jones talks into a walkie as we CUT TO:

QUICK SHOTS:

...a MAN IN BOOTS plays blackjack. He gets a 21 just as  
Jamal grabs him, pulls up a pant-leg to reveal a machine  
helping him count cards. Vroom. Taken away in a cop car.

...a WAITRESS sets down a drink, stealthily palms a stack of  
chips into her pocket. She turns and walks right into Jamal.  
Who smiles. Vroom. Taken away in a cop car.

...a BATHROOM STALL where a MASKED MAN yanks out a gun. He  
opens the door and WHAM! He's hit point-blank by a BEANBAG  
fired from Jamal Jones' shotgun.

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)

...which basically means they're  
sure as hell gonna see if there's  
something bigger in the works.

...the guy flies back and WHOOMP! Lands in an ambulance,  
gets taken away as we SMASH TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, BOOTH - SAME

...the money changing booth, where someone takes a stack of  
hundreds in a PLASTIC CASE and shoves it into...

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)  
Now as for the security below,  
they've got one of those old  
pneumatic tubes, leading straight  
from the cashier's hands...

...the AIR TUBE (like at a bank drive-thru.) WHOOSH! We're  
racing down after it, whirring into...

THE COUNTING ROOM

...where it's picked up and counted by men under the gaze of  
the mean-looking SUNUVABITCH FOREMAN.

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)  
...down to the counting room. Even  
when they get shipments through the  
front, it goes right to the vault.

A KNOCK at the steel front door. The foreman glances at a  
security monitor, sees a guard with a cart of cash. Two  
guards on the inside cover him with their guns as we CUT TO:

THE VAULT

...where the cart gets pushed in. The door -- an old, thick  
titanium monster with spinning dials -- slams shut.

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)  
Now, the vault was, admittedly,  
installed during the Carter  
Administration. But there's a  
reason that it hasn't been broken  
into in thirty years.

As the doors close, Jamal pulls a chair up in front of it,  
and sits with a shotgun in his lap.

MITCH (V.O.)  
So no one's ever pulled it off?

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)  
 One guy did. Did everything right,  
 stole about two million, he went  
 off and hid in Slovakia.

We hear CHEERING from somewhere as we SMASH TO:

A BAR IN SLOVAKIA

...where MR. SUCCESSFUL HEIST GUY slams his beer glass down,  
 steals a kiss from a GIRL, goes off to the urinal...

DAVID EASTWICK (O.S.)  
 Jump ahead to six days later...

...and YOINK! He's YANKED BACK, spraying urine, hauled out  
 the bathroom doors and directly into...

AN UNDERGROUND ROOM IN THE BELLINI

...where Jamal, Gantt, and the guards SLAM our beaten,  
 screaming Mr. Successful down before a rusty old BAND-SAW.

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)  
 ...and next thing you know, he  
 finds himself back at The Bellini.

His eyes DILATE, reflecting the whirring blade as WE CUT TO:

BACK WITH DAVID AND MITCH

...where pleasant LOUNGE MUSIC percolates in the lobby.

DAVID EASTWICK  
 Guy walks around with a rubber hand  
 now. Getting the point here, Mitch?

Mitch looks away. After a long beat...

MITCH  
 What are we supposed to do? Run?

DAVID EASTWICK  
 Run? No. We're not gonna run.  
 I'm gonna do what any sane person  
 would do in my situation. I'm  
 gonna get drunk.  
 (beat)  
 Then I'll figure a way to rob this  
 shithole.

He turns to leave, and bumps into Tommy. Gives him an  
 apologetic smile, continues on as Mitch blurts after him:

MITCH

You're a fuckin' boyscout, David!

David waves him off and keeps walking. We hang back with Tommy, looking worried leading Foreigner by the hand across the rowdy casino floor. As they go...

FOREIGNER

Daddy? I thought Mommy didn't want you bringing me here.

TOMMY

Yes, well, what Mommy doesn't know won't hurt her, right?

FOREIGNER

So... it's like lying?

TOMMY

Well... no, not lying...

(beat)

Well, actually, *yes*, like lying. See, lying is bad, except for when you do it to get outta' trouble.

FOREIGNER

Y'mean... like when you got kicked out of Sea-World for peeing in the petting tank?

TOMMY

Perfect example! Mommy didn't need to know about that, right? Well, this is exactly the same thing.

As they head for a door marked EMPLOYEES ONLY...

TOMMY

Keep your fingers crossed, baby, Daddy's gotta call in some favors.

And we immediately hear:

DRUMMER (PRE-LAP)

*A favor? Are you shitting me?!*

INT. BELLINI CASINO, BACKSTAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Tommy's Drummer breaks down his kit as Tommy and Foreigner stand nearby, Tommy already wishing he hadn't asked.

## DRUMMER

You just cost us 40% of our take,  
and you wanna *borrow* money? Hell  
no! And while we're on it, why  
don't you do me a favor and--

Just as we CUT TO: TOMMY'S BASS PLAYER, SITTING AT A BAR.

## BASS PLAYER

--lay off the fucking nachos? You  
can't order a giant plate of fat  
every night and still wear tight  
leather pants everywhere. You look  
like Jim Morrison boned a walrus.  
Oh, and by the way--

Next up in his POV: THE LEAD GUITARIST, AT HOME.

## GUITARIST

--are you even *aware* of how  
inappropriate your September 11th  
tribute songs are? The firefighters  
have suffered enough, man! And for  
the record--

Next in Tommy's POV: A BANKER AT WELLS FARGO.

## BANKER

--no. We don't give loans to  
people who *own* nothing, *have*  
nothing, and maxed out all of their  
credit cards. That's what we call-

Next in Tommy's POV: TED NUGENT, SHOOTING A RIFLE

## TED NUGENT

--the most inane crap I ever heard.  
Any moron who thinks I'm gonna lend  
him money shoulda' never fell outta  
his mammy's ass.

(pauses)

By the way, didn't I kick the shit  
out of you one time?

Ted turns and shoots something -- BOOM -- as we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, HALLWAY - NIGHT

BOOM-BOOM-BOOM. Hip-hop POUNDS from behind the closed door  
of the Bellini penthouse. Tommy and Foreigner approach.



FOREIGNER

Who's room is that, daddy?

TOMMY

The devil's, sweety. The devil's.

Tommy knocks. It opens a second later and out leans COOL G: hair in braids, bling everywhere, a million-dollar scowl.

TOMMY

Hey there, I'm here to see-

COOL G

Where our sandwiches at?

TOMMY

Huh? I'm not room service, dude, I'm supposed to meet--

COOL G

(gets in his face)

You will bring up the sixteen shark-tail sandwiches we ordered, or we are going to have a problem, nigga.

He SLAMS the door. Then reopens it--

COOL G

And some caviar too! Bitch.

Pulls it shut again, Tommy tries to grab it.

TOMMY

WAIT! Wait, I'm just here to see--

The door is thrown wide by PERCY RAMONE, president of Sampson Records: a 5-foot, 200-pound powder-keg of manic energy.

PERCY

Tommy Watts! How the hell are ya?

TOMMY

(resigned)

Hey Percy, long time...

PERCY

Tell me about it, you look great, fatter every time I see you. Bring your fat ass in here.

TOMMY

(to Foreigner)

Eyes and ears, sweety.

She covers her ears and shuts her eyes (this is clearly not the first time they've played this game) following Percy...

INTO THE PENTHOUSE

...and into the fray of BOOMING crunk, half-naked women, weed smoke, and a bunch of RAPPERS shooting fireworks at each other. The curtains are on fire and no one notices.

PERCY

(flames whizzing past)  
You're in the presence of greatness here, Tommy. Meet my new group: the Itchy Trigga Finga Niggaz.

TOMMY

...itchy, trigger, finger...?

PERCY RAMONE

No, all one word: Itchy-Trigga-Finga-Niggaz. With a 'Z.' They got that big hit, "Shoot Ya Teacha."

CRUSHA (O.S.)

Yo Percy!

They glance over behind the couch at CRUSHA (cleverly named for the fact that he's big and can crush things), firing Roman Candles across the room at a tattooed guy named N-SANE.

CRUSHA

We gots to get a new water-bed.

Motions to a room, where LIQUID flows from under a door.

PERCY

No prob, we'll take care of it.

BOOM! A firework SPLATTERS the TV. Tommy flinches.

PERCY

(grins)  
Don't act so shocked, Mr. "I-Almost-Burned-Down-The-Bel-Air-Hotel-In-1988." C'mere.

Percy leads him out to the balcony as we CUT TO:

EXT. BELLINI CASINO, BALCONY - MOMENTS LATER

Quieter here, except for fireworks hitting the glass doors. Percy paces with Tommy, Foreigner feeds fish in a fountain.

PERCY

Goddamn, your little gal's growin' up, I remember when she was just a bump on a roadie chick's belly. She got a singing voice like her dad?

TOMMY

Percy-

PERCY

Just thinkin' aloud--

TOMMY

No.

PERCY

Alright, alright, alright. I'm assuming that you called 'cause you need money, true or false?

(off Tommy's ashamed nod)

Then the stars have aligned for us. I got something that needs doing.

Percy scribbles a note for Tommy -- an address.

TOMMY

(reads it)

Palmdale? That's like... out in the middle of the desert, right?

PERCY

'Zactly. I just need you to cruise out there, pick something up, bring it back to these fine chaps in the penthouse, and you, my good sir, will be a thousand dollars richer.

TOMMY

(after a beat)

What am I picking up?

PERCY

Nothing. And it'll stay that way.

That's all Percy's gonna say. Tommy considers for a moment. He looks over at his daughter. Finally... he nods, defeated.

PERCY

That's my boy, up and at 'em!

(as he turns away)

Hey, want me to keep an eye on Foreigner while you're on the road?

(MORE)

PERCY (CONT'D)  
 We got a karaoke machine, I bet  
 she'd sing a mean Joan Jett--

SLAM! Tommy is already out the door, Foreigner in his arms. Percy shrugs -- *oh well, your funeral*. And as ROCK AND ROLL by Led Zeppelin starts pounding, we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, BAR - MOMENTS LATER

The song plays on the casino lounge's jukebox. We find David at the bar, sketching diagrams onto a napkin, watching a couple CASINO GUARDS load money into a cart.

He polishes off his third drink as, at a nearby roulette table, someone bets red 22 and scores. People cheer.

LUCY (O.S.)  
 That doesn't happen often, does it.

David turns to see LUCY, sitting two stools over. Mid-20's, attractive, disarmingly sunny, adorably vulnerable.

DAVID EASTWICK  
 No. Good luck, but it won't last.  
 House always wins, you know.

LUCY  
 That's what they say.  
 (offers her hand)  
 Lucy.

DAVID EASTWICK  
 David.

LUCY  
 I know.

She smiles at his confusion. Motions over to a poster nearby: "The Magical David Eastwick." His cheesy grin.

LUCY  
 Word on the street is that "No  
 Vault Can Hold You."

DAVID EASTWICK  
 I did get stuck in the elevator at  
 Macy's one time.  
 (off her laugh)  
 So what do you do?

LUCY  
 I answer phones at Good Samaritan.

DAVID EASTWICK  
That's a... suicide hotline, right?

LUCY  
Yep.

He holds her look a moment. She's not joking.

DAVID EASTWICK  
Wow... keep anyone from dying recently?

LUCY  
Yeah, y'know, temporarily.

DAVID EASTWICK  
Well, then...  
(raises his glass)  
To "temporarily." About the best anyone can hope for.

They toast -- clink. And as she sets her glass down...

LUCY  
So what's next for you today?  
Sawing any women in half? Making stuff disappear?

David glances towards the money-booth, downs a swallow.

DAVID EASTWICK  
In the short term, I intend to perform tonight's show, pray that nothing goes catastrophically wrong, and put my tiger to bed.

LUCY  
Sounds dangerous.

DAVID EASTWICK  
What does?

LUCY  
Letting a tiger sleep in your bed.

DAVID EASTWICK  
He's old and arthritic. Plus I'm not his type.

LUCY  
Interesting, which type are you?  
(off his look)  
There are only four, you know...

DAVID EASTWICK  
Four types of men?

LUCY  
Exactly. There are princes, there are frogs, there are princes who turn out to be frogs, and occasionally, vice-versa.

DAVID EASTWICK  
(smiles)  
I've read, in reputable sources, that there's a completely foolproof way of figuring that out...

LUCY  
(smiles back)  
That's a terrible line, my friend.

DAVID EASTWICK  
I was gonna suggest DNA testing.

LUCY  
Too clinical. I prefer field-research. Eight O'clock. Here.

DAVID EASTWICK  
...dinner?

LUCY  
Sure. I wanna see how long you can keep this gentleman-act up for.

DAVID EASTWICK  
Guess that answers the question of what type you are then.  
(off her look)  
Someone who's kissed a few frogs.

Lucy smiles. Trace of sadness there. Beautiful all the same.

LUCY  
Yeah well... most people don't realize how lucky they are to have had a few good heartbreaks.

David nods. Hears her. Lifts his glass again. One of those rare, random, fleeting moments of alcohol-tinged intimacy.

DAVID EASTWICK  
To a few good heartbreaks.

LUCY  
To princes and frogs.

And as their glasses CLINK, we immediately CUT TO:

INT. H.L. SHAPIRO'S ROOM - SAME

The TOAD sits on a table in H.L.'S room, staring. REVERSE TO REVEAL H.L., inches away, staring back. The amphibian lets out a croak, H.L. grimaces.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
What did the lesbian frog say to  
the other?...  
(beat)  
"We *do* taste like chicken."

He looks over at his empty plate. Then to the TOAD. Finally, steeling himself, he lifts the toad. Shuts his eyes. Sticks his tongue out... tastes it and recoils. Almost pukes.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
Chicken, my ass...

Now he slowly LICKS its warty, slimy skin as we CUT TO:

THE BATHROOM

Where H.L. SPITS toothpaste. Then pauses... staring at the swirling water going down the drain. His eyes DILATE into black pools, as we hear "Riders on the Storm" by THE DOORS.

MORRISON (V.O.)  
*Riders on the storm... Riders on  
the storm... Into this house we're  
born, into this world we're thrown.*

WHOOMPH! H.L. stumbles out into the suite, toothbrush still sticking out of his mouth. The short hallway is unnaturally elongated. He lurches to the glass window, staring out...

INT. TOMMY'S CHEVY CITATION - NIGHT

A desert highway. Tommy drives along it, nodding his head to the music. Lights sparkle behind him as he departs Vegas.

MORRISON (V.O.)  
*There's a killer on the road...  
 His brain is squirming like a  
 toad... Take a long holiday...  
 Let your children play...*

Glances at his sleeping daughter next to him, then out at the dark road, a bullet speeding blindly into night as WE CUT TO:

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

David at dinner with Lucy, across from her. We can tell he's completely, and absolutely smitten. Doesn't want to be, but there's a connection between them, electric and true, as...

MORRISON (V.O.)  
*Girl ya gotta love your man...  
 Take him by the hand... Make him  
 understand... The world on you  
 depends...*

She leans in and touches his hand. It's over. He's totally gone as we CUT TO:

QUICK SHOTS:

--H.L. lurches down the hall with an ice bucket. The vine wallpaper WRIGGLES, the carpet STICKS to his feet, as...

--TOMMY speeds on. Eyes start to close. Almost drifts into a passing SEMI, jerks away, pulls the car straight as...

--DAVID with Lucy in front of the Bellagio fountains. It's that moment. As water dances behind them, their lips meet...

--H.L.'s fingers CLATTER across the keyboard, filling pages, his cigarette smoke forming visions in the air: visions of a man driving, a couple kissing, then the song ends, as the smoke becomes...

INT. TOMMY'S CHEVY CITATION - MORNING

...a dust cloud rolling over Tommy's car, parked out in the desert. It's early morning, Tommy and Foreigner are in the backseat, she's using his belly as a pillow. Suddenly...

BANG BANG BANG! Tommy jerks awake.

TOMMY  
 Wha- who- where-



Foreigner groans, doesn't wake. A long tendril of drool drips from her mouth. Tommy looks up to see a WIZENED NATIVE AMERICAN MAN peeking in the car. Meet ATAHALNE.

ATAHALNE

You're the man Ramone sent?  
 (off his muddy nod)  
 Come, let's make this quick. Cops  
 have been on my ass since Friday.

Tommy sits up, gently rests his daughter's head on a bundled sweatshirt, and climbs out into the parking lot of...

THE ABANDONED BUILDING

Where a rusty sign reads "DINER." As Tommy shuts the door...

ATAHALNE

You thought it wise to bring your  
 kid along on a deal like this?

TOMMY

Man, my parenting skills ain't none  
 of your...  
 (beat)  
 ...what kinda deal is this exactly?

Atahalne looks at him stone-faced, as we CUT TO:

A BIG WOODEN CRATE

Atahalne lifts the top, Tommy peers in. Looks confused.

TOMMY

...I drove all the way out here to  
 pick up two crates of squirt guns?

We REVERSE TO REVEAL the crate's loaded with UZI'S, HANDGUNS and SHOTGUNS, all colored NEON BLUE, PINK, AND GREEN. Giving him a "you idiot" look, Atahalne points a gun at Tommy.

TOMMY

Jesus--

KA-BLAM! Atahalne fires over his shoulder, cuts the DINER sign off its chain. Tosses the gun back into the box.

ATAHALNE

What you are looking at here, white man, are designer Glocks, SMG's, automatics, and pump shotguns, all made-to-order in special day-glo colors. They are all the rage with rappers, gang-bangers, p-diddy's...

TOMMY

Um... y'know, I'm thinking that maybe driving around with all these guns AND my nine-year-old daughter might not be the best idea ever to come down the turnpike-

Atahalne SHOVES a heavy crate of guns into Tommy's arms.

TOMMY

Okay, point taken--

THUNK! Atahalne STACKS a second crate on the first, sends Tommy toppling backwards as we CUT TO:

INT. TOMMY'S CHEVY CITATION - MOMENTS LATER

Tommy drives, Foreigner in the passenger seat, the back STUFFED with boxes of guns, his face dark with worry.

FOREIGNER

(points)  
Look, daddy...

In the distance, a dust-devil SWIRLS ominously as we CUT TO:

INT. H.L. SHAPIRO'S ROOM - MORNING

The swirling shape of a SCREEN-SAVER. H.L. lifts a groggy head from the desk. Bumps the mouse, the screen-saver stops.

H.L. SHAPIRO

Imuna...  
(rubs eyes)  
Holy shit.

He stares at the computer... at the end of PAGE 60. He skims the pages, more and more excited. Then dials his phone...

H.L. SHAPIRO (INTO PHONE)

Ken? H.L... what?  
(eyes clock)  
6:30. Yes AM.  
(MORE)

H.L. SHAPIRO (INTO PHONE) (CONT'D)  
 Listen, I just wrote the best sixty  
 pages of my life. Yes. Who cares  
what fucking time it is, did you  
hear me? Sixty pages! One night!  
 Best of my life!

(calms)

It's fucking great. We're gonna  
 pull this off, buddy, we're gonna-

He sits down with a smoke and STOPS mid-sentence, the  
 cigarette falls out of his mouth. The toad's cage is empty.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 I'll call you back.

CLICK! He hangs up and hits the floor, searching around...

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 No-no-no-no-no!  
 (wails)  
 Where did you goooooo?

And as he scrambles around the room, we CUT TO:

THE TOAD

Hopping down the hall, onto a ROOM SERVICE CART, just before  
 it's pushed away, as we hear:

DAVID EASTWICK (PRE-LAP)  
 Room service!

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - MORNING

David, wearing a robe, carries a tray of breakfast into his  
 shabby bedroom, where Lucy dozes in his sheets.

DAVID EASTWICK  
 (settles in beside her)  
 The Hotel Eastwick offers only the  
 finest to its guests, particularly  
 when said guests are not wearing  
 any clothes. Omelette?

LUCY  
 Hmmm, yes, yes. Does the Hotel  
 Eastwick carry hot sauce?

He SNAPS his fingers dramatically. Produces a salt-shaker.

LUCY  
 (skeptical)  
 That's not hot sauce.

DAVID EASTWICK  
 No, but it is what I hid in my hand  
 on the way over here. *But look--*

He clumsily fumbles a bottle of TABASCO out of his pocket.

LUCY  
 (laughing)  
 ...as hot sauce appears before my  
 very eyes. Keep that up and you'll  
 be playing the Venetian in no time.

DAVID EASTWICK  
 Actually, I did play the Venetian.

LUCY  
 Really?  
 (as she digs in)  
 Isn't that, like... kind of a step  
 down, to be playing the Belinni?

DAVID EASTWICK  
 Yeah, well... would you believe me  
 if I told you that I have an evil  
 almost-twin brother who is a total  
 fuck-up and has gotten us kicked  
 out of every other casino in town?

LUCY  
 Very funny.

DAVID EASTWICK  
 It's true. That, plus, "Bellini"  
 is actually Italian for "place  
 where old performers go to die."

LUCY  
 Since when are you old?

DAVID EASTWICK  
 I am in magician-years.

LUCY  
 I was unaware that magicians age  
 differently than regular mortals.

DAVID EASTWICK  
 We do. We're like baseball players  
 and dogs. You slow down, the  
 tricks become harder, you pretend  
 it's your costume getting smaller  
 and not your waist getting bigger,  
 you can't hold your breath as long--

Lucy POUNCES on him, giggling as she stuffs a pillow over his face. David, laughing, struggles to push her off.

LUCY

Oh no! Look at the *poor old man!*  
He can't hold his breath! He can't  
fight back! He's really screwed  
now, isn't he?

DAVID EASTWICK

(under the pillow)  
Remains to be seen, my dear.

She giggles, hops off of him, starts to get dressed.

DAVID EASTWICK

...wait a minute, that was going  
somewhere interesting.

LUCY

I'd love to stay, but I gotta go  
see my dad at the casino.

DAVID EASTWICK

He works at The Bellini?

LUCY

He owns The Bellini.

David freezes. Stares at her, trying to hide his shock.

DAVID EASTWICK

Franklin Gantt is your father?

LUCY

I didn't tell you that?

DAVID EASTWICK

I think I would have remembered.

LUCY

(giggles)  
Make you nervous? Lying in bed  
with the boss's daughter?

DAVID EASTWICK

No! 'Course not, he's not even my  
boss, I'm my own boss, it's just--

LUCY

He's throwing a big shindig  
tonight, you wanna come? You guys  
would get along *famously*--

DAVID EASTWICK

NO! I mean, uh, yes, fine, I just had no idea that--

LUCY

Don't get weird about my dad, he's a teddy-bear. Loves everybody.

(beat)

Except people who mess with his casino. Then he'll bury you out in the desert.

She giggles. David looks pale, as we CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Deep desert. A coyote watches from the brush as Subash and Sunil dig a grave in the tough soil, conversing in Hindi.

SUNIL (SUBTITLED)

*What do you think, deep enough?*

SUBASH (SUBTITLED)

*You know what I think.*

Ignoring him, Sunil opens the car's trunk -- filled with severed BODY PARTS wrapped in plastic. Subash keeps on him:

SUBASH (SUBTITLED)

*This is deeply improper. Shiva demands cremation of the deceased, never burial.*

SUNIL (SUBTITLED)

*Yes, but Bhujbal demanded burial, and I am frankly more concerned about him right now. And speaking of moral improprieties, I'm pretty sure Shiva also has rules against killing a man and chopping him up into little pieces. Now help me, it's getting hot out here.*

Subash grudgingly helps him drag the severed torso out, accidentally knocking an arm free as they carry it over.

SUBASH (SUBTITLED)

*I'm simply saying, there's no reason not to give him a proper--*

Just as they see it: a COYOTE snags the arm and runs away.

SUBASH (SUBTITLED)

*Shit!*

He drops the torso, yanks out a gun, and SHOOTS after it, misses completely. Sunil grabs him, pulls the gun down.

SUNIL (SUBTITLED)

*What are you doing?!*

SUBASH (SUBTITLED)

*He took the arm!*

SUNIL (SUBTITLED)

*So what? We are disposing of the body! Who cares if it winds up in a shallow grave, or in some animal's stomach? Now let's go!*

They hurriedly get back to work as we CUT TO:

INT. TOMMY'S CHEVY CITATION - DAY

Tommy speeds along the highway, windows open, music blaring,

FOREIGNER (O.S.)

I like the pink ones.

TOMMY

Pink what?

(looks back)

Oh shi-- put that back!

Grudgingly, Foreigner returns the PINK GLOCK she was holding.

FOREIGNER

...I was just playin' with it.

TOMMY

You need to leave those alone, honey, those things are... bad.

She contemplates a moment, sipping her Sprite.

FOREIGNER

Does that mean you could you get in trouble for having 'em?

TOMMY

(frozen smile)

That's, uh, complicated. Why?

FOREIGNER

'Cause there's a cop next to us.

Tommy looks over, and sees, indeed, there is a COP CAR right next to them. He's jumps in his seat--

TOMMY

Fuck me! I mean shit, I mean--  
God... darnnit!

He loses control, swerves, rights himself. But the cops are looking at them. Foreigner waves cheerfully. They wave back, then speed around the bend, gone. Tommy sighs, relieved.

FOREIGNER

(screams)

DAD!

Tommy looks forward just as the coyote runs across the road, carrying the dead guy's arm.

TOMMY

AAAAAGGGGHHHHH!!!

WHAM! Tommy SLAMS into the coyote, the arms BOUNCES off his windshield, the car skids out of control...

...and CRASH! Flies off the highway, takes out a cactus, and SMASHES to a halt. A moment later, inside the car, Tommy lifts his head from the wheel, bruised, lip split open.

TOMMY

...Foreigner?

Glances into the back. She's not there.

TOMMY

*Foreigner?!*

Then sees her, sitting up from the floor behind his seat. He scrambles to pull her in close, terrified.

TOMMY

No, no, no, talk to me sweetie,  
please, are you hurt?

FOREIGNER

...I spilled my soda.

TOMMY

...Oh God... Thank you, God, thank  
you... here, baby, take this...



He digs out a bottle of water, puts it to her lips, she drinks deeply. Then offers it back to him.

TOMMY

No, honey, you finish that.

She nods, drinks the rest-- glug, glug, glug. Then...

TOMMY

Sweetheart, we're gonna go on... a little nature hike, okay? Just until we find some other people. Come on now...

He gets out of the car, carrying her, and we CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT ROAD - AFTERNOON

Merciless afternoon sun rages as Tommy's boots drag along the vacant highway. Haggard, sunburned, near collapse, Foreigner unconscious in his arms. He's eating from a can of Pringles.

TOMMY

Why does... this always... happen to me...?

CHERYL (O.S.)

Like you got nothing to do with it?

Tommy looks over to see Cheryl, his ex-wife, walking with him. Strangely, he doesn't seem to wonder what she's doing all the way out in the desert. Just takes it for granted.

TOMMY

I wouldn't... even be... in this mess... if it weren't... for you.

CHERYL

Oh, so now it's my fault? You had a choice. You could have paid your alimony. Could have gotten a job. Could have not gotten fired from the last twelve gigs. No one said you had to smuggle guns and put your daughter's life in danger.

TOMMY

You... shut up... devil-woman... You're not... even... real...

And finally, he COLLAPSES to his knees, falls back, dropping the Pringles, Foreigner sprawled across his torso. A second later, a SCORPION skitters past his face as we hear:

ZOE (PRE-LAP)  
Well this is just fuckin' *peachy*...

INT. BELLINI CASINO, BACKSTAGE - DAY

We're backstage at Bellini, with David, Mitch, and Bob, and a very-pissed off looking Zoe.

ZOE  
...your brother somehow cheats \$62,000 out of the Hindi Mafia, who are now blackmailing you into a complicated multi-million dollar heist of a casino owned by one of the scariest men in the Western United States, and on top of that, you just slept with the scary guy's daughter.

A long beat. Then--

DAVID EASTWICK  
Yeah, that about sums it up.

BOB  
Great. Now, in my most humble fucking opinion, I say we let Mitch take his own medicine for once.

MITCH  
Hey, dude, shut up-

DAVID EASTWICK  
(stops him with a hand)  
I'd love nothing more than for Mitch to take his own medicine. Unfortunately, in this case it would kill him, and I'm not gonna let my brother drink Hemlock.

MITCH  
Thank you.  
(beat)  
What's Hemlock?

BOB  
(stands, disgusted)  
This is bullshit, Dave.  
(MORE)

BOB (CONT'D)

Once upon a time, like ten years ago, you mighta been able to pull something like this off. If you had unlimited resources, and your speed was still worth a shit, then maybe, yeah, this might be doable.

(beat)

...it ain't exactly ten years ago.

DAVID EASTWICK

Look, Bob, listen--

BOB

--and on top of that, you're not makin' a cent on this fuckin' deal?

DAVID EASTWICK

What I'm getting is my brother's life. Whatever the exchange rate on that is, I'll take it.

BOB

That's very touching, but I already got two strikes against me, Dave, I can't do this shit. I'm out.

David looks over at Zoe. She looks away.

ZOE

Sorry, David. I got a kid to look out for.

David nods. Starts to get up to leave when, out of nowhere, Mitch is on his feet, yelling:

MITCH

All you ungrateful assholes better listen up! I'm gonna remind you of what my brother's too gentlemanly to say -- namely, both of you didn't have shit before he took you in. Bob, not a lot of ex-cons workin' the magician's circuit, if you know what I mean. If not for Dave, you'd still be changing sheets for \$4.50 an hour at Big Stu's Bunny Ranch. Now *there's* a job to write home about.

(points to Zoe)

(MORE)

MITCH (CONT'D)

And the only reason you can even feed your little tyke is 'cause David here didn't fire your ass like he should've when you got knocked up by some trucker whose name you can't remember. We've all done our share to pull him down.

(rounds on Bob)

And Bob, if you *really* didn't want to go to jail, you wouldn't be growing pot in your basement.

There's an awkward silence, then:

DAVID EASTWICK

(stunned)

You grow pot in your basement?

BOB

It's medicinal!

(glares at Mitch)

Okay, fine, Mitch, you ain't the only fuckup-fairy in the room.

(sighs)

So... if we do this, we need every advantage we can get. Now, given that you're already schtupping this guy's daughter, I'm thinking we got an inside angle, so to speak--

DAVID EASTWICK

No.

BOB

No what?

DAVID EASTWICK

Sorry. She's off limits.

BOB

Why?

DAVID EASTWICK

Because I like her.

BOB

Consider this: you screw this girl over, you break her heart, fine. She'll recover. Mitch, on the other hand, cannot recover from death.

(beat)

It's gonna be her or him, Dave. Think about it.

Tightening on David as he weighs his options, we CUT TO:

INT. FRANKLIN GANTT'S ESTATE, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Franklin Gantt shakes David's hand, both men dressed to the nines. They're at a lavish gala at Gantt's estate, Vegas's finest passing this way and that.

DAVID EASTWICK  
Thanks for having us, sir.

FRANKLIN GANTT  
Pleasure's mine. I'm just glad you  
coaxed this one into coming out...

He's referring, of course, to Lucy -- standing at David's side in a shimmering, low-cut gown.

FRANKLIN GANTT  
You look marvelous, my girl, better  
than a Vegas showgirl. Which is  
why you really need to *cover-the-  
fuck-up*. I've got something better  
for you upstairs. Like a mumu.

LUCY  
(giggles to David)  
What's funny is he's actually  
serious, he never jokes.

FRANKLIN GANTT  
Bullshit. I told you knock-knock  
jokes when you were four.

LUCY  
And I still haven't recovered. If  
you two will excuse me, I think  
we're all in dire need of drinks.

Lucy heads for the bar, leaving David alone with Gantt, who puts a friendly arm around him.

DAVID EASTWICK  
Lemme' ask you something: There's  
been two types of men in my  
daughter's life so far -- me, and a  
bunch of scumbags that I gotta  
chase off the fucking continent.  
(smiles)  
...which one are you?

David's struck speechless. Gantt pats him on the shoulder.

GANTT  
Food for thought.

He gives David a toothy smile as we CUT TO:

INT. SMOOTHIE PENA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A "BEHIND THE MUSIC" plays on a TV, shows a fast-food joint.

VHI NARRATOR (ON TV)  
...the tragedy was only compounded  
when lead singer Tommy Watts was  
arrested for drunk driving, after  
stealing his own tour bus for a  
late-night trip to Hardee's.

It cuts to a tour bus LODGED into the Hardee's drive-through  
lane. The cops haul Tommy away, he's still yelling his order.

TOMMY  
...and some chili-cheese fries too!  
Extra cheese, y'hear me?!

We WIDEN TO REVEAL Smoothie Pena and his stoned homies  
laughing and watching TV. There's a KNOCK on the apartment  
door, Smoothie opens it to see...

H.L. SHAPIRO  
I need another toad.

SMOOTHIE PENA  
Wha'? Where's the one you bought?

INT. BELLINI CASINO, RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The salad bar at the Bellini buffet. AN OLD LADY tongs up  
some mixed greens onto her plate and moves on... just as some  
salad SHIFTS in its tub and we hear a RIBBIT as...

H.L. SHAPIRO (PRE-LAP)  
Whaddy mean, "you're out?!"

INT. SMOOTHIE PENA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Smoothie leads H.L. into the living room.

SMOOTHIE PENA  
It was my last one. I'm all out.  
You want some coke?

H.L. SHAPIRO

What? No! I want a goddamn toad.

Smoothie pours some white powder onto a plate. H.L. pauses.

H.L. SHAPIRO

OK, I'll take a toad and some coke-

He starts chopping like it's second nature. (Which it is.)

SMOOTHIE PENA

Look, man, this is Vegas. Toads don't grow on trees. You want coke, pot, heroin, speed, E, even peyote, I can get that tonight. You want a hallucinogenic toad, that's gonna take...

(thinks)

...at least two days.

H.L. SHAPIRO

I don't have two days. I barely have *one* day. If I don't get this done, I'm gonna get written off as some unprofessional, drug-addled douchebag. Anybody got a straw?

Someone hands him a straw, he leans down and BANG! A hole EXPLODES in the wall above him. H.L. sits up, wide-eyed as...

KA-BOOM! The next shot BLOWS the front door off its hinges and FOUR MASKED MEN come swarming into the room.

SMOOTHIE PENA

What the fu-

Smoothie's homies dive for guns, but the LEAD MASKED MAN and his crew surround them, weapons up. H.L.'s frozen, mid-sniff.

LEAD MASKED MAN

Everybody keep your hands up or we're gonna paint the walls with you.

SMOOTHIE PENA

Who the hell is this?!

SECOND MASKED MAN

Our names are not important. What *is* important is that-

SMOOTHIE PENA

Man, fuck you- Clarence!

SECOND MASKED MAN  
 (an awkward pause)  
 What? No... I ain't Clarence.

SMOOTHIE PENA  
 Bullshit, nigga, you still wearin'  
 them Ronald McDonald red-ass tennis  
 shoes!

The man sheepishly glances down at his raggedy RED SHOES.

SMOOTHIE PENA  
 (points to first guy)  
 And that makes you Felix, right?

FIRST MASKED MAN (FELIX)  
 Goddammit, Clarence, I told you not  
 to wear those fucking shoes.  
 (to Smoothie)  
 Okay, yes, this is Felix. Here's  
 the deal: things are getting tight  
 on our end, and being that you  
 haven't paid tribute in 3 months--

SMOOTHIE PENA  
 --which might have somethin' to do  
 with my supplier fallin' out of a  
 fucking building--

FELIX  
 --which is unfortunate. Because  
 what it means is that I now have to  
 take everything you got -- drugs,  
 cash, wallets, guns, your fuckin' X-  
 Box -- and put it all in this bag  
 and walk out. Gonna be like my  
 last divorce settlement. Cool?

He hands out sacks to his flunkies, who walk around  
 collecting drugs, baggies, etc. H.L. sits there, eyes wide.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 (to himself)  
 This is isn't happening.

SMOOTHIE PENA  
 I can't believe you do me like  
 this! *Pinche pendejo cabron*--

FELIX  
*Sabado, Domingo, solamente en  
 Telemundo*, that's all the Spanish I  
 know. Where's your safe, Smoothie?



H.L. SHAPIRO  
The coke was spiked with acid. I'm  
hallucinating this, it's not real-

FELIX  
(WHACKS H.L. with the gun)  
Shut up!

H.L. SHAPIRO  
(clutches his head)  
Okay that's real-

Felix BOOTS him onto his side, yanks his Superman decal  
wallet out of his pants, as Smoothie continues ranting:

SMOOTHIE PENA  
...chinga tu madre, joto! Comin'  
up in my house with a gun and shit--

FELIX  
(sing-songy)  
I'm running out of patience...

SMOOTHIE PENA  
Fuck you, fuck your patience, and  
fuck Clarence's faggoty-ass red  
shoes. You know what The Flash  
used to say about you? Y'all is  
the dumbest hog mufuckas ever to  
get their hands dirty.

Felix pauses, as if deciding something. Then...

FELIX  
The Flash also jumped out a ten  
story window. Which doesn't  
exactly make him a genius. And on  
that scale of things, wanna know  
where that leaves you, Smoothie?

SMOOTHIE PENA  
(rolls his eyes)  
Where-

BLAM! Smoothie's head explodes. Brains fly everywhere.  
Even Felix's goons are startled.

CLARENCE  
What the fu-

Just as one of smoothie's homies FIRES A GUN from under a  
pizza-box, and the room breaks into a full-blown BULLET  
PARTY. H.L. lunges for the door as...

EXPLODING PLASTER stops him, he runs back the other way, and CLICK! Felix aims a gun right at H.L. and...

H.L. SHAPIRO

Oh. Fuck.

There's only one way to go: THE WINDOW. A big, fat, plate glass sucker. H.L. steels himself, turns toward it, jaw set as we RAMP DOWN to super-slow-motion as he DIVES and...

CRAAAAAAASSHHHHH!

H.L. BUSTS OUT through the glass, just like The Flash in his prime, and we FREEZE FRAME on him, scream echoing...

H.L. SHAPIRO

OOOOHHHHHHHHHH SHHHHHHHIIIIII-

...WHACK! H.L. UNFREEZES and slams into a three-story CACTUS. He bounces off, hits the ground with a WHOMPH.

H.L. SHAPIRO

(wind knocked out)

...oowwww... oowww... *somuchpain...*

He struggles to his feet, gunfire strobing above as he dives--  
INTO HIS BMW

...and SQUEALS away down the street. Catches his reflection in the mirror, sees there's still a PIECE OF CACTUS stuck to his face. Unthinking, he yanks it out with a THUNK.

H.L. SHAPIRO

AAAAAAAAAAIIIIIIIEEEEEEEEE!!!

He hurls it out the window. Tears in his eyes, he catches his breath, rubs his cheeks, lights a smoke. Calms. Then--

H.L. SHAPIRO

*Shit!*

He SLAMS ON THE BRAKES... because, as we see, the seat next to him is empty. We CUT TO:

BACK IN SMOOTHIE'S APARTMENT

...and there's H.L.'S LAPTOP CASE, surrounded by the dead bodies of Smoothie and his gang. Felix shoves the computer case into a bag, already filled with drugs and cash.

FELIX  
 (motions to his crew)  
 Let's go. PD 'probly on their way.

They clear out of the room with their loot as we CUT TO:

BACK IN H.L.'S CAR

...down the street, H.L. watches the bad guys hurry out of Smoothie's apartment and into their Chevy Impala. A moment.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 No...  
 (beat)  
 No, no, *goddammit, motherfucking...*

H.L. lets out a SQUAWK OF RAGE, pounds the steering wheel. Then throws the car into gear and follows them as we CUT TO:

INT. FRANKLIN GANTT'S ESTATE, OUTDOOR GARDEN - NIGHT

POP! A cork bursts out of a champagne bottle. A waiter freshens Gantt's drink as he talks to Lucy and David.

GANTT  
 So lemme' make sure I got this memo right: you got a new trick... and you wanna store it in my vault.

DAVID EASTWICK  
 I know it sounds crazy, but here's something to mull over: "The Bellini Hotel has a magic trick so secret they have to keep it under lock and key." Then you get your guards wheeling the thing through the casino, all covered up, everybody wondering what the hell we've got up our sleeve...  
 (beat)  
 Think the Venetian's got that?

Gantt ponders a moment. Impressed.

LUCY  
 (grins)  
 Told you he was good.

GANTT  
 Okay, we'll give it a shot. I'll clear it with my security guys.

Gantt turns, dismissing him, walks away. Lucy slips her arm through David's and gives him a squeeze.

LUCY  
He likes you. I can tell.

DAVID EASTWICK  
Yeah? How?

LUCY  
He hasn't threatened to kill you yet.

David hides his dismay behind a glass. Then notices... SUNIL is outside the party. Waving from behind a hedge.

LUCY  
...ooh, almost forgot, there's this new Afghani place we should get lunch at tomorrow, I heard they got curries that'll melt your face off.

DAVID EASTWICK  
Uh... sure. Excuse me a sec?...

He slips away, pretending to take a cell call, as we CUT TO:

EXT. FRANKLIN GANTT'S ESTATE -- MOMENTS LATER

David sneaks outside the mansion, down into the shadows of its back entrance, where Bhujbal, Subash and Sunil wait, while Mitch fiddles with a wall-bank of electrical wiring.

DAVID EASTWICK  
(to Mitch)  
We good?

MITCH  
Us: one. Motion detector: zero. OW!

ZZZT! A wire shocks him, he yanks his hand away.

BHUJBAL  
Did he take to your idea?

DAVID EASTWICK  
He likes it more than he likes me.  
Which isn't saying much.

BHUJBAL  
And the safe?

DAVID EASTWICK  
Haven't looked yet.

BHUJBAL  
Then I suppose you should do so.  
(motions to Sunil)  
Go with him, keep him on task.

DAVID EASTWICK  
Bhuj, this is not a tech-support  
hotline. I don't need a supervisor.  
Besides, who the fuck's ever heard  
of a middle-managing mobster?

MITCH  
Who's ever heard of a Hindi  
mobster?

DAVID EASTWICK	BHUJBAL
Shut up!	Shut up!

Bhujbal moves in close on David, all business now.

BHUJBAL  
Find the safe, get the plans. I  
will not ask again.

David shakes his head, hating this. But still he heads in,  
followed by Sunil as...

INT. FRANKLIN GANTT'S ESTATE - MOMENTS LATER

..forcing casualness, David heads through. Sees Gantt  
talking to Lucy at the bar; she waves, he waves back. Then--

UP THE STAIRS

--he "casually" bumps into a passing woman.

DAVID EASTWICK  
Pardon me.

He steps past, pocketing a COMPACT from her purse. David and  
Sunil round the corner, quickly looking into rooms.

SUNIL  
Locked.

David eyes the door's old fashioned key-hole. He snags a pen  
from Sunil's jacket, unscrews it, slips the ink-shaft into  
the lock. A beat, then the door CLICKS open and they enter--

## FRANKLIN GANTT'S OFFICE

...an expensively accoutremented room. David scans the place, checking under the desk, looking behind paintings.

DAVID EASTWICK  
...safe, safe, safe...

He suddenly stops. Stares, resigned, at a painting of Gantt and Lucy. She's 11 years old here, cute as can be.

DAVID EASTWICK  
(as he moves painting)  
Sorry, sweetheart.

Sets down the painting to reveal A SAFE as we CUT TO:

## THE HALLWAY

As Lucy comes up the stairs, looking around - *where the heck did David go?* She walks down the hall as...

## INSIDE GANTT'S OFFICE

David opens the compact, brushes some powder on the keys.

SUNIL  
What are you doing?

DAVID EASTWICK  
From the pattern and smudges on the keypad, I should be able to figure out which keys have been pressed, and in what order. The first key is typically the least smudged and-

He stops mid-sentence --the only key with a fingerprint is 9.

DAVID EASTWICK  
What idiot makes his code 9999?

He enters the code, the safe lets out a HISS as the door SLIDES open on hydraulic hinges. Revealing, next to stacks of money, a LARGE SHIPPING TUBE. Bingo. David grabs it.

SUNIL  
(reaches for cash)  
What have we here?

DAVID EASTWICK  
(swats his hand away)  
You're about to get millions, the hell you need a few thousand for?

SUNIL  
I have a large Video Hut fee.

He reaches again and CLICK! The office door starts to open.

LUCY (O.S.)  
Hey, David?

Their expressions: *shit!!* David hits the SAFE CLOSE button and SHUNK! The door SLIDES SHUT on Sunil's hand. He pulls it back to discover he's MISSING HIS LAST TWO FINGERS.

SUNIL  
WWWWWWW-  
(David covers his mouth)  
-wwwwwwwwwwhhhhghghghhhghghhhhh!!

David slings the painting back over the safe and shoves Sunil behind the couch, hand over his mouth, just as...

LUCY  
(entering)  
Whatcha' doing?

DAVID EASTWICK  
I was just looking for... the bathroom and I somehow wound up in your dad's inner lair.

LUCY  
Got a private one in the corner.  
But I'm glad I found you here...  
(closes door)  
It's... comfier.

Behind the couch, David lets go of Sunil, who stares in horror at his mangled hand. David tries to lead Lucy out, but she SHOVES him back down, straddling him.

LUCY  
You know, I've never actually made it with anyone in my dad's house...

DAVID EASTWICK  
...and if I have anything to say about it, you never will.

LUCY  
(kisses down his body)  
Oh come on, don't be a spoilsport-

Behind her, Sunil crawls out and picks up one of his fingers off the floor. David waves a hand - *get back, hide!*

DAVID EASTWICK  
 Uh, listen, I'm not trying to  
 dissuade you here but-  
 (as her head disappears)  
 Whoah- HEY- wow, I mean-

Lucy pops back up, just as Sunil (still looking for his other  
 finger) steps behind a plant.

LUCY  
 If you want me to stop, I can, but-

DAVID EASTWICK  
 No. No, no, no. I'm just nervous  
 about your dad's office.  
 (gets an idea)  
 How about your old room?

LUCY  
 (a mischievous grin)  
 Now that's an idea...

She slides a spaghetti-strap back on and pulls David up, but  
 he stalls, motioning to the bathroom door.

DAVID EASTWICK  
 But I really have to use this  
 first. Join you in a second?

LUCY  
 Alright, Mr. Magician. Be quick, I  
 want to see what you can do with  
 those magic fingers of yours.

She wiggles her fingers playfully. David has just thrown up  
 in his mouth a little bit. She shuts the door and Sunil  
LURCHES out from behind it, a torrent of Hindi profanity:

SUNIL (IN HINDI, SUBTITLED)  
*Holy Shiva have mercy, my fucking  
 fingers! Oh God! OH GOD!*

DAVID EASTWICK  
 I am so sorry-

SUNIL (IN HINDI, SUBTITLED)  
*Great Ghandi's Man-Titties! What  
 has happened to my goddamn hand?!*

DAVID EASTWICK  
 Listen, I feel really bad about  
 this, but we gotta move out, champ-



SUNIL  
 (switches to English)  
Get my finger!

DAVID EASTWICK  
 What!?!

SUNIL  
 My other finger! It is still in  
 the safe! Will that not make it  
 easy to fingerprint me, imbecile?!

David nods - *good call*. Punches the code, snatches the  
 finger, wipes the blood, shuts the door as we CUT TO:

INT. FRANKLIN GANTT'S ESTATE, STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER

David and a ghost-faced Sunil hurry down the hall. They  
 FLATTEN themselves into an alcove as Gantt leads guests past.

FRANKLIN GANTT  
 ...and up here is where I humiliate  
 my friends at pool.  
 (stops, eyes ground)  
 Okay, who spilled Merlot on my  
 carpet?

Walks on, pissed, as David and Sunil dart out and we CUT TO:

EXT. FRANKLIN GANTT'S ESTATE, SIDE OF HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

They hurry outside, Sunil moaning and clutching his hand,  
 David with the plans. Bhujbal stares, confused.

DAVID EASTWICK  
 There was a total, like, serious  
 mix-up up there, but the good news  
 is we've got the plans. Hold this?  
 (hands finger to Bhujbal)  
 ...long story. Look, I gotta, um,  
 take care of something. Excuse me.

He goes in, leaving them staring at the finger. Then...

MITCH  
 (BORAT accent)  
 High five!

Sunil extends his (still intact) middle finger as we CUT TO:

EXT. FELIX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

"GIVE BAD RECEPTION THE FINGER" reads a billboard, featuring a smirking guy with a cell phone. Below, Felix's Impala pulls up to a crappy apartment building and the bad guys pile out... not noticing the BMW idling down the street.

IN THE BMW

H.L. sits in the darkness, sweating.

H.L. SHAPIRO

Okay... this is not the stupidest thing you've ever done. You've done way stupider stuff.

(beat)

...you just can't remember it.

He takes a hit off a bottle of Wild Turkey from under his seat. Exhales, rolls his neck, then climbs out as we CUT TO.

INT. CRAPPY APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Inside, the boys settle in, shedding their ski masks. We've got TED, with corn-rows; GROSSMAN, who's on the all-steroid diet; CLARENCE, a shaved-head black guy; and FELIX, basically Christian Slater channeling Jon Gotti. As they empty bags...

FELIX

...you believe he kept it in a fucking cereal box?

GROSSMAN

Shit wasn't even name-brand either. Who hides his money in a box of Fruity-O's?

FELIX

(shrugs)

Nobody now.

If they were to look carefully, they'd notice a guy with a face full of cactus-holes peeking in the window as we CUT TO:

OUTSIDE THE APARTMENT

...where H.L. watches them crack open beers, everyone getting comfy. Felix pulls off his sweatshirt, revealing a BULLET PROOF VEST underneath, with VEGAS PD stenciled on it. The breath catches in the back of H.L.'s throat as he realizes...

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 (whispers)  
 ...ohmygod...

...these guys are dirty cops. H.L.'s shock is short lived as he sees them pull out his expensive, silver LAPTOP.

FELIX  
 Well, well, check this out. Looks like our runner was a high roller.

He opens the computer, a Final Draft document glows to life.

CLARENCE  
 What is that, some sorta' movie?

FELIX  
 (reading)  
 "GUNZ AND TITTIE\$" by H.L. Shapiro.  
 This oughtta' be a masterpiece...

They skim the first page, and one by one, start CRACKING UP.

TED  
 ...dude must've been *high as shit* when he wrote this! IMDB his ass.

Grossman types his name into IMDB. H.L. waits, listening..

FELIX  
 Oh, *this* douchebag. I saw him on "Dateline" once. Did a couple good movies back in the 90's, but he got into coke and ended up getting busted by security at LAX. They found a couple eight-balls in his bag, plus, like... the biggest dildo you've ever seen. I'm talking, like, *huge and black--*

They cackle as H.L. squirms in horror. Then... his face hardens, and as that military DRUM ROLL plays, he heads for--

HIS CAR

...where he snatches his bottle of Wild Turkey, stuffs a rag into it. His Zippo flame shimmers in his eyes as we CUT TO:

INSIDE FELIX'S APARTMENT

Where the guys giggle over "NOTABLE LINES BY H.L. SHAPIRO."

FELIX

(reads, tough-guy voice)

"You wanna shoot me, go ahead. I'm already dead inside. I took an .82-caliber lie straight to the heart."

(over their laughter)

What is this shit?! .82-caliber *doesn't even exist!* This guy must be worst writer alive!

They erupt in laughter, as DING DONG! The doorbell rings.

CLARENCE

I'll get it.

Clarence opens the door to see the Chevy Impala engulfed in Molotov cocktail flames, blazing merrily in the night.

CLARENCE

Shit! Fuckin' undercover car's on fire! Get an extinguisher! Shit!

He runs over to a garden hose, turns it on, races towards the car. The hose pulls up short, YANKS him off his feet as...

BACK IN THE APARTMENT

...bad guys tear out of the room. As soon as they're gone, a rock EXPLODES through the back window. H.L. climbs in as...

FELIX (O.S.)

(sprays fire extinguisher)

Fuckin' precinct is gonna have my ass. Goddammit!

H.L. picks up the computer, goes to leave, then pauses because... well, there are lot of drugs lying around. A beat. Then he RUSHES BACK, stuffing shit into his pockets.

GROSSMAN (O.S.)

What the-

H.L. WHIRLS to see a very surprised Grossman in the doorway, bucket in hand. He drops it, goes for his sidearm--

H.L. SHAPIRO

Shit--

--as H.L. grabs a SNUB NOSE off the table, it's a race for the first shot, as... BLAM! Grossman's ear DISINTEGRATES in a dark spray. He falls back, clutching his head.

GROSSMAN  
 Oh shit! Oh shit! Motherfucker  
 shot my ear off! Fuck!

Felix and the others race back in, guns blazing. H.L. fires blindly, trips out the broken window, his computer flies out and SMASHES to the ground in a brilliant FLASH of sparks.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 Waaaaaaaaaugh!

He snatches the smoking laptop back up, as behind him, Clarence runs for the window. H.L. turns to fire. Click-click. Empty. On instinct, he THROWS the gun and -- WHACK!

CLARENCE  
 (clutches his face)  
 Ahh! My nose! My fuckin' nose!

H.L., wide-eyed, bolts away, gunfire ZINGS around him. Dives into his car and FISHTAILS off into the night, as we CUT TO:

EXT. BELLINI CASINO, VALET - NIGHT

H.L. pulls up to the valet stand. He's filthy, face covered in cactus sores, car riddled with bullet holes. He climbs out just in time to see SECURITY GUARDS drag past an OLD WOMAN -- she's half-naked, hair wild, fighting them tooth and nail.

OLD WOMAN  
 You'll never take me alive, fuckers!

A shaggy VALET KID comes up beside H.L., shaking his head.

VALET KID  
 ...yeah, apparently the bingo  
 parlor salad-bar got dosed with  
 some kinda hallucinogenic. Been  
 hell on earth ever since.  
 (off his silence)  
 What kinda sick asshole would do  
 that, huh?...

H.L. stuffs his keys into the kid's hand, and as grandma brawls with the guards, he heads inside as we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, H.L.'S ROOM - SAME

CLICK -- H.L. quietly enters his suite. THUMP -- gently sets down his destroyed computer. Sits down on the bed. All is still... until his cell RINGS, Ken Freidburg's name pops up.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 (after a beat)  
 Sorry, Ken.

He silences it. Then turns off the lights, curls into the fetal position... and begins to cry. We CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. DESERT - MORNING

The sun rises over the endless desert. Nature buzzes. And on the empty road, Tommy Watt lays unconscious. A shadow passes over him and a CANTEEN is tenderly put to his lips...

TOMMY  
 (jerks up SPUTTERING)  
 Wha-- oh shit! It's you...

Widen to reveal it's Atahalne, the Native American gun-smuggler, kneeling by Tommy in the morning light.

TOMMY  
 (spits)  
 ...what the hell you just give me?

ATAHALNE  
 ("duh")  
 Thunderbird.

TOMMY  
 That wine that homeless guys drink?  
*I'm dyin' of thirst here--*  
 (startled)  
 Where's Foreigner?!? Where's my--

He whirls around, Foreigner is nowhere in sight.

ATAHALNE  
 She's already in the truck.

TOMMY  
 Is she okay?

ATAHALNE  
 Yes. It seems she had something to drink, didn't walk through the hot sun in leather pants, and didn't eat a can of salty, dehydrating Pringles. So yes, despite spending time in your company, she's fine.

He turns and walks back towards his pick-up. Tommy follows.

TOMMY

...I never got your name, man.

ATAHALNE

Atahalne. It means "The interrupter" in my language.

TOMMY

Why do they call you-

ATAHALNE

I don't know.

TOMMY

That's weird, dude-

ATAHALNE

Yes, very.

TOMMY

Were your parents like-

ATAHALNE

It is unknowable, like the wind.

They get into the old truck and slam the doors as we CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT JUNK YARD - DAY

Atahalne's pickup SKIDS up to a lonely double-wide out in the middle of nowhere. As they get out, Foreigner eyes the busted cars, oil spillage, broken bottles of Thunderbird.

FOREIGNER

Um... aren't Indians supposed to be touch with nature and stuff?

ATAHALNE

Nature? Let me tell you something about nature, white girl. When I was six years old, I watched my grandfather go into the hills and get eaten by a goddamn mountain lion. I live in the middle of the desert surrounded by rattlesnakes and scorpions and 110 degree temperatures. Fuck nature. What has nature done for me lately?

(off their stunned look)

What are you going to do, cry a single tear?

TOMMY

Uh... can you please not talk like that in front of my daughter?

Atahalne gives him the stone-face. Foreigner, realizing that her dad might not want to push this, pulls on his pant leg.

TOMMY

("getting it")

Right. Fuck nature. Got a phone?

Atahalne motions for Tommy to follow him inside...

THE DOUBLE-WIDE TRAILER

...and into the living room, which is filled with cigarette butts, a bong, and stacks of empty TV dinners.

ATAHALNE

I've just got to check on something. Phone's in the corner.

Atahalne slips into the back room, closing the door behind him. Foreigner wrinkles her nose.

FOREIGNER

It smells in here.

TOMMY

I know, honey. But we'll be out of here in just a few minutes. Go get yourself a drink of water, okay?

She goes into the kitchen. Tommy picks up the phone. It's dead. Clicks the line a few times. Nothing. Sighs.

TOMMY

I'll be right back, honey.  
(calling out)  
Ata... Ata... um, Interrupter?

He opens the bedroom door and stops dead as he sees...

A FULLY FUNCTIONING METH LAB

Cauldrons of bubbling piss-yellow liquid everywhere. Tommy's face: *holy fucking shit*. Now he knows why it smells bad.

TOMMY

Uh, sorry, your phone's out of...  
(stage whispers)  
Foreigner! Go outside! Now!



Atahalne lights a smoke, checking his science experiments.

TOMMY

Whoah! Hey! You sure it's a good idea to smoke in here? Isn't this stuff flammable?

ATAHALNE

Yeah, sure. But it's like washing your hands in the bathroom. Don't piss on 'em, and you don't have to.

TOMMY

Well, that ain't strictly accurate--  
(stops himself)  
Nevermind, I'm sure you're right. Look, we're just gonna walk back to the freeway. I'm sure someone will be along any time now-

He backs away, noticing that Foreigner is still in the kitchen, looking out the window.

TOMMY

Foreigner! I said go outside!

FOREIGNER

I'm watching the men play paintball.

TOMMY

What?

He comes to the window... and stops, gob-smacked, when he sees MEN WITH RIFLES AND BLACK BODY-ARMOR sneaking from car to car, surrounding the house.

TOMMY

(turns, whispers)  
Uh... Ata- Atal- *dude, the opscay are erehay!* Do you hear me? *The fucking cops are--*  
(stops himself)  
I mean "freakin'"! Freakin' cops. Okay? We're leaving-

SWAT COMMANDER (O.S.)

ATAHALNE WHITEHORSE! THIS IS THE POLICE! COME OUT WITH YER HANDS UP!

Atahalne pulls away the blinds to see the incoming team of SWAT GUYS, their van blocking in his pick-up truck.

ATAHALNE  
Great spirit protect us...

He RIPS open a closet filled with guns and ammo. Pulls out a fully automatic rifle as Tommy's face goes pale. He snatches up Foreigner, backs toward the door.

ATAHALNE  
(very reasonable)  
Don't worry. I will handle this.  
(then--)  
FUCK YOU PIGS! DIE! DIE! DIE!

BREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAPPPP!!! He unloads out the window as Tommy pulls Foreigner to the floor, covering her, as highly trained SWAT agents RETURN FIRE.

TOMMY  
Jesus, man, holy god!! The hell's wrong with you?! You need to, like, smoke a fuckin' peace pipe, dude!

FOREIGNER  
Daaaaaddeeeeeeeee!

TOMMY  
It's okay, baby! It's okay!

It's not okay. Atahalne pulls a Patton, walking from window to window, shooting back, oblivious to the incoming fire.

ATAHALNE  
Far better to go out in a blaze of-  
(freezes)  
Uh-oh.

Tommy looks up and sees what the "uh oh" is: in the next room, the meth lab has caught on FIRE.

TOMMY  
...oh god...

He picks up Foreigner, bullets blasting around them, and races for the door, KICKS it open, the girl in one arm, his other hand raised as he sprints away from the house.

TOMMY  
Don't shoot! I'm unarmed!

Out steps Atahalne, rifle roaring like a chainsaw, as Tommy SKIDS for cover behind the truck, shielding Foreigner, as...

KAAAA-BOOOOM! The trailer explodes. Atahalne's body is THROWN LIKE A RAGDOLL, right past Tommy and Foreigner as...

INT. SWAT TEAM VAN, 50 FEET AWAY - SAME

...the same SWAT commander from before sits in the van (with its "Flash"-shaped dented roof.)

SWAT COMMANDER  
Repeat that, the suspect is where-?

WHAM! Something hits the van, leaving an Atahalne-shaped dent embedded in the side panel.

SWAT COMMANDER  
Goddammit, not again...

And as he gets up, we CUT TO:

EXT. SWAT TEAM VAN - LATER

The remains of the trailer smolder. A medic treats Tommy's skinned knee while a SWAT TEAM GUY interrogates him.

SWAT TEAM GUY  
So your car broke down, and he was just giving you a ride?  
(off his nod, skeptical)  
Let's see some I.D.  
(checks license)  
Holy shit... you're Tommy Watts?

Tommy brightens - maybe this will help him out?

TOMMY  
Yeah, that's me all right--

SWAT TEAM GUY  
Hey guys! You gotta see this, it's like one of those "where are they now" things you see on TV! This fat-ass right here is Tommy Watts from *Restraining Order*!

The guys crowd around, excited: "Holy shit!/Hot damn!/It's like he ate Vince Neil!", etc. Tommy slumps as we CUT TO:

EXT. SIDE OF DESERT ROAD - DAY

Jumper cables SPARK as the SWAT Team tries to jump-start Tommy's fucked-up car. Tommy tries the ignition, no dice.

SWAT COMMANDER  
 ...well, it sure ain't the battery.  
 (peers into backseat)  
 Say, what're all the squirt-guns  
 for?

Tommy glances back, where sure enough, a couple of PINK and BLUE REVOLVERS have spilled onto the floor. Freezing up, Tommy tries to think of an answer. Nothing comes. Then--

FOREIGNER  
 They're for my birthday party  
 tomorrow.  
 (smiles)  
 I'm gonna be a cowgirl.

The commander is charmed. Buys it hook, line, and sinker.

SWAT COMMANDER  
 Look, Tommy, ain't no way you're  
 gonna get this thing back on the  
 road today. I know a good garage  
 back in town, they'll setcha' up.  
 (calls to one of his guys)  
 Lenny! Get the chain, we gotta get  
 this little cowgirl to her party!

And we immediately CUT TO:

TOMMY'S CAR

Rolling along smoothly... towed behind the SWAT van. Up in the cabin, Foreigner leads the SWAT guys in a sing-along of her favorite ditty: Restraining Order's LAYIN' DOWN YO LADY.

SWAT GUYS/FOREIGNER  
*She ain't gonna tell me maybe!  
 Gonna get freaky with yo' baby!  
 Yeah, I be layin' down yo' lady!*

In the midst of all this, Tommy sits there, shaken. Looks at Foreigner, tears in his eyes. Mouths the words "Thank You" to her. She smiles. And as the SWAT van rolls on, towing a shipment of illegal weapons toward Vegas, we hear:

DAVID EASTWICK (PRE-LAP)  
 So... we've got a problem.

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT -- DAY

The whole gang is here in David's living room. David, Mitch, Bob, Zoe, Bhujbal, Subash, and Sunil (with his fingers hastily sewn back on), hovering over a set of blueprints.

DAVID EASTWICK

As you see here, Gantt's security system is a gimme. It's so old and outdated, it could practically be playing a show at his casino.

(off their look)

Problem is, Gantt knows it. Which is why he's drawn up this...

David SMACKS DOWN a second set of blueprints. A long beat as everyone looks them over. Then--

BOB

Is this what I think it is?

DAVID EASTWICK

What do you think it is?

BOB

Plans for a new fucking vault.

DAVID EASTWICK

Then, yes, it's exactly what you think it is. It's getting installed on Monday. Which gives us...

MITCH

(counts on fingers)

...two days?

David nods. Everyone starts talking at once, freaking out.

BOB

(cuts in over them)

Look, guys, forget it! Deal's off!

BHUJBAL

Cow-shit. If two days is all we have, then we will have to make do.

BOB

(to David)

We haven't even practiced the trick yet, you could fuckin' die in there--

DAVID EASTWICK

Then we'll just have to be careful.

(to everyone)

Now, regardless of the security system, our real problem is Gantt himself. He realizes he's been robbed, he'll walk the face of the earth itself to exact his revenge. The man's old testament.

(digs into his wallet)

...which is why I need about two million dollars worth of these.

David slides a \$100 bill across to Bhujbal.

BHUJBAL

...counterfeit?

(off his nod)

If I could counterfeit two million dollars, I would not need you to rob the casino.

DAVID EASTWICK

You don't get it. We want to rob the casino without them KNOWING they've been robbed. At least for a while. They won't know where to look or who to focus on. As far as they know, the money will have just-  
(snaps his fingers)

-disappeared.

A look between them -- *this could work...* just as there's a KNOCK at the door. Everyone freezes, glancing at each other.

DAVID EASTWICK

Who is it?

LUCY (O.S.)

Your hot date.

David's face -- *shit!* Motions to the stacks of plans, blueprints, piles of incriminating evidence, whispers:

DAVID EASTWICK

*Hide. Everything.*

(louder)

Just a sec, sweetie!

And the gang springs into action, scooping up papers, straining for silence as they shuffle into David's room, as--

DAVID EASTWICK  
 (opens up for her)  
 Hey there.

Lucy looks at him. He's trying so hard to play innocent.

DAVID EASTWICK  
 ...what are you doing here?

LUCY  
 Lunch? Today?  
 (off his blank stare)  
 Afghani place, curries that'll melt  
 your face off? Remember?

DAVID EASTWICK  
 Right...

LUCY  
 (a little suspicious)  
 Unless I'm interrupting something.

MITCH (O.S.)  
 Don't be silly.

Mitch exits the bedroom carrying a bunch of magic-show props.

MITCH  
 I was just helping David prep for  
 the show tonight.  
 (extends a hand)  
 Mitch. Resident black sheep.

She shakes it, he winces. David glares -- *WTF are you doing?*

MITCH  
 You guys go ahead, I'm just gonna  
 raid the fridge and order up porn,  
 hope you don't mind.

Mitch grabs milk from the fridge, drops it. Tries to pick it up, drops it again. David steers a (bemused) Lucy out, mouthing over his shoulder-- "*Get it done.*" As we CUT TO:

INT. AFGHANI RESTAURANT - DAY

David sits at the table, a mess, sweating, sick to his stomach, mind on tonight. Lucy sits across from him, talking.

LUCY

...so this guy's about to slit his wrists in a bathtub, and I'm the phone with him, and all of a sudden I hear barking in the background. I ask him, "Is that your dog?" He says "Yeah. That's Hungry." So I ask him: "If you do this... who's gonna feed Hungry?" And that was all it took. He got out of the tub. Forces of darkness held back for another day.

DAVID EASTWICK

(distracted, after a beat)

...all because some guy had to feed Hungry.

LUCY

Yeah well, there's something to be said for taking care of a creature that can't care for itself.

(grins)

Your brother, for example.

DAVID EASTWICK

Mitch is not a dog. Dog's don't get into debt. And they pee in public less.

LUCY

(laughing)

...so why do you do it, then?

DAVID EASTWICK

You mean why do I take care of him?

(off her nod)

I owe him.

This gets her attention. She searches his face a moment.

DAVID EASTWICK

Our old neighborhood wasn't the safest place in the world. Neither was the house we grew up in. Mitch was always tougher than me, he took a lot of the beatings so I didn't have to. It changed him. So I guess it's only fair I take one for him every once in a while.

She stares at him, flabbergasted.



LUCY

Thank you.

DAVID EASTWICK

For what?

LUCY

For not turning out to be a frog.

(off his discomfort)

I'm serious, you somehow live ten years in Vegas without turning into a slimeball, you take care of the people you love no matter what, and you may be the first guy ever who didn't want something from me or my father. So... thank you.

(kisses him)

To be honest, I was starting to lose hope.

David hides behind his drink, face full of self-loathing. Knows he has to make a choice. From somewhere, we hear...

BHUJBAL (PRE-LAP)

So you want out?

INT. INDIA IMPORTS AND DELICACIES - EVENING

David, looking tired and worn and determined, sits across from Bhujbal in the back office of India Imports.

DAVID EASTWICK

That's what I said.

Bhujbal eyes him skeptically, like he's trying to understand this strange specimen in front of him: the honest man.

BHUJBAL

And what you suggest for your debt... a payment plan?

DAVID EASTWICK

I'll take a freakin' coupon book if I have to, but I can't do this job.

BHUJBAL

Care to enlighten me about *why* you've had this change of heart?

DAVID EASTWICK

(shakes his head)

I can't.

(MORE)

DAVID EASTWICK (CONT'D)  
 But you know my word is good, and  
 if I say I'm gonna pay you back,  
 then that's exactly what I'll do.  
 I'll even pay interest.

BHUJBAL  
 I'm afraid it's too late to back  
 out now. In order to get the  
 counterfeit on such short notice,  
 I've had to take on a partner.

DAVID EASTWICK  
 Then you'll just have to tell him  
 the deal's off. I'm not doing it.

There's a deadlock for a long beat. Then... Bhuj relents.

BHUJBAL  
 ...maybe between this, and the new  
 vault, and Sunil losing his  
 fingers... perhaps the Gods are not  
 smiling upon us after all, eh?

DAVID EASTWICK  
 (laughs, relieved)  
 You can say that again.

WHAM! A frying pan connects with David's skull, smashes him  
 out of his seat as we CUT TO:

ROPES

...tying David body onto a table. All sorts of torture  
 devices laid out nearby: knives, sledgehammers, bolt cutters.  
 David's eyes open to see Bhujbal pacing in front of him.

BHUJBAL  
 Tell me, David, you have heard the  
 expression "What happens in Vegas  
 stays in Vegas?"

DAVID EASTWICK  
 Does this mean we're not  
 negotiating anymore?

BHUJBAL  
 (sighs, picks up a saw)  
 I'm very disappointed in you. I  
 expect this kind of behavior in  
 your brother, but-

DAVID EASTWICK (O.S.)  
 Look, can we stop? This is idiotic.

Bhuj stops cold -- David is sitting free from his ropes.

DAVID EASTWICK  
I mean, seriously, who the hell  
tries to *tie up an escape artist?*

Bhujbal glances over to Subash and Sunil as we CUT TO:

HANDCUFFS

...clicking into place, David now double-locked to the table.

BHUJBAL  
Where was I?

DAVID EASTWICK  
"What happens in Vegas."

BHUJBAL  
Oh yes.  
(resumes pacing)  
If this thing does not happen, you  
will stay in Vegas. And by that I  
mean, *several feet underneath--*

He stops as he turns again, because David is sitting on the  
table, both handcuffs dangling from his fingers.

DAVID EASTWICK  
Can we just skip to the punchline?

Another look between Bhujbal and his goons. Then we CUT TO:

PLASTIC WRAP

...as David, even more beat-up now, is SARAN WRAPPED to the  
table like a mummy. He's pretty freakin' immobile.

DAVID EASTWICK  
Guys, c'mon, this is ridiculous.

SHINK! Bhujbal grabs a pair of PRUNING SHEARS, tosses them  
to Sunil (who catches them with his good hand.)

BHUJBAL  
Start with his pinky.

Sunil moves in with the shears.

DAVID EASTWICK  
Great idea. Ever heard of a *thief*  
with no *fingers?*  
(MORE)

DAVID EASTWICK (CONT'D)  
I thought you guys were supposed to  
be big on math and logic.

Bhujbal nods -- *good point*. Then yanks off David's shoes,  
motions Sunil toward his exposed TOES.

BHUJBAL  
Say "yes", David. Before we are  
forced to cut off your toes and  
dump them into the shark tank at  
Mandalay Bay.

DAVID EASTWICK  
Bhuj, I don't care if I end up in a  
curry dish at that shitty  
restaurant of yours, I'm still not  
gonna do it. And if you kill me,  
you won't make a fuckin' cent.

Bhujbal pauses. Looks at Sunil, who's got David's BIG TOE  
nestled between the shears... and motions him off. David  
slowly lets out a breath. As Bhuj turns away...

BHUJBAL  
I like your girlfriend.

The room quiets. Bhujbal turns back, approaching him slowly.

BHUJBAL  
You have a fascinating skill - to  
disappear in thin air. Maybe step  
into a box and vanish. Maybe your  
brother, too, can share this skill.  
One minute he is in Vegas, and the  
next, somewhere else. But this  
girl? What is her name -- Lucy?

DAVID EASTWICK  
You stay the hell away from her-

BHUJBAL  
Let me finish, David. We are both  
showmen, you and I, and I want you  
to get the full impact. There is no  
magic in making something vanish.  
The real magic is making something  
come back.

(off his look)  
I will make sure Lucy reappears. A  
leg will appear up in Lake Tahoe,  
an arm in Reno, a breast in Primm.  
(leans in, whispers)  
If you do not show me your magic, I  
will be forced to show you mine.

David stares, jaw clenched, straining against the plastic.

BHUJBAL

So I ask you now, Mr. Magician...  
are you ready to cooperate?

David stares at him, knowing he's got no choice, choking on his own bile, as we CUT TO BLACK:

BOB'S VOICE (PRE-LAP)

Brace yourselves, Las Vegas! The  
show is ABOUT TO BEGIN!

INT. BELLINI CASINO, STAGE, AUDIENCE - NIGHT

KA-BLAM! Pyrotechnics BURST, revealing David on stage at the Bellini. Showtime. In the crowd, Lucy sits with Franklin Gantt. She squeezes his hand, as flames FLARE and we CUT TO:

INT. SWAT VAN - SAME

Fireworks EXPLODE over the Excalibur Hotel, as the SWAT Van tows Tommy's car past. Tommy, up front, is on the phone:

TOMMY (INTO PHONE)

...Cheryl... Cheryl... Cheryl! My  
car's dead, I'm sorry, can you just  
pick her up at the Bellini?

(softer)

...I'll have your money for you.

Looks back at Foreigner entertaining the boys, as we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, H.L.'S ROOM - NIGHT

H.L. lies in bed, still in a foetal ball. Glances at his phone: "12 missed calls." Finally, he sits up as...

INT. FELIX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Grossman sits up into frame, snorts, eyes watery. We're back at Felix's, the boys on the couch, nursing their H.L.-inflicted wounds with lines of meth. Felix on the phone...

FELIX

(slams it down)

Jesus Christ, Mr. Pyro-Maniac Dildo-Smuggler has fallen off the fucking map. It's been 16 hours and no one at the station's heard dick.

CLARENCE

Well... that ain't good.

Clarence HOWLS as Felix GRABS his broken nose and SQUEEZES.

FELIX

(over his screams)

Nooo, see, that's the only good news we had all day, cause it means he hasn't turned us in to I-A. He knows we're cops, he knows what we look like, and I heard somewhere that *really awful things* happen to dirty cops when they go to prison. Am I getting through to that heroin sponge you call a brain?

And tosses Clarence's head back, letting go of his nose.

FELIX

(off their freaked looks)

Clean this fuckin' place up. It's making me sick just lookin' at it.

The crew gets to work. Felix heads into the bathroom, pops a couple Aspirin, squeezes his head. Not his finest hour.

TED (O.S.)

Hey, Felix...

FELIX

Ted, *Jesus H. Christ*--

Then sees what Ted is holding: H.L.'s Superman decal wallet. Takes out a BELLINI KEY-CARD, a room number on it. A smile curls across Felix's face as he says:

FELIX

Cha-ching...

INT. MONTE CARLO - MOVING - NIGHT

KA-CHUNK! A sawed-off gets cocked. Felix and his crew speed along the strip, loading guns, snorting meth, Felix's body starting to TWITCH and STUTTER as we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI, MAGIC STAGE - SAME

WHOOSH! David swings a sheet like a matador, YANKS IT AWAY, and WILLY THE TIGER appears out of nothing. More applause.

POP! A BOUQUET OF FLOWERS explodes from out of David's shirtsleeve. Tosses them to Lucy. She blushes, Gantt smirks.

SWISH! David steps into a wardrobe-sized box. Slides out a false back where MITCH is waiting for him... dressed and made up to look exactly like him. They could be twins.

DAVID EASTWICK  
Ready for this?

MITCH  
Like fuckin' Robocop.

David shoves him into the box and then slips backstage, as Mitch steps out, bathed in the crowd's applause as we CUT TO:

INT. DAVID'S CHANGING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

David bursts into his dressing room, where Bhujbal waits with his goons. Quickly pulls a casino-employee uniform on over his suit, and begins applying a makeup disguise.

DAVID EASTWICK  
(fighting panic)  
Please... tell me... we're set...

Bhujbal smirks, opens a duffel bag, it's filled with CASH.

BHUJBAL  
Hot off the press, so to speak.

David picks up a stack, his fingertips come up DARK GREEN.

DAVID EASTWICK  
It's still wet?

BHUJBAL  
What do you expect? They just printed it this morning.

David looks up to a stage monitor, where Mitch misses a cue.

DAVID EASTWICK  
(whispers to self)  
...oh God, don't fuck this up...

He grabs the bag and races out as we CUT TO:

EXT. BELLINI CASINO, PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Outside, Cheryl strides angrily up to the The Bellini's front entrance, eyes like flamethrowers.

CHERYL

Tommy?... Did I not say... *to do something normal this weekend?!*

We WHIP PAN over to Tommy and Foreigner -- sunburned, clothes singed, beat up, his smashed Chevy sitting behind them.

TOMMY

Cheryl, I swear to you, none of this is as bad as it looks--

Just as the SWAT VAN drives by, stereo blaring "ASS BLASTER."

SWAT GUY

Later, Tommy! Try not to crash your car next time!

Tommy winces, waves. Cheryl shakes her head, incredulous.

TOMMY

Just wait inside, okay? I'm gonna run upstairs, get your cash, and I'll be right back. Cool?

Cheryl nods - *just go*. Takes Foreigner under her arm as Tommy rushes inside. We hear a DING as...

INT. BELLINI CASINO, MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tommy steps in the elevator, riding with Felix and company, all high on meth and looking like they've gone at it with a pack of mountain lions. Tommy quickly decides the paneling is interesting to look at. The thugs get off, he stays as...

INT. BELLINI CASINO, MAIN ROOM - SAME

Down on the gambling floor, Cheryl leads Foreigner past the roulette wheel (which will soon be blown to bits) to the bar (where David first met Lucy.) Calls over...

CHERYL

You guys got chocolate milk?



Foreigner amuses herself, spinning on a swiveling stool as...

INT. BELLINI CASINO, ITFN'S ROOM - NIGHT

BANG BANG! Tommy POUNDS on the penthouse door. Releasing clouds of pot smoke, Cool G opens up, bowling ball in hand.

COOL G  
What'chu want?

Behind him, Crusha throws a baseball at N-Sane, who WHACKS IT past Cool-G's head (who doesn't notice.) The ball ricochets down the hall, leaving huge dents in the walls.

TOMMY  
I'm here to make a delivery.

COOL G  
Shit, just bring that shit up.

TOMMY  
I'm gonna need some help.

COOL G  
Listen, nigga', I'm bowlin' here-

He points at a bunch of FULL BOTTLES OF CRYSTAL they've set up as bowling pins. Tommy's trying so hard to keep his cool.

TOMMY  
Look, can you please, please, just--

WHACK! Another "home run" almost takes Tommy's head off. He looks into the room, blood reaching a boil as we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, H.L.'S ROOM - SAME

Back in his room, H.L. packs his bags. Stuffing shit in with one hand, holding the hotel phone to his ear with the other.

H.L. SHAPIRO  
(into phone)  
I called twenty minutes ago for a porter, no one's arrived yet. No-  
(a knock at the door)  
...nevermind, that's them.

He hears a CLICK as the door unlocks, it swings open...

H.L. SHAPIRO  
About fuckin' time--

WHAM! He gets PISTOL WHIPPED onto the bed, sending his suitcases bouncing off, looking up terrified at...

FELIX

Well aren't you just the hardest little button to button.

Ted and Clarence pin him in place, stuffing a gag into his mouth as Felix digs for something inside a medical kit.

H.L. SHAPIRO

(through gag)

Wha-- Wha're y'grrna do?

TAP TAP! Felix is prepping a SYRINGE.

FELIX

Me? I'm not gonna do anything. You, on the other hand, my friend, are about to hit rock bottom. See, some people rebound, and get their lives straight. Others?...  
(turns to him)  
...others burn out.

H.L. sees it: Grossman's cooking up a batch of HEROIN in a spoon, the dark liquid starting to bubble.

FELIX

You're about to become an "E True Hollywood Story", H.L. And the thing of it is, the people who are gonna believe this the most, are the people who know you the best.  
(flicking needle)  
Get his arm ready.

They pull back his sleeve, Ted ties him off with a belt. H.L. THRASHES, but it's three big cops on one scrawny writer.

FELIX

Hold STILL motherfucker--

THUNK! Felix stabs the syringe into his arm, goes to hit the plunger and send the death-shot home as -- CRACK! -- H.L. grabs the bedside lamp and SMASHES IT over Felix's skull.

FELIX

(falls back)

Fuck! Get that shit away from him!

Ted grabs the lamp, but H.L. rips its cord out, sending sparks flying, and shoves it into Ted's neck. ZZZZZT!

The lights in the room BLACK OUT. There's audible CHAOS in the darkness, then the lights flash back on and...

WE'RE IN THE HALLWAY

...where H.L. SPRINTS for his life. The needle is still in his arm. He yanks it free with a GASP, for a moment it's like he's about to pass out, but still he runs on as...

BACK IN H.L.'S ROOM

Grossman's on the floor, trying to revive Ted. Felix BOOTS him off, scalp bleeding down onto his face.

FELIX

Get the fuck up, he's gettin' away!

GROSSMAN

Chill out, the guy's gonna be dead from an OD in ten seconds--

FELIX

No, he's not! I didn't hit the plunger in the fucking needle!

A glance between the group; a silent "oh shit." Then--

FELIX

**GO!!**

And they're out the door, as we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, PENTHOUSE - SAME

Back in the penthouse, the baseball game has resumed, Cool G up to bat now. Tommy watches, at the tail-end of his rope.

TOMMY

Listen, fellas?... I'm trying to be respectful here. But I really... need... to conclude this transaction... Right Now.

COOL G

In a fuckin' minute, we busy! Just bring that shit up here yo'self.

He turns his back on Tommy to hit the ball... just as Tommy SNATCHES the baseball bat from him and GOES NUTS.

TOMMY

(smashes wide-screen TV)  
Fuck!

(MORE)

TOMMY (CONT'D)  
 (smashes Bose stereo)  
 This!  
 (smashes mirror)  
 Shit!  
 (random destruction)  
 RAAAAAAA! AAAGGHHHHH! **AARRRGGGG!!**

He throws the bat to the ground and spins. They're staring at him like this is the craziest shit they've ever seen.

TOMMY  
 I have responsibilities! I have a daughter! And alimony! And you guys are fucking this up!

COOL G  
 Hold up! We just havin' some fun--

TOMMY  
 Fun?! FUN?! Are you fucking retarded?! Lemme ask you something: the Crystal, the caviar, the guns-- where you think that comes from?

A glance between the thugs.

N-SANE  
 The label?

TOMMY  
 Fuck no, motherfucker! Percy Ramone and Sampson Records *don't give a shit about you*. They're not paying for any of this -- you are. It comes out of your royalties.  
 (off their look)

I know this 'cause I've been there, gentlemen, and let me tell you: once things slow down, and your records ain't selling, and no one understands your heartfelt tributes to the firefighters at Ground Zero, and your car payments are so behind that you have to fight Ted Nugent in a celebrity boxing match just to break even, this shit will come back to haunt you -- and not just you, but the people you love. Wanna be like me and spend your later years at some shit-ass casino, opening up for Foghat and fuckin' up your alimony? Fine! But if not... take heed, brothers: the dream they're selling you is a lie.

There's a long pause as the ITFN takes this in. Finally--

COOL G  
So... you want some help gettin'  
those crates up?

Tommy's look -- pure, unadulterated catharsis -- we CUT TO:

INT. MAINTENANCE SHAFT - SAME

SPARKS FLY in a dark maintenance shaft, as a man with a blowtorch cuts a hole in a metal tube, air HISSING out of it. He lifts his welding mask and we see it's BOB, head sweating.

BOB  
(into walkie talkie)  
Here we go, daddy-o...

We WHOOSH BACK TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

David, dressed as a moustached security guard...

DAVID EASTWICK  
(into walkie-talkie)  
Easy-peasey Japanesey.

...pushes a cart of "money" to the counting room door. Hits a buzzer. Inside, the Sonuvabitch Foreman sees him on the monitor and opens the door as we CUT TO:

INT. MAINTENANCE SHAFT - SAME

Bob reaches into his toolbox for what looks like a GRENADE.

BOB  
...yer gonna get a medal for this  
one, kid...

He pops the pin, tosses the grenade into the suction-tube, and we follow as IT RICOCHETS DOWNWARD and we CUT TO:

INT. COUNTING ROOM - SAME

David pushes the cart in. The Sonuvabitch Foreman motions--

SONUVABITCH FOREMAN  
Over there.

Just as everyone turns, perplexed as... Clank... CLANK... CLANK!!! David takes a deep breath as the grenade FLIES out of the tube and - BANG! Spews caustic smoke into the air.

SONUVABITCH FOREMAN  
Get out! Everyone get out!

People rush out. David, hidden in smoke, pulls on a GAS MASK. Goes to the vault, types in a code, pushes the cart...

INSIDE

...where he unloads the counterfeit money. Stops. Stares at the piles of cash next to him, wheels turning, and we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, STAGE - SAME

Back on stage. Mitch performs, enjoying the limelight.

MITCH  
And for my next trick, this ball  
which you see in my hand...

He picks up a silver orb, accidentally drops it. Gets a big laugh. Tries to grab it again, it escapes his grasp.

MITCH  
Provided I can get it into my  
hand... get back here, you...

More laughter. Gantt leans over to Lucy, smiling.

FRANKLIN GANTT  
I like the bumbling idiot routine,  
is this a new act?

LUCY  
(suspicious)  
No... but I think I've seen it  
before. Excuse me a second?

She rises, heads towards the backstage door as we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, COUNTING ROOM - SAME

Smoke clearing inside the counting room, Jamal Jones storms inside, flanked by security. They sweep the place, checking for missing money... and find nothing.

SONUVABITCH FOREMAN  
 It's all secure, nothing's been  
 touched. The fuck's going on here?

Jamal, still suspicious, punches in a code and goes into...

THE VAULT

...where everything looks equally untouched. In fact, the only abnormality is the BIG, SQUARE BOX sitting in the middle of the room, covered by a drop-cloth.

Lips pursed, Jamal moves to it, YANKS the covering away to reveal... an EMPTY glass water-tank.

GUARD (O.S.)  
 'Scuse me?

Jamal turns to see a Guard in the doorway.

GUARD  
 We gotta get that thing on stage.

Jamal scowls, not liking any of this. Shakes his head.

JAMAL JONES  
 (eyes the false bottom)  
 No fucking way. This thing doesn't  
 move until I've searched every  
 square inch of it, inside and out.

Jamal and his men unlock the tank to examine it as we CUT TO:

INSIDE A TINY COMPARTMENT

David hides, curled into a tight ball, listening to the men outside, money bag in hand. He starts to sweat as we CUT TO:

EXT. BELLINI CASINO, VALET - NIGHT

Tommy and the ITFN grab two crates from the back of his car.

N-SANE  
 So what you sayin' is that for  
 everything the label buy us, say...  
 (as if "making this up off  
 the top of his head")  
 (MORE)

N-SANE (CONT'D)

...they get us a pimped-out tour bus with hydraulics and hot tub, and spinnin' rims, and our own beef jerky machine, with the good stuff, you know, peppered, not that terriyaki shit, and, a stripper pole, wit' a buncha strippers dressed like Jane Fonda in "Barbarella" wit' the fishnets and the rayguns and shit... we payin' for that, not them?

TOMMY

Not only are you payin' for it, but they're literally charging you twice what it's worth.

CRUSHA

That's some fucked up shit.

The ITFN nod in unison as they follow Tommy in and we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, VAULT - SAME

Back in the vault, Jamal has the water tank open, feels around the interior. Knocks on its floor. Sounds hollow.

JAMAL JONES

It's got a false bottom.

Jamal pulls his gun and motions for a guard to open it up. Outside, a FLOOR EMPLOYEE with a bad bowl-haircut ducks in.

FLOOR EMPLOYEE

Floor boss wants to know what the hell's going on, we got money spilling outta the drawers upstairs-

JAMAL JONES

Do I not look fucking busy here?! Roll it down, man, this shit ain't brain surgery!

The employee scowls and walks out with cart, as the guard searches the box, TAPPING on its walls with his gun as...

INSIDE HIS COMPARTMENT

...David can hear it: TAP TAP, TAP TAP, as...

OUTSIDE

...the guard freezes. Sees it: a tiny BUTTON in the wall.



GUARD  
Gotcha. Keep me covered...

Jamal keeps his gun trained on the box as... WHUMP! Its floor opens... to reveal a false bottom that's completely empty. Jamal looks in, disbelieving, as...

INT. BELLINI CASINO, BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

TAP TAP, TAP TAP go the hard-soled shoes of the Employee, who wheels THE MONEY CART down a back hall and into...

THE BACKSTAGE AREA

...where he knocks on the lid. It opens, and out crawls...

DAVID EASTWICK  
Thanks, Bob. I owe you.

And on closer look, we realize the employee IS Bob, in a fake goatee and a terrible bowl-cut toupee.

BOB  
I can't believe that worked.

DAVID EASTWICK  
Magic. It's all sleight of hand and misdirection. See ya topside.

David hurries off. Bob takes off his toupee, eyes it...

BOB  
Hey, can I keep this thing?

But David's already gone, as we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, VAULT - SAME

Back in the vault, Jamal is fucking furious. Kicks a cart aside. The Guard is still standing there.

GUARD  
Uh... is it okay if I get this thing on stage now?

JAMAL JONES  
Get it out of my fuckin' face.

He SLAMS the lid shut, the Guard wheels it out as we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

A service hall, where the Guard pushes along the cloth-draped water-tank, when... BANG! A man BURSTS out a door and SLAMS into the tank, knocks it over. Jumping back to his feet is...

H.L. SHAPIRO

Sorry!

H.L. runs on. The guard shakes his head, sets the cart back upright, rolls onward. Not noticing the TINY GLASS KEY that has fallen onto the floor, as we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, DRESSING ROOM - SAME

David enters, THROWS the bag down on his dressing room table. It's so full of money, the zipper won't close. Yanks off his disguise, strips off his uniform, then--

LUCY (O.S.)

I'm curious. About you and me.

He whirls to see LUCY -- standing in the doorway, eyes like stone, holding a prop sword.

LUCY

How much of that was bullshit?  
Eighty percent? Ninety?

DAVID EASTWICK

I can't -- I can't talk, I gotta-

LUCY

--I'm guessing it's 100, but I'm  
really, really hoping you'll give  
me a different number, David.

He tries to pass, she pushes the sword into his chest.

LUCY

Take another step and I'll cut your  
lying fucking heart out. Got it?

She walks him back, blade at his chest as we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, STAGE - SAME

The audience applauds at Mitch's last trick, as Bob wheels the water-tank onto the stage.

MITCH  
 (whispers to Zoe)  
 Where's my brother?! *We were  
 already supposed to switch--*

ZOE  
 (terrified)  
 I don't know, what do we do?!

He glances out at the audience. There's nothing else to do.

MITCH  
 I'm gonna do the trick.

ZOE  
What?!?

Mitch steps out, arms up, greeted by CHEERS as we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, ACCESS HALLWAY - SAME

H.L. hurries down the service hall, disoriented, looking for an exit when WHAM! A door opens, revealing...

FELIX  
 There he is, get him!

H.L. spins a 180 and runs, bad guys on his ass as we CUT TO:

INT. CASINO STAGE - NIGHT

Mitch watches apprehensively as Bob preps the water-tank.

MITCH  
 For my final act of the evening...  
*and perhaps the final act of my  
 life...* may I present to you: "The  
 Box Of Fate!"

People clap as the box is pushed onto the stage, attached to cables from above. As Zoe helps Mitch into his harness...

MITCH  
 (whispers to Zoe)  
*How the hell does he get out?*

ZOE  
*There's a glass key on the bottom  
 of the tank.*

A fire-hose is plugged into the box, water GUSHES in. Running on pure adrenaline, Mitch holds his hands out to be cuffed. Then, he's lifted over the box, upsidedown...

MITCH

Wish me luck.

And plants a kiss on Zoe. In the audience, Gantt cocks his head -- *nigga what?* And with a SLAM of the lid, Mitch gets locked inside. Bob hits the winch, the box is lifted skyward.

MITCH

(going under water)

*Shit, shit, shit...*

He holds his breath, fighting back panic. Then a curtain DROPS over the box, leaving us in darkness as...

BACKSTAGE

Lucy's still got David at sword-point, eyes focused on the cash in his duffel bag. David's eyes flicker to the monitor behind her: Mitch in the box, struggling to find the key.

LUCY

This is fucking uncanny, you had me  
*so fooled*. There I was thinking  
I'd finally meet someone who--

CLICK! A GUN presses to the back of her head. It's Bhujbal, with Sunil and Subash, who take the sword from her.

BHUJBAL

Lover's quarrels. Very tragic.

DAVID EASTWICK

Great, you're here. If everybody  
can just wait one sec, Mitch has no  
idea what he's doing and he's  
probably gonna' drown, so--

BHUJBAL

I am terribly sorry to hear that.  
(points gun at him)  
But it seems this will be a case of  
"three birds, one stone."

Bhuj smiles, looking up at the stage monitor, and we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, STAGE, INSIDE TANK - SAME

Mitch frantically feels around the tank for the glass key. It's nowhere to be found. He scrunches himself upright, takes one last breath of air. Then the tank FILLS COMPLETELY as...

INT. BELLINI CASINO, STAGE - SAME

The audience nervously looks at each other. It's taking a long time. Is this part of the show? Gantt glances at the empty seat next to him and we CUT TO:

A FOUR-WAY SPLIT SCREEN:

IN THE UPPER LEFT - Tommy and the ITFN roll a luggage cart with the crates (covered in sheets) across the casino floor.

TOMMY

...my drummer, well, my first drummer, he diversified. Put his money into mutual funds...

IN THE UPPER RIGHT - Mitch cries out as he pounds at the glass, trying to break free, drowning. Just as he was in the beginning, only now we know it's Mitch, not David.

MITCH (SUBTITLED)

*There's no fucking key!*

IN THE LOWER LEFT - David and Lucy back away from Bhujbal, with his sword, passing the tiger's cage.

DAVID EASTWICK

Okay! I respect you! I'm scared of you! Can we talk now, please?!

IN THE LOWER RIGHT - Felix and his cronies chase H.L.

FELIX

Don't let him get away!

Clarence pulls out his gun and fires - KABLAM! KABLAM! KABLAM! H.L. dives through a doorway and into...

INT. BELLINI CASINO, MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...the Main Bellini floor, followed by a hail of GUNFIRE. Glasses shatter, slot machines spray coins, people scream as:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, BACKSTAGE, CHANGING AREA - SAME

Bhujbal and his flunkies WHIRL around at the sound of the shots... just as David unlocks Willy's cage.

DAVID EASTWICK  
(to Lucy)  
Run.

They do. Bullets SCREAM after them, but they're cut off by:

WILLY  
**ROOOOOOAAAAAARRRRRRRR!**

The bad guys turn to see the tiger prowling out of its opened cage. Subash, on instinct, grabs the broom.

SUBASH  
Back off, pussycat, you don't want  
none of this-

Willy LEAPS onto Subash, who SCREAMS as he's ripped to shreds. Bhujbal, horrified, snatches the money and runs, Sunil scrambles after him as we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, MAIN ROOM - SAME

The casino floor in UTTER PANIC. People racing to get out as bullets WHIZ through the air. H.L. crawls under a table, as across the room, Clarence shoots until he's DRY FIRING.

FELIX  
(grabs his arm)  
What the fuck are you doing?

CLARENCE  
Sorry, I'm high, it was instinct--

FELIX  
*Instinct?* Who do you think you  
are, LAPD? There's cameras all  
over this room, you have any idea  
how *fucked* you just made us?!

Clarence shrugs -- *sorry?* Felix eyes H.L., trying fruitlessly to get away. Silently weighs his options. Then...

FELIX  
(shrugs)  
Well... ain't like those bullets  
are going back in the gun--

BLAM BLAM BLAM! He unloads, joined by his crew, shooting at--  
THE CASINO FLOOR

...where we find ourselves right back where we started:  
bullets flying, crowds stampeding, and H.L. hiding under a  
table, covering his head, whispering...

H.L. SHAPIRO  
...this... isn't... happening...

BAM! Bullets SMASH into a slot machine, spraying quarters,  
he lets out a shriek, as nearby...

...Tommy fights his way through, spinning, screaming out:

TOMMY  
Foreigner! Foreigner!!!

BOOM! A shot ZOOMS past his ear, across the room, and blasts  
through the wall as we WHOOSH TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, STAGE, THE WINGS - SAME

David and Lucy (still arguing) tear along down corridors of  
curtains, the sounds of ROARING AND SCREAMING behind them.

LUCY  
*I can't believe you used me!*

DAVID EASTWICK  
*It's slightly more complicated--*

WHOOSH! They burst through the curtains and...

ONTO THE STAGE

...where they skid to a halt. The crowd stares at the Magical  
David Eastwick, standing in his tux, dry as a bone, Lucy on  
his arm. There's some confused applause, when suddenly...

SUBASH  
AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

Subash runs past, his arm is now a SPOUTING STUMP. Bhujbal  
and Sunil follow, chased by a roaring, blood-soaked tiger,  
who pounces again on Subash, ripping into him as...

EVERYONE  
AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

It's pandemonium as everyone races to get out.

GANTT

What in pluperfect *hell*--

Bhujbal and Sunil break for the exit. The tiger, leaving a dead Subash in his wake, gives chase. Lucy yanks out of David's grasp, he tries to pull her back in--

DAVID EASTWICK

Wait, please, lemme' explain--

CRACK! She belts him in the face, breaks away. David spits blood, glances from her retreating form... to the tank above... to Bob, fruitlessly trying to pull the winch lever.

DAVID EASTWICK

Oh Christ...

David grabs a fire-axe and BAM! Cuts the winch-cable. With a WHIR OF ROPE, the box falls and SMASHES OPEN on the stage, flooding its contents out... including Mitch's limp form.

DAVID EASTWICK

Mitch!

(pulls him in, shakes him)

...Mitch, fuckin' wake up, talk to me, don't do this, MITCH--

BLECCHH! Mitch pukes up water all over him, coughing:

MITCH

I'm...fine.. oh man, that sucked...

(beat)

You said there was a fucking key!

But his anger is short-lived as Zoe kneels beside him, cradling his head to her (ample) bosom...

ZOE

...I can't believe you did that, that was amazing, are you okay?

MITCH

I need mouth-to-mouth immediately.

David shakes his head -- *the man never changes.*

DAVID EASTWICK

Take care of him, I'll be back.

ZOE

Where you goin'?



DAVID EASTWICK  
 (already out the door)  
 Gotta catch up with a girl!

And onward he runs, as we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, CASINO AREA - MOMENTS EARLIER

In the chaos of the casino floor, H.L. crawls past Tommy, who struggles through the crowd like a fish fighting a current, eyes panicked, stumbling right into Cheryl.

TOMMY  
 Where's Foreigner?!

CHERYL  
 (hurt, dazed)  
 I don't know, I lost her, I don't--

She bursts into tears. Tommy pulls her in.

TOMMY  
 We'll find her. Come on.

And SHOVES his way through the crowd as they pass...

THE ITCHY TRIGGA FINGA NIGGAZ

...crouching behind their luggage cart, freaked out.

CRUSHA  
 This some bullshit, G, we shoul'da'  
 never come out here--

N-SANE  
 He's right man, we gotta split now!

Cool G doesn't answer. Just stares at the crates. Then...

COOL G  
 Listen: as a true Itchy Trigga  
 Finga Nigga, you do not run from a  
 gunfight. Especially when you got a  
 crate a' guns sittin' next to you.  
 (stands, inspirationally)  
 The ghosts of Tupac and Biggie are  
 lookin' down on us, gentlemen. It  
 is our duty, now, to show them that  
 mindless violence and hip-hop still  
 go hand in hand.  
 (dramatic pause)  
Who's with me?

A hip-hop THUMP rises, as the men share a look, then... the CRATE is RIPPED OPEN. Hands WHIR past, snatching up guns until finally the ITFN stand, loaded with day-glo firearms.

COOL G

Show these mufuckas how we ride!

And as they OPEN FIRE, we immediately CUT TO:

TITLE CARD: 3.5 SECONDS LATER

Cool-G and the ITFN cry like babies as shit explodes all around them, sticking their guns out, firing back blindly.

CRUSHA

(bawling)

This shit ain't cool! This shit ain't cool!

They myopically spray fire across the room as we WHOOSH TO:

UNDER THE GAMING TABLES

...where H.L. lunges along on all fours, glass falling around him. Suddenly, he stops. Backs up. Because he sees...

...THE TOAD, a few feet away, hopping.

H.L. SHAPIRO

No. Way.

He looks to the nearby exit, then back at the toad. A long beat. Then... he dives after it as we CUT TO::

UP IN THE MEZZANINE

...where FRANKLIN Gantt watches, aghast, as the gunfight destroys his life's work. BOOM! A FLAMING ROULETTE WHEEL frisbees past his head. Then...

FRANKLIN GANTT

Hell no, I did *not* leave Cincinatti for this.

...down into the fray the man walks. Head low, eyes up, like the T-1000. Ready to take on all comers as...

-Clarence lunges at him, gun raised. Gantt KNEES him in the balls, yanks the gun away, shoots him in the femur as...

-N-Sane makes a run for him. POP! Gantt pistol-butts his nose, sends him down. Walks on, until...

FRANKLIN GANTT

Hey!

He points to a GUY scooping poker chips from off the ground.

FRANKLIN GANTT

(ice cold)

Put 'em back.

The guy does as told, Gantt resumes his war-path, just as...

-Grossman steps up, pistol pointed. Gantt stops, gun aimed back. A Mexican stand-off, the old dude in the suit against the human steroid-depository. Their eyes locked. Then...

GROSSMAN

Fuck. This.

Grossman BREAKS FOR THE EXIT. Gantt turns, waits a minute, then, without looking, shoots him in the ass as we CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

The TOAD makes its escape. Zigzagging through people's running feet, going UNDER A ROOM SERVICE CART, as H.L. vaults right OVER it, scrambling after his prey, gaining...

H.L. SHAPIRO

...get back here you little  
bastard, you're MINE...

H.L. dives and CATCHES IT, toad squirming between his hands.

H.L. SHAPIRO

End of the line, sweetheart!  
(pulls it close)  
I had to go through hell to find  
you, but now I am gonna take you  
back to Los Angeles, I'm gonna pour  
some champagne, and then I am gonna  
lick you *All Night Long*...

FELIX (O.S.)

Look who it is!

H.L. freezes. 15 feet behind, Felix approaches, gun up.

FELIX

...my favorite dildo-smuggler.

H.L. SHAPIRO

(desperate)

Hey, hey, it was the drugs I was smuggling, okay?! I just thought that if I packed a huge... *thing* in my suitcase, security would be too embarrassed to search my bag.

FELIX

(COCKS the gun)

...not a bad idea.

Levels it with H.L.'s head, 10 feet behind, execution style.

H.L. SHAPIRO

Wait! I've got money. Cash. Drugs. I know people, movie stars, actresses, I can introduce you--

FELIX

Why is it that addicts always gotta beg? You people go through life in what basically amounts to *slow-motion suicide*, and yet you cry like little faggots when your number comes up.

H.L. SHAPIRO

(freaking out)

--*I'll do anything, please, don't do this, I wanna live...*

FELIX

Get the fuck up, turn around.

H.L. stands, facing away, toad clutched to his stomach. Felix eyes him -- *what's he got?* H.L. looks down at the toad, what he's been chasing this whole time, finally in his hands.

H.L. SHAPIRO

Sorry, lil' fella...

FELIX

What?

H.L. SHAPIRO

Catch.

He spins and HURLS THE TOAD like a baseball. Felix instinctively fires, and BANG! Gets sprayed with TOAD GOO. Bewildered, the man looks down at the creature's remains.

FELIX

Did you just... did you just throw  
a *frog* at me? Jesus, tastes like--  
(spits goo)  
You must be fucking *freak*, man,  
what the hell are you carrying a  
frog around the hotel for?

H.L. finally turns to face him. An odd light in his eyes.

H.L. SHAPIRO

It's not a frog. It's a red-  
bellied Borneo toad.

FELIX

(wipes his eyes off)  
Great, thanks for the bio lesson--

H.L. SHAPIRO

You don't understand. The Borneo  
toad is one of the most potent  
hallucinogens on the planet.

Felix pauses, as his pupils dilate... and we WHOOSH INTO HIS  
POV. He looks down at the "gunk" all over his hands, and his  
fingers begin to elongate, dribbling off like water in space.

FELIX

What. The. Fuck. ...?

SHINK! The hallway STRETCHES OUT, like looking through the  
wrong end of a telescope. H.L. appears to be 50 feet away.

FELIX

...oh god...

BOOM! Felix squeezes off a shot, it goes wild, H.L. takes  
off running. Felix staggers after him as we CUT TO:

A HALLWAY

As Willy the tiger prowls. A GUEST steps out of his door,  
sees the tiger, YELPS, dives back inside as we WHOOSH TO:

ANOTHER HALLWAY

Foreigner, walking lost, eyes wide, calling out...

FOREIGNER

Daddy?...

But gets no response, she keeps going as we WHOOSH TO:

YET ANOTHER HALLWAY

As Tommy and Cheryl rush along, then... they hear it: a child crying. They rush around a corner...

...to find Foreigner all alone, sitting at the end of the hall. Relief floods Tommy's face as they scramble to her.

TOMMY

(pulls her into his arms)  
...baby, baby, I'm so sorry, don't  
worry, daddy's here, mommy's here--

Foreigner clings to him, buries her face in his shirt. It's the first time, in this whole nightmare, that she's lost it.

CHERYL

Tommy-

TOMMY

-I'm so sorry, Cheryl. I'm a  
terrible father-

CHERYL

Tommy-

TOMMY

-you were right about everything.  
I'm gonna quit the band, and get a  
real job, and pay my alimony--

CHERYL

**Tommy!**

Something lets out a GROWL. Tommy turns to see a blood-spattered white tiger at the end of the hall, staring at him like he's the slowest antelope in the herd.

TOMMY

Oh Christ...

The tiger stalks forward. Tommy cautiously slips Foreigner from his arms, and pushes her into Cheryl's.

TOMMY

Cheryl? Honey? Take Foreigner and  
head down that hall.

CHERYL

Tommy, what the hell are you doing--

TOMMY

Taking care of my family. For once.

He pushes them down the side hall, sends them running. Then backs up, right into the tiger's path, ARMS HIGH.

TOMMY

Hey! Albino Pussy! You want a piece of me? Come on!

He picks up a plate of half-eaten steak off a cart, tosses it at Willy, who SNARLS at him -- eyes narrowing to slits.

TOMMY

Okay... that worked.

Tommy spins and SPRINTS FULL-TILT BOOGIE down the hallway, the tiger right on his heels, as we CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - SAME

H.L. -- hauling ass, screaming as shit explodes around him.

H.L. SHAPIRO

AAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!

Felix chases after, his shots going wild because, in his eyes, the world has gone UTTERLY BATSHIT: the hall EXPANDS and SHRINKS and ROLLS LIKE A KALEIDOSCOPE, as...

INT. NEARBY HALLWAY - SAME

...Tommy races the other way, also screaming:

TOMMY

FUUUUUUUCCKKKKK MMMMMEEEEEEEEEE!

THUNK! The tiger SKIDS into a wall behind him, just barely missing Tommy as he rounds a corner. Then climbs to its feet and comes after him again as we pull back to reveal...

THE HALLWAY INTERSECTION

...where Tommy and H.L. are about to cross paths as...

TOMMY

AAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHH!

H.L. SHAPIRO

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHHHH!

WHAM! They SLAM into each other, impact knocking them to the floor, laying them out, gasping. Behind them they hear:

FELIX

...retarded fuckin' thing...

20 feet away, Felix is trying to reload his gun. As he struggles to get the clip in...

FELIX

...in my career, I have been *shot*,  
*stabbed*, and *beaten*... but I have  
never once been hit with an  
amphibian.

(CLICK, gets it in)

First time for everything, huh?

H.L. SHAPIRO

(wind knocked out of him)

...look out... for the tiger...

Felix looks up, and sure enough, there's a BLOOD SPECKLED BENGAL TIGER approaching him, growling low, threatening.

FELIX

Yeah, yeah, nice try, asshole. I'm  
in narcotics, think I don't know  
what an induced hallucination is?

H.L. SHAPIRO

(still wheezing)

...I'm serious... there's a fucking  
tiger... right there...

FELIX

Bullshit! There is no way a  
goddamn albino Bengal tiger is  
running loose around the Bellini!  
You're just trying to--  
(taps skull with gun)  
--mess with my head!

ROOOARRRRRR! Willy, sensing aggression, rumbles out a warning. Felix has a moment of doubt, raises the gun.

FELIX

(aims at the tiger)

You're not real. You don't exist.

POUNCE! Willy leaps over the guys on the floor and FLATTENS FELIX, savaging him tooth and claw as...

FELIX

(his dying scream)

YOU'RE NOT REAAAAAAIIIIIIIEEE!

Tommy and H.L. simultaneously sit up, watching, gape jawed... and then get SPRAYED WITH BLOOD. A shared glance--



H.L. SHAPIRO  
Time to go?

TOMMY  
Amen, brother.

And with that, they're on their feet and down the hall, getting out while they still can, as we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, LOBBY - SAME

Lucy storming down the hall, digging her keys from her purse.

LUCY  
Sonofabitch, sonofabitch, sonofa-  
Just as she's GRABBED FROM BEHIND, gets spun around by...

SUNIL  
Don't fucking move.

PSSSSSHHH! She sprays him with Mace from her key ring. Sunil falls back SCREAMING, clutches his face, just as Bhujbal steps in and BELTS her across the jaw. Down she goes. CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, LOBBY - SAME

Feet skidding over the debris, water spewing down on him from the fire sprinklers, David searches through the wrecked room.

DAVID EASTWICK  
Lucy! Lucy!!!

She's nowhere to be seen, until...

LUCY (O.S.)  
David!

...he looks up and sees, inside the rising glass elevator, Bhujbal with Lucy, gun to her skull. Salutes David as they go up. Eyes hard, David takes off sprinting for the...

STAIRWELL

...where he lunges up the levels, clutching his gut.

DAVID EASTWICK  
I need... to get... in shape...

He sucks in air, trying not to slow, as we CUT TO:

EXT. BELLINI CASINO, ROOFTOP - MOMENTS LATER

BANG! Out onto the roof comes David, gasping for air, as...

SUNIL (O.S.)

Ala-kazzam.

Sunil appears behind him, .45 pointed to his skull, eyes still red from the pepper spray.

DAVID EASTWICK

Please... tell me... you did not just... say... "ala kazzam."

SUNIL

Yes. And if you keep talking I will make this thing say "ala-kaboom."

DAVID EASTWICK

Congratulations... you're only one language away... from bilingual.

WHACK! Sunil PISTOL-WHIPS him, shoves him around the corner to where Bhujbal holds Lucy at gunpoint on the roof's ledge.

LUCY

If you're going to shoot him, would you get it over with already?

DAVID EASTWICK

Lucy, gorgeous, you're really making me question the validity of saving you right now...

Bhujbal stares at them, amused.

BHUJBAL

If you two are finished, I have other business to attend tonight.  
(off their glares)  
You have two choices: bullets, or gravity. Pick one.

DAVID EASTWICK

Let her go, Bhujbal. She doesn't even know who you are.

BHUJBAL

Seeing as how you just used my name, you are really not helping matters. Sunil?

Sunil grins, lifts the gun-

DAVID EASTWICK

Stop.

(off their pause)  
...we'll... we'll jump.

LUCY

No way, I'll take the bullet.  
(off his look)  
What's my headline gonna say,  
"Suicide Worker Jumps Off  
Building?" Fuck that--

CLICK-CLICK. Bhujbal aims his handgun and Lucy FLINCHES -- her fear finally showing. Sunil shoves them to the ledge.

BHUJBAL

You picked an interesting woman,  
David. It pains me to do this--

DAVID EASTWICK

Wait! Wait, one thing...

BHUJBAL

Final words?...

A trace of a smile on his face. Then--

DAVID EASTWICK

Yeah... *Ala-kazzam.*

POP! David WHIRLS, as something ERUPTS from his sleeve. The bad guys jump back, guns up... then start laughing when they see he's holding A BOUQUET OF FAKE PINK FLOWERS.

BHUJBAL

You *must* be getting old, David,  
that magic trick has been around  
since the dawn of time. Haven't  
you something more original for me?

DAVID EASTWICK

(grins)  
Sure...

CLICK-CLICK go the flowers. Bhujbal's eyes widen as... BOOM! Sunil's collarbone EXPLODES. He gets BLOWN BACK as David WHIRLS toward Bhujbal, the fake flower-bouquet SIZZLING.

BHUJBAL

(whispers)  
...how did you-?

DAVID EASTWICK  
Magician never tells.

His finger curls around the trigger and BOOM! David gets KNOCKED OFF HIS FEET. Bhujbal, stunned, turns to see...

...JAMAL JONES. Emerging from the stairwell, security uniform in tatters, smoking shotgun in hand.

BHUJBAL  
Oh shit-

CRUNCH! Jamal BELTS him in the face with the shotgun, sends him down. Jamal steps over David, snatches up the BEAN BAG he just shot him with. Grins:

JAMAL JONES  
Sorry 'bout that, figured you'd catch it with your teeth.

He hauls David to his feet, makes to handcuff him, just as Sunil rises up behind them, gun aimed at David's skull...

LUCY  
DAVID!

David spins as... KABLAM! In ultra-slow-mo, the bullet flies out of the gun as David raises a hand as if to ward it off...

WHAP! It goes right through his hand in a gout of blood, then rips through his shoulder as he COLLAPSES.

LUCY  
No!

Lucy spins with the money-case, and CRACK! Bashes it across Sunil's head, almost knocks him off the roof, he's trying to keep his balance and get one more shot off...

JAMAL JONES  
*Don't do it!*

Jamal, across the roof, RACKS the shotgun. Sunil pauses... then SWINGS the gun toward Jamal and BANG! We CUT TO:

EXT. BELLINI CASINO, FRONT LOT - 4.5 SECONDS LATER

The SWAT VAN, with its "Flash-shaped-dent" in the roof and "Atahalne-shaped dent" in the side, idles up front.

SWAT COMMANDER  
 --suspect is or is not on the roof?  
*Can I get straight answer here?!*

WHOOOMP! Sunil's dead body CRASHES through the windshield, embeds itself in the dashboard. A second later, a small BEAN-BAG lands on him. The commander just stares. Then--

SWAT COMMANDER  
 Fuck this, I quit.

And tosses away the CB as we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, MAIN ENTRANCE - NIGHT

ANIMAL CONTROL GUYS wheel a cage with a bloody, very well-fed tiger inside it. Tommy and his family pass by, walking out as one. Then H.L. goes by, as once again, his cell rings.

H.L. SHAPIRO (INTO PHONE)  
 Hey Ken.

KEN FREIDBERG (PHONE)  
 How's our baby doing?

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 Baby's dead, Ken.

KEN FREIDBERG (PHONE)  
 What, dead? Dead like how?

H.L. SHAPIRO  
 Like the way I'm gonna be if I don't get my shit together. I'm checking into rehab when I get back. If I gotta lose the career, so be it.  
 (beat)  
 I don't... I don't want to be the guy they find dead in some hotel room and have you not be surprised.

KEN FREIDBERG (PHONE)  
 Jesus, H.L...

H.L. steels himself, shuts his eyes.

KEN FREIDBERG (PHONE)  
 That's the best fuckin' news I heard all week. Do what you gotta do. Don't worry about the studio, I'll handle 'em.  
 (MORE)

KEN FREIDBERG (PHONE) (CONT'D)

(a beat)

And for the record, I'll be there  
when y'get out. With breath mints.

And with a chuckle, Ken's gone. H.L. takes a deep breath. He seems... relieved. Looks at the mayhem on the street, paramedics rushing past, as we follow...

A MOVING STRETCHER

...where David Eastwick lies, Lucy by his side.

DAVID EASTWICK

I'm sorry, I didn't mean to...

LUCY

Shhh. You can explain later.

(beat)

But you better do a damn good job.

They pass Bhujbal, getting hauled away in handcuffs, yelling:

BHUJBAL

They did this! They killed these  
men, they have the money! Look in  
the suitcase, LOOK IN THE SUITCASE!

A SWAT GUY carrying the cracked suitcase looks at him. Opens it to see stack upon stack of money, flips through it. Then looks at his fingers and sees... they're green.

SWAT GUY

I ain't exactly Alan Greenspan, but  
this money looks weird as shit.

Bhujbal, in shock, gets hauled out the door. As David gets rolled toward an ambulance, Mitch runs alongside him.

MITCH

(whispers)

You switched it? Dude, you *genius*!  
Where's the real stuff stashed?

(beat)

You did stash it somewhere, right?

(beat)

...***Right?***

We hear a HUM OF ELECTRONICS...

INT. BELLINI CASINO, VAULT - NIGHT

...and the vault door opens, Gantt enters with Jamal. Slices the plastic off the cash, flips through it. Nods. It's good.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

David lies in his hospital bed, eyes shiny with Morphine.

LUCY

(sitting across from him)  
 Let me get this straight... you orchestrated this break-in to my father's vault so that you could pretend to rob him... all so you could get Mitch out of trouble, and put that scary Indian guy in jail?

DAVID EASTWICK

(slumps)  
 Yes.

He looks into her. It's the moment that will make or break their relationship, and he knows it. A long beat, then...

LUCY

Pretty good explanation.  
 (leans in, kisses him)  
 Lie to me again and I'll kill you.

DAVID EASTWICK

Deal.

She kisses him again, and as music plays ("TAKE A LOAD OFF ANNIE", by THE BAND), we hear:

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)

Okay. So you're probably wondering what happened after all of this...

EXT. REHAB CENTER - DAY

A sign reads MALIBU EXHAUSTION CLINIC. We glide past, through the open window of H.L.'s sun-filled room.

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)

H.L. high-tailed himself into rehab. One week later, he was writing again, better than ever. Maybe he finally found his muse.

As H.L. types away, we pan down to the THE TOAD: now stuffed, body stitched back together, sitting inside a snowglobe, fake snow settling around it. The music continues and we CUT TO:

INT. BELLINI CASINO, MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Drywall flutters through the air like snow. It's the gunfight in the Bellini, only not quite as raw. More "staged."

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)  
 He turned his draft into the studio, and while it wasn't what they were expecting, they loved it all the same. The project is starring, of course...

Now we pull back to reveal a FILM CREW and lights everywhere, as the ITFN fire their day-glo guns -- only this time, no one's crying, and their shots actually hit their targets

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)  
 ...your favorite rappers. The deal was brokered by Tommy, whose new calling seems to fit him well...

Nearby, Tommy -- slimmer, in an Armani suit and an Iron Maiden t-shirt -- talks with Percy Ramone, shaking his head.

TOMMY  
 ...no, this is the same crap you pulled on Restraining Order back in '82. You screwed us then, and I'm not gonna let you screw them now.  
 (sticks card in his hand)  
 Come back with something real.

Tommy walks off to where Cheryl and Foreigner are waiting for him. Foreigner's one year older now, cool as ever.

FOREIGNER  
 How'd it go, daddy?

TOMMY  
 I punched him in the nuts and made him eat sand. Who's hungry?

And out they go -- one big, happy family -- as behind them, Percy looks at Tommy's business card:

TOMMY WATTS  
 PRESIDENT, WATTS MANAGEMENT  
*"If we ain't number one, then number two on you."*

Percy scowls, and we CUT TO:



EXT. PAKISTAN MOUNTAINS - DAY

A mountaintop blizzard beats mercilessly at a flimsy TENT.

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)  
 Bhujbal got extradited back to New  
 Dehli for his trial. Luckily for  
 him, he managed to escape to  
 Pakistan, where he's now attempting  
 a resurgence of the Indian Mob.

Bhujbal and two other MISERABLE-LOOKING HINDI THUGS sit  
 inside the tent, eating a dinner of cold daahl.

BHUJBAL (IN HINDI, SUBTITLED)  
*...that's all I am saying: it is no  
 easy task, keeping it gangster.*

Just as the wind knocks out a support, the tent caves in and  
 snuffs out their lamp, leaves them draped in TOTAL BLACKNESS.

BHUJBAL (IN HINDI, SUBTITLED)  
*Shit.*

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

David stands over us, a mouth-mask covers his awed face.

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)  
 As for me? Well, let's just say I  
 had one more magic trick up my  
 sleeve. You might say it was the  
 greatest of all.

We reverse to reveal a CRYING NEWBORN BABY. David brings it  
 over to Lucy, she cradles it in her arms as we CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL, WAITING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Gantt flips his Zippo lighter as David hands out cigars.  
 Mitch, arm around Zoe, watches the baby through a partition.  
 He holds up a camera and just as it clicks, we CUT TO:

EXT. SIDE OF THE ROAD - EVENING

David and Lucy, with a 4-YEAR-OLD BOY in her arms, posing  
 before the beautiful desert sunset. David grabs the camera  
 off his car's hood and off they drive, towing an animal  
 trailer: Willy the tiger lounges inside, happily retired.

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)  
Roulette. You spin the wheel, and  
take your chances. Knowing all the  
while it's got the worst odds in  
the house.

We pull away, and as they go, their car becomes a ROLLING  
WHITE BALL. The highway MORPHS into the curved wooden track  
of a roulette wheel. Spinning, spinning, spinning we go..

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)  
It's a sucker's game, a palooka  
bet, a shotgun marriage of chance  
and superstition. But when you win--

...and as the rolling ball finally CLATTERS home, we CUT OUT.

DAVID EASTWICK (V.O.)  
--you win everything.

FADE OUT.