

CASINO

By

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EXT. RESTAURANT PARKING LOT, LAS VEGAS, 1983 - DAY

SAM 'ACE' ROTHSTEIN, a tall, lean, immaculately dressed man approaches his car, opens the door, and gets inside to turn on the ignition.

ACE (V.O.)

When you love someone, you've gotta trust them. There's no other way. You've got to give them the key to everything that's yours. Otherwise, what's the point? And, for a while... I believed that's the kind of love I had.

Suddenly, the car explodes. Flames, smoke and metal rise into the sky covering the view of the Las Vegas casinos and their signs.

Music in: J.S. Bach - 'St Matthew Passion'.

Ace's body comes flying in - extreme slow motion. His body twists and turns through the frame like a soul about to tumble into the flames of damnation.

MAIN TITLE SEQUENCE.

INT. TANGIERS CASINO FLOOR - NIGHT

Vignette of ACE through rippling flames, we move in on ACE ROTHSTEIN overseeing the casino. He lights a cigarette.

ACE (V.O.)

Before I ever ran a casino or got myself blown up, Ace Rothstein was a hell of a handicapper, I can tell you that. I was so good, that whenever I bet, I could change the odds for every bookmaker in the country. I'm serious. I had it down so cold that I was given paradise on earth. I was given one of the biggest casinos in Las Vegas to run, the Tangiers...

INT. SAN MARINO ITALIAN GROCERY/BACK ROOM, KANSAS CITY - NIGHT

Vignette of MOB BOSSES sitting at a table surrounded by food and wine like the gods of Olympus.

ACE (V.O.)

...by the only kind of guys that can actually get you that kind of money: sixty-two million, seven-hundred thousand dollars. I don't know all the details.

NICKY (V.O.)

Matter of fact...

INT. BAR, LAS VEGAS - NIGHT

Vignette of NICKY SANTORO standing at a bar with DOMINICK SANTORO, his brother, and FRANK MARINO, his right-hand man.

NICKY (V.O.)

...nobody knew all the details, but it should'a been perfect. I mean, he had me, Nicky Santoro, his best friend, watching his ass...

INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Vignette of GINGER MCKENNA a dazzling thirty-one-year-old blonde seated by a small fiery pool.

NICKY (V.O.)

...and he had Ginger, the woman he loved, on his arm. But in the end...

INT. TANGIERS SPORTSBOOK/ACE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

ACE looks over the casino he rules.

NICKY (V.O.)

...we fucked it all up. It should'a been so sweet, too. But it turned out to be the last time that street guys like us were ever given anything that fuckin' valuable again.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - NIGHT

Aerial shot coming down out of the clouds over the brightly lit Vegas Strip and off into the blackness of the desert night.

ACE (V.O.)

At that time, Vegas was a place where millions of suckers flew in every year on their own nickel, and left behind about a billion dollars. But at night, you couldn't see the desert that surrounds Las Vegas...

EXT. DESERT - DAWN

Aerial shot swooping along the desert floor, then rising above the mist to reveal mountains in the distance.

ACE (V.O.)

But it's in the desert where lots of the town's problems are solved.

NICKY (V.O.)

Got a lot of holes in the desert, and a lot of problems are buried in those holes. Except you gotta do it right. I mean, you gotta have the hole already dug before you show up with a package in the trunk. Otherwise you're talkin' about a half-hour or forty-five minutes of diggin'. And who knows who's gonna be comin' along in that time? Before you know it, you gotta dig a few more holes. You could be there all fuckin' night.

EXT. LAS VEGAS STRIP, 1973 - NIGHT

TITLE IN: 'THE STRIP', 'LAS VEGAS', 'TEN YEARS EARLIER'

ACE is greeted by a casino exec and walked through the brightly lit entrance to the Tangiers Casino.

ACE (V.O.)

Who could resist? Anywhere else in the country, I was a bookie, a gambler, always lookin' over my shoulder, hassled by cops, day and night. But here, I'm 'Mr Sam Rothstein'. I'm not only legitimate, but running a casino. And that's like selling dreams for cash.

INT. TANGIERS CASINO - NIGHT

We see ACE enter alone. He is greeted by BILLY SHERBERT. They are joined by top executives RICHIE and RONNIE in suits and ties. They walk through the casino, past crowded and noisy craps tables, spinning roulette wheels, blackjack tables, poker-faced players at poker tables, and elegant, cordoned-off, black-tie, baccarat tables.

ACE (V.O.)

I hired an old casino pal, Billy Sherbert, as my manager and I went to work.

SHERBERT

(Introducing the EXECS to ACE)

...And this is Ronnie, who takes care of the card room...

ACE (V.O.)

For guys like me, Las Vegas washes away your sins. It's a morality car wash. It does for us what Lourdes does for humpbacks and cripples. And, along with making us legit...

INT. TANGIERS/HARD COUNT ROOM - NIGHT

Dolly back from a wall of money. An employee pours a bucket full of coins into a trough. Camera follows progress as numerous coins move on a conveyor system, through a sorting machine. Camera reveals several rolls of coins on a lower conveyor as they move up a ladder towards an employee's hands, who then places the rolls on a rack.

ACE (V.O.)

...comes cash. Tons of it. I mean, what do you think we're doing out here in the middle of the desert? It's all this money. This is the end result of all the bright lights and the comped trips, of all the champagne and free hotel suites, and all the broads and all the booze. It's all been arranged just for us to get your money. That's the truth about Las Vegas.

INT. TANGIERS/FLOOR/SOFT COUNT ROOM - DAY

Camera follows JOHN NANCE carrying a small suitcase and walking through the casino to a door leading to the cashier's cage. The sign on the door reads 'Authorized Personnel Only'. He walks through the cage, to another door: 'Notice - Keep Out'.

ACE (V.O.)

We're the only winners. The players don't stand a chance. And their cash flows from the tables to our boxes ...through the cage and into the most sacred room in the casino ...the place where they add up all the money ...the holy of holies ...the count room.

He opens the door. We see inside the count room from NANCE'S point of view.

It looks like the area behind a teller's cage in a bank. A large room, windowless, decor-free. One side is a mesh cage, opened to reveal stacks of cash boxes. Several COUNTERS in white shirts are gathered around a glass table counting and

sorting paper money.)

ACE (V.O.)

Now this place was off limits.

COUNTER #1

Verify two thousand.

ACE (V.O.)

Even I couldn't get inside, but it was my job to keep it filled with cash. That's for sure.

NICKY (V.O.)

They had so much fuckin' money in there, you could build a house out of stacks of \$100 bills. And the best part was that upstairs, the board of directors didn't know what the fuck was going on.

At one end of the room the clerks empty the metal boxes and rapidly count the cash at a counting table. The camera follows a cash 'drop box' being lifted from the stack by a clerk. He pours the cash on to the table and shows the empty box to a video camera. COUNTER #2 rapidly counts the cash and announces:

COUNTER #2

Five thousand.

NICKY (V.O.)

I mean, to them everything looked on the up and up. Right? Wrong.

The first counter recounts the cash.

COUNTER #1

Verify five thousand.

NICKY (V.O.)

The guys inside the counting room...

Stacks of bills lie nearby. The camera pans across the room to another table manned by a COUNT ROOM EXECUTIVE who repeats the figure and writes it down on a master list.

COUNT ROOM EXEC

Five thousand.

We move back to NANCE opening a cabinet full of stacks of \$100 bills. He opens his suitcase and begins to fill it with cash. As he does this, the workers studiously look in other directions.

NICKY (V.O.)

...were all slipped in there to skim

the joint dry. They'd do short counts, they'd lose fill slips. They'd even take cash right out of the drop boxes. And it was up to this guy right here [NANCE], standin' in front of about two million dollars, to skim the cash off the top without anybody gettin' wise ...the IRS or anybody.

COUNTER #1

Verify two hundred.

NANCE closes the case and walks out. One of the counters dumps another container of money on the table.

NICKY (V.O.)

Now, notice how in the count room nobody ever seems to see anything. Somehow, somebody's always lookin' the other way. Now, look at these guys [COUNTERS]. They look busy, right? They're countin' money. Who wants to bother them? I mean, God forbid they should make a mistake and forget to steal. Meanwhile, you're in and you're out.

NANCE exits the count room and proceeds through the lobby of the casino, passing ACE and SHERBERT, to a side exit door.

NICKY

Past the jag-off guard who gets an extra c-note a week just to watch the door. I mean, it's routine. Business as usual: in, out, hello, goodbye. And that's all there is to it. Just another fat fuck walkin' out of the casino with a suitcase. Now, that suitcase was goin' straight to one place: right to Kansas City ...which was as close to Las Vegas as the Midwest bosses could go without gettin' themselves arrested.

NANCE leaves the casino and gets into a cab parked at the curb.

EXT. KANSAS CITY AIRPORT - DAY

NANCE arrives. He is greeted by ARTIE PISCANO, a gray-haired sixty-year-old underboss.

TITLE IN: 'KANSAS CITY'

NICKY (V.O.)

That suitcase was all the bosses

ever wanted ...and they wanted it every month.

PISCANO

Hey, John, how are you? How was your ride?

EXT. SAN MARINO ITALIAN GROCERY, KANSAS CITY - DAY

NANCE, with suitcase, and PISCANO leave the car and enter the produce market.

NICKY (V.O.)

Now this old Mormon fuck here...

CUT TO: NANCE, AS HE GETS OUT OF PISCANO'S CAR

INT. SAN MARINO ITALIAN GROCERY, KANSAS CITY - DAY

NANCE and PISCANO walk through the grocery store, through the warehouse, past various employees to a doorway leading into the back room, where they are greeted by five older men around a large wooden table with bowls of macaroni and old jelly glasses filled with red wine.

NICKY (V.O.)

...he had to fly in with suitcases once a month, nice and easy.

NANCE

Somethin' smells good.

PISCANO

Yeah, they made us somethin' to eat.

NICKY (V.O.)

The bosses would come from all over the place: Detroit, Cleveland, Milwaukee. All over the Midwest. And they would meet in the back of this produce market in Kansas City. I mean, nobody even knew.

NANCE shakes hands with AMERICO CAPELLI, sixty-eight, a bald, affable Milwaukee entrepreneur and ARTHUR CAPP, his thirty-year-old yuppie lawyer son.

Camera continues to pan around the room.

NICKY (V.O.)

One of the guys made his mother do all the cooking.

On VINCENT BORELLI, seventy-year-old Kansas City boss.

BORELLI

Did you ever see that guy Jerry

Steriano?

On VINNIE FORLANO, mid-seventies, an old-timer who once drove for Capone and is now Remo Gaggi's right-hand man.

FORLANO

Jerry Steriano?

BORELLI

Yeah.

NICKY (V.O.)

Now, these old greaseballs might not look it, but believe me, these are the guys who secretly controlled Las Vegas.

PISCANO joins his MOTHER and DAUGHTER by a stove.

PISCANO'S MOTHER

That man's here again.

Piscano dips a piece of bread into a pot of tomato sauce.

NICKY (V.O.)

Because they controlled the Teamsters' Union, and that's where you had to go if you wanted to borrow money to buy a casino.

BORELLI (O.S.)

When you've finished with him, I want him.

PISCANO'S MOTHER

(Carrying a plate of food to the table where BORELLI and FORLANO are seated.)
Here you are, gentlemen.

NICKY (V.O.)

And nobody got a Teamsters' loan, unless the guys in this room knew they were gonna get their little suitcases.

FORLANO gets up from the table and walks toward NANCE.

NICKY (V.O.)

Guys like this antique here [FORLANO], out of Detroit. Or especially guys like Remo Gaggi, the outfit's top boss.

NANCE embraces REMO GAGGI who's seated on a couch, and sits across from him.

GAGGI

You got a round figure on it?

NICKY (V.O.)

Definitely the most important guy in this room.

NANCE

(Picking up the suitcase)

About twenty pounds.

GAGGI

So?

NANCE

That's around seven hundred thousand.

GAGGI

Uh-huh, good.

NANCE opens the case to reveal the money.

ANDY STONE

(Off-screen, from following scene)

I know it's a little early for Las Vegas...

INT. TANGIERS EXECUTIVE OFFICE PRESS CONFERENCE/BANQUET ROOM - DAY

Camera tilts down a model of the Tangiers Hotel and Casino, then reveals the cover of Business Week magazine with a drawing of PHILIP GREEN, a young corporate type, smiling out under the headline: 'Philip Green, Vegas Wunderkind'.

STONE (O.S.)

...but I do want to welcome the ladies and gentlemen of the gaming industry.

On ANDY STONE, a middle-aged man at a podium giving a speech while GREEN, seated at a table, looks on. PHOTOGRAPHERS flash their cameras. ACE and SHERBERT, sitting next to GREEN, also watch the photo op ceremony.

ACE (V.O.)

As far as the world was concerned Andy Stone, the head of the Teamsters' Pension Fund, was a legitimate guy.

STONE

This is a very auspicious occasion.

ACE (V.O.)

A powerful man.

STONE

Philip, if you would rise.

Green stands up.

ACE (V.O.)

He even played golf with the
President.

STONE

On behalf of the Teamsters' Pension
Fund, it is my pleasure to present
to you . . .

ACE (V.O.)

But Andy also took orders. And when
he was told to give a pension fund
loan to Philip Green...

STONE

(Handing GREEN a large
cardboard facsimile
'check')
...this check for \$62,700,000 for
the new Tangiers.

GREEN

Thank you.

ACE (V.O.)

...he did what he was told.

PHILIP GREEN, who is now the head of the Tangiers Hotel and
Casino Corporation, is standing at the podium giving a speech.

NICKY (V.O.)

Now here was the perfect front man.
I mean, what the fuck else could he
be? He didn't know too much. He
didn't want to know too much,
especially that the bosses made the
Teamsters lend him the money. He
wanted to believe the Teamsters gave
him all that fuckin' money 'cause he
was smart.

An exploding flash bulb fills the screen.

GREEN

...I say that, knowing full well
just how much competition we have in
this great city.

EXT. CHEAP MOTEL OFF HIGHWAY - DAY

We see a MAN and a WOMAN swimming underwater. Camera reveals

that they are in a motel swimming pool with glass portholes. Expensive cars are parked outside one of the rooms. Hoods stand around outside the door.

NICKY (V.O.)

And where they got Green from - who the fuck knows? All I know is that Green was an Arizona real estate hustler, who barely had enough gas money to come and pick up his own fuckin' check...

INT. TANGIERS EXECUTIVE OFFICE PRESS CONFERENCE/BANQUET ROOM - DAY

We return to the press conference. Photographers snap away. In the background are six-foot blow-ups of the Business Week cover. The camera moves past GREEN, CAPP and several other men, past SHERBERT, to ACE.

NICKY (V.O.)

Now, all they needed was somebody they could trust to run the casino. And who better than Ace? I mean, he was already in Vegas a couple of years and he had the fuckin' place clocked.

FREEZE FRAME ON ACE.

INT. TANGIERS SWIMMING POOL - DAY

Camera looks straight down from the top of a hotel to a large pool area.

NICKY (V.O.)

But typical Ace...

INT. TANGIERS SWIMMING POOL/POOLSIDE - DAY

STONE, in a bathing suit and robe, sits on a lounge chair with a telephone. ACE, in sports clothes, sits on another chair.

NICKY (V.O.)

...give him a shot at runnin' a casino and he tries to talk you out of it.

ACE

You know, I don't know if I could do this even if I wanted to. The Gaming Commission would never give me a license. I have at least two dozen gambling and bookmaking pinches on me.

STONE

You don't have to have a license to work in a casino. All you gotta do is apply for one. The state law says you can work in a casino while they're processing your application. They got a ten-year backlog.

ACE

But what happens when they do find out?

STONE

Why would they want to find out? We're puttin' a hundred million into this desert here. Why would they want to lock us out? And besides, they'll never find out. All you gotta do is keep changing your job title. Like, uh, from Casino Executive to Food and Beverage Chairman. And what happens it, they take your application, they put it at the bottom of the pile. I know guys workin' there for thirty years, don't have a license.

ACE

(Exhales)

It's a tough proposition, Andy. You, you know, if I did it, I'd have to run it my way.

STONE

You got it.

ACE

I'm serious. No interference.

STONE

Nobody's gonna interfere with your running the casino. I guarantee it.

Stone lights a cigarette.

INT. TANGIERS CRAPS PIT - NIGHT

ACE blows on a die.

NICKY (V.O.)

And that's how that got Ace to take over.

ACES's hands place the die into a micrometer.

NICKY (V.O.)

They wanted him because Ace ate,

slept and breathed gambling.

Camera swish tilts up to ACE, then swish pans to boxman, dealers and players watching him, trying to act calm.

NICKY (V.O.)

They worked out a real cute job title too.

We see the die in the micrometer.

NICKY (V.O.)

Tangiers Public Relations Director.

Satisfied the die is not loaded ACE sets it on the craps table, the camera cranes up to reveal the Tangiers Casino floor.

NICKY (V.O.)

But the only thing he ever directed was the casino. He made his first bet when he was fifteen years old, and he always made money. But he didn't bet like you or me.

A DEALER is sliding chips, tossing them on to a craps table.

NICKY (V.O.)

You know, havin' some fun with it, shit like that.

ACE

(Approaching the DEALER)

Where the hell did you learn how to deal?

(He reaches down, stacking and arranging the chips.)

NICKY (V.O.)

He bet like a fuckin' brain surgeon.

ACE

(To the chastised

DEALER)

Place the checks properly. That's the way you do it.

DEALER

Yes, sir.

NICKY (V.O.)

He had to know everything, this guy.

Direct overhead tracking shot as ACE walks between two rows of gaming tables.

NICKY (V.O.)

He'd find out the kind of inside stuff nobody else knew, and that's what he'd put his money on.

INT. GYM/BOOKIE JOINT, BACK HOME, PRE-SEVENTIES - DAY

ACE walks past two boxers sparring in a ring, through a doorway into a room where several gamblers are seated around a table.

NICKY (V.O.)

Even back home, years ago, when we were first hangin' out together...

TITLE IN: 'BACK HOME, YEARS AGO'

NICKY (V.O.)

...he'd know if the quarterback was on coke.

ACE is looking at the odds board for college football games. The bookie, LUCKY LARRY, is waiting for ACE to hand in his picks.

ACE

I'll take Columbia for twenty.

NICKY (V.O.)

If his girlfriend was knocked up.

LUCKY LARRY

Twenty dimes on Columbia . . .

As soon as ACE bets, a man erases a number from the chalkboard and replaces it was a '6', changing the odds. Two GAMBLERS saunter from the room.

NICKY (V.O.)

He'd get the wind velocity so he could judge the field goals. He even figured out the different bounce you got off the different kinds of wood they used on college basketball courts, you know?

EXT. GYM/BOOKIE JOINT PUBLIC PHONES - DAY

The two GAMBLERS we saw sauntering out of the bookie joint are racing to the nearest public phones. Another GAMBLER has already beaten them to it.

NICKY (V.O.)

He'd be workin' on this shit day and night. There was nothin' about a game he was gonna bet that he didn't know.

GAMBLER #1

(Into phone)
Ace got down at six.

GAMBLER #2

(Into phone)
Charlie, hey. Rothstein got six.

INT. GYM/BOOKIE JOINT, SEVERAL DAYS LATER - DAY

A bookie hands a stack of money to another bookie, who hands the money to ACE.

ACE removes several bills from the top of the stack of winnings and holds them out to the BOOKIES.

NICKY (V.O.)

Season after season, the prick was the only guaranteed winner I ever knew. But he was so serious about it all that I don't think he ever enjoyed himself. But...

ACE exits.

NICKY (V.O.)

...that's just the way he was.

INT. MOB SOCIAL CLUB BACK ROOM - NIGHT

The room has an espresso machine and a saint's day calendar. Assorted hoods are listening to NICKY at the bar. Camera dollies to REMO GAGGI, at the rear table playing gin rummy with OLD MAN CAPO and losing. Every time the CAPO picks up a card, he's able to knock or get gin, sending GAGGI into a fit bemoaning his bad luck.

NICKY (V.O.)

But back then the bosses didn't give a fuck about whether he enjoyed himself or not. To them, he was a cash register. All they had to do was ring the bell and take the money. Especially Remo, who was a fuckin' degenerate gambler who always lost.

GAGGI

(Slams down his cards
and curses at his
losing hands)
Ma che cazzo!

[Italian-American slang for 'What a prick.'] All those fuckin' sweeps.

NICKY (V.O.)

I mean, unless Ace made his bet.

GAGGI

That's enough now!

OLD MAN CAPO

I can't contest the cards.

GAGGI

Va fa 'n culo! [Italian-American
slang for 'Fuck off']

(Summoning a young
man.)

Johnny!

NICKY (V.O.)

Ace made more money for them on a
weekend than I could do heisting
joints for a month.

ACE enters and walks to GAGGI's table.

NICKY (V.O.)

Whatever Ace picked up on the street
he told Remo.

NICKY

(Walks over to ACE
and whispers)

Hey, did you bring that thing?

NICKY (V.O.)

You know, I mean fixed fights, doped
horses, crooked fuckin' zebras...
locked-in point spreads. He told
fuckin' Remo everything. And to tell
you the truth. I don't blame him.

GAGGI stands up and shakes ACE's hand.

GAGGI

Ace.

NICKY (V.O.)

Keepin' Remo happy with money was
the greatest insurance policy in the
world.

GAGGI beams as ACE takes out an envelope filled with cash
and hands it over to him. GAGGI sits back down and ACE,
knowing his place, smiles and is about to leave.

GAGGI

Son-of-a-bitch. How the hell did you
get Oklahoma-Michigan? Nobody ever
had Oklahoma-Mi... How the hell'd
you do it?

ACE

Well, that's why they paid so well.

GAGGI

You see?

(Chuckles.)

Never tells me nothin'. Ace, what do we got on for next week?

ACE

Well, it's a little too early. I'd say Thursday would be good. I'll know by then. Is that all right?

GAGGI

Okay. You come by the house?

ACE

I'll come by.

GAGGI

Seven o'clock?

ACE

Seven o'clock.

GAGGI gets up and kisses ACE as NICKY and OLD MAN CAPO look on.

GAGGI

Good job, my boy. Keep it up. Okay, Ace?

ACE nods in agreement and leaves the room.

GAGGI

(To NICKY)

Hey, Nick. Vien acca. [Italian-American slang for 'Come here']

NICKY

(To ACE)

I'll be right out.

GAGGI

T'aggia parla. [Italian-American slang for 'I've got to talk to you'] Nicky... See that guy?
(pointing to the off-screen ACE)

NICKY

Mm.

GAGGI

Keep a good eye on him. He's makin'

a lot of money for us. And he's gonna continue makin' a lot of money for us, so keep a good eye on him.

NICKY

Mm.

GAGGI

Not like your fuckin' friends out there, that... without brains. Okay?

NICKY

All right.

GAGGI

Uh-huh. Mi raccomando. [Italian-American slang for 'I'm counting on you']

NICKY

Yeah.

GAGGI

Fine.

NICKY

(Reaching down to touch GAGGI's money, joking with him.)
Want me to take this for you?
(He walks out.)

NICKY (V.O.)

So, now, on top of everything else, I gotta make sure that nobody fucks around with the Golden Jew.

INT. BACK HOME BAR - NIGHT

We move past JOE, a guy at the bar entertaining a BRUNETTE and a BLONDE, to NICKY and FRANK MARINO at the other end. There are other bar patrons in the background.

JOE

(To the BARTENDER)
Chase, couple of shooters for the ladies.

BARTENDER (O.S.)

All right.

ACE (V.O.)

Yeah, we made a great pair. I made book and Nicky made sure we always collected. The old men loved us. And why not? They all made money with us.

NICKY

(To MARINO)

They payin'?

ACE (V.O.)

How did Nicky collect?

MARINO

They pay every week, like they're supposed to.

ACE (V.O.)

Don't ask.

NICKY

Then where the fuck is the money? I don't see the money.

ACE enters, and greets the two girls.

ACE

Hi, Melissa. Heidi.

BLONDE

Hi, Sam.

JOE

(To the GIRLS)

Who's this guy?

MARINO

(To NICKY)

Get the fuck out of here. It was nine. I laid nine.

ACE approaches NICKY and MARINO.

NICKY

It was eight. Ace... tell him the line on the Bear's game.

ACE

Eight.

NICKY

If he don't know, nobody knows. Told you it was eight.

MARINO

Well, how come I laid nine?

NICKY

'Cause you're a jag-off. I would have fuckin' made you lay ten...

ACE notices a pen lying on the bar. He taps JOE on the

shoulder.

ACE

(To JOE)

Excuse me.

JOE

What?

ACE

(He holds up the pen)

Is this yours? Your pen?

JOE

Yeah, that's my pen. Why?

ACE

I ju- Well, it's a nice pen. I just didn't know whose it was. I thought it was yours. I didn't want it to get lost.

JOE

Well, thank you. Why don't you take that fuckin' pen and shove it up your ass, you fuckin' jag-off?

NICKY looks over.

ACE

Well, I was just offering you the-

NICKY moves towards JOE.

JOE

(Turning his back to
talk to the girls,
referring to ACE)

This fuckin' asshole.

NICKY grabs the pen out of ACE's hand.

MAN #1

(To JOE)

Look out!

Before ACE can react, NICKY grabs JOE and starts stabbing him in the neck with the pen.

MAN #1

Joe! Look out, Joe! Look out!

NICKY grunts while JOE gasps and groans. The BLONDE screams while NICKY's hand continues to plunge the pen into JOE's throat. JOE tumbles to the floor.

NICKY pounces on him, still stabbing and now kicking. JOE

whimpers.

NICKY

What's that? You hear? You hear a little girl, Frankie? You hear a little girl, Ace? Is that a little fuckin' girl?! What happened to the fuckin' tough guy? Told my friend stick it up his fuckin' ass?! Huh?! Huh?!

ACE

(Over whimpers and pants)

Wait a sec, Nicky, Nicky, Nicky. Take it easy.

ACE looks stunned. NICKY's still holding the bloody pen.

ACE (V.O.)

While I was tryin' to figure out why the guy was sayin' what he was sayin', Nicky just hit him. No matter how big a guy might be, Nicky would take him on. You beat Nicky with fists, he comes back with a bat. You beat him with a knife, he comes back with a gun. And you beat him with a gun, you better kill him, because he'll keep comin' back and back until one of you is dead.

NICKY (V.O.)

Listen...

INT. TANGIERS CASINO FLOOR, 1972 - NIGHT

Camera swoops from a woman cheering as she wins at a slot-machine to a blackjack table, then to a roulette table and over to a craps table.

Montage of very short cuts of chips being picked up, dice thrown, money being poured from a bucket, stacks of money.

NICKY (V.O.)

...with me protecting Ace, he made a fortune for the bosses. I mean that's what got him to Vegas. He was a money machine. A tremendous earner for these guys. As soon as he took over, he doubled the fuckin' drop. With Ace the casino never saw so much money. And the bosses, they couldn't be happier.

INT. TANGIERS CASINO FLOOR - NIGHT

Camera moves in on ACE as he looks out over the casino. Dealers deftly stack chips, scoop up losses and pay off winners. Chips and money are everywhere.

In extreme close-up slow motion a die falls on to a table.

INT. TANGIERS CASINO SLOT-MACHINE AREA - NIGHT

ACE and SHERBERT are walking down a casino aisle by the slot-machines. Dealers immediately snap to attention at their approach.

ACE (V.O.)

In Vegas, I had to keep a few juiced-in local cowboys working. They were close to the, you know, good old boys.

ACE

(To SHERBERT)

Pay him six hundred a week, tell him to walk around and look smart.

ACE (V.O.)

I mean, without us, these guys, they'd still be shovellin' mule shit.

ACE points at paper cups, empty glasses and the debris of silver dollar wrappings on the floor. DON WARD, the Slots Manager in Western garb, immediately starts picking up the debris. ACE looks at WARD sternly.

ACE

Ward, you gotta keep a cleaner station. If you need 'Mr Clean', page him, all right?

WARD bends down and picks up some trash.

WARD

It won't happen again, Sam.

ACE

Mr Rothstein.

ACE

(To SHERBERT)

Is this guy just another dumb fuckin' white man, or what? What's his story?

SHERBERT

We need this guy.

ACE

We can't get rid of him?

SHERBERT

He's juiced in. He's the County
Commissioner's cousin.

ACE

I wouldn't give the bum a mop job.

They exit.

INT. TANGIERS BACCARAT TABLES - NIGHT

A card shoe slides across the baccarat table. A state SENATOR,
a little drunk, tips the dealer, kisses the blonder HOOKER
with him, fills his pockets with his winnings and walks over
to see ACE.

ACE (V.O.)

These yokels ran the state.

DEALER #1

Thank you very much, Senator.

ACE (V.O.)

They passed the laws, they owned the
courts.

SENATOR

Hi, Ace.

ACE

Hello, Senator.

They shake hands.

SENATOR

(To ACE)

Hey, I need a room. Need a room.

ACE

Good to see ya.

(To SHERBERT)

William would you...

The SENATOR shakes hands with SHERBERT as the HOOKER joins
them.

ACE (V.O.)

I had dozens of politicians and state
officials comin' through that place
every week.

SHERBERT

Nice to see you, Senator.

ACE

(To SHERBERT)

Help the Senator, give him whatever
he wants.

SHERBERT

Certainly.
(Leads the way.)
Senator.

ACE (V.O.)

Why not make them happy?

SHERBERT

We have some nice penthouses you'll
enjoy. Maybe the Presidential Suite.

INT. TANGIERS PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - DAY

The SENATOR unzips the HOOKER's dress, kisses her and walks through the bedroom doorway, looking over his shoulder to her as she takes off her dress and walks out of his sight.

ACE (V.O.)

For politicians...

INT. TANGIERS BACCARAT TABLES - DAY

ACE smoking a cigarette by the baccarat tables.

ACE (V.O.)

...like our state senator up there,
everything was on the house.

INT. TANGIERS PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - DAY

The SENATOR opens a bureau drawer and takes out a small velvet pouch and pours black \$100 into his palm.

ACE (V.O.)

These guys won their comped life
when they got elected. So, hey, why
not take advantage of it? Still, the
politicians come cheap. We could
handle them.

INT. TANGIERS, ICHIKAWA LUXURY SUITE - DAY

K. K. ICHIKAWA a Japanese businessman, and a male associate pick up towels and soap from about the bedroom of their suite. A blonde woman checks herself in the mirror.

ACE (V.O.)

It's a whale like K. K. Ichikawa,
who plays thirty thousand dollars a
hand in baccarat. That's the one you
really gotta watch.

ICHIKAWA and his associate walk into the the suite's living-room and join a Japanese woman seated on a couch.

ACE (V.O.)

He plays fast and big and he has the cash and the credit to turn out your lights. About a year ago, he cleaned out a couple of casinos in the Cayman Islands.

They begin to stuff Tangiers soap and towels into their luggage.

ACE (V.O.)

Downstairs, he takes us for two million... and upstairs he takes free soap, shampoo and towels. Another billionaire cheapskate who loves his free rooms...

EXT. TANGIERS JET, LAS VEGAS AIRPORT - DAY

The Tangiers jet with the Tangiers logo on its side as ICHIKAWA shakes ACE's hands before boarding. SHERBERT follows him and his associates aboard.

ACE (V.O.)

...free private jets, and two million of our money.

ACE

Nice to see you again.

ACE (V.O.)

But we got him back. I had our pilot tell him the plane was on the fritz.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TANGIERS JET, STILL IN THE SAME SPOT - NIGHT

SHERBERT apologizes to ICHIKAWA and his entourage as they all get off the jet.

SHERBERT

Ken, I don't know what the hell went wrong. I'm awfully sorry.

ICHIKAWA

This is a big problem. Big problem.

SHERBERT

I can't understand it. These mechanical things, you know, they happen. Hey, be-better here than
(gesturing to the sky)
up there, you know what I mean?

INT. LAS VEGAS AIRPORT RESERVATION DESK - NIGHT

SHERBERT arguing with TICKET AGENT as ICHIKAWA and entourage look glum.

ACE (V.O.)

Then he missed the commercial flights connecting with Japan.

AGENT

I'm so sorry. There's a convention in town, and all flights are booked.

SHERBERT

A convention?

(Turning to ICHIKAWA)

I can't believe that there's a convention. It's never... ?

ICHIKAWA

What can I do?

EXT. TANGIERS CASINO - NIGHT

A smiling ACE greets ICHIKAWA and his entourage as they drive up and get out of Tangiers limos.

ACE (V.O.)

We got him back ...with a whole floor of rooms for himself.

ACE

I'm sorry you missed the plane.

ICHIKAWA

You want to get my money back, right?
(Chuckles)

ACE

No, no, no. No gambling. No.

INT. TANGIERS BACCARAT TABLES - NIGHT

ICHIKAWA, with the Japanese woman, picks up some chips and places them on the table. ACE and SHERBERT watch from behind a barrier.

ACE (V.O.)

He bet one thousand a hand instead of his usual thirty thousand a hand.

A dealer's hands slide two cards on the table.

DEALER

The bank wins a natural eight over a five.

Another dealer's hands place two chips on a table. ICHIKAWA looks on.

ACE (V.O.)

But I knew, the trick with whales like Ichikawa was that they can't bet small for long. He didn't think of it as winning ten thousand, he thought of it as losing ninety thousand.

ICHIKAWA places a larger bet.

ACE (V.O.)

So, he upped his bets...

A dealer picks up some chips from a rack and places them on the table.

ICHIKAWA is now seated with stacks of chips in front of him.

ACE (V.O.)

...until he dropped his winnings back and gave up a million of his own cash.

DISSOLVE TO:

ICHIKAWA, hours later, his chips depleted. ACE and SHERBERT still watch from behind the barrier as millions in chips are back in the dealer's racks.

ACE (V.O.)

In the casino, the cardinal rule is to keep them playing...

Move in on ACE as he smokes a cigarette.

ACE (V.O.)

...and keep them coming back. The longer they play, the more they lose. In the end, we get it all.

INT. TANGIERS CASINO - NIGHT

ACE, with pit bosses next to him, looks out over the huge casino where hundreds of thousands of dollars are being poured into machines.

ACE (V.O.)

In Vegas, everybody's gotta watch everybody else.

Camera reveals the DEALER at a craps table.

DEALER

Six, an easy way. Six! All right, who's gonna give me...

The DEALER places some chips on the table.

ACE (V.O.)

Since the players are looking to
beat the casino...

THE CAMERA IS ON THE DEALER.

DEALER

...both dice must hit that back wall
each and every roll. All right, make
a six!

**CAMERA PANS TO A WOMAN AND A MAN AT THE TABLE. THE WOMAN
TOSSES SOME DICE.**

ACE (V.O.)

...the dealers are watching the
players.

WOMAN

Gimme a six!

DEALER

Come on, baby, make a six!

A BOX MAN, seated mid-table is watching the DEALER.

ACE (V.O.)

The box men are watching the dealers.

CAMERA PANS TO THE DEALER.

DEALER

(Humming, fielding,
every roll.)

**CAMERA PANS TO A FLOOR MAN, STANDING DIRECTLY BEHIND THE BOX
MAN.**

ACE (V.O.)

The floor men are watching the box
men.

**CAMERA SWISH PANS TO REVEAL A PIT BOSS STEPPING IN, SCANNING
THE FLOOR.**

ACE (V.O.)

The pit bosses are watching the floor
men.

SWISH PAN TO A SHIFT BOSS SURVEYING THE CASINO.

ACE (V.O.)

The shift bosses are watching the
pit bosses.

SWISH PAN TO SHERBERT.

ACE (V.O.)

The casino manager is watching the shift bosses.

SWISH PAN TO ACE.

ACE (V.O.)

I'm watching the casino manager.

CAMERA SWISH PANS AND TILTS UP TO A VIDEO CAMERA MOUNTED INSIDE A GLASS DOME HANGING FROM THE CEILING.

ACE (V.O.)

And the eye-in-the-sky is watching us all.

SWISH PAN TO:

INT. TANGIERS-EYE-IN-THE SKY MONITOR ROOM - NIGHT

Video monitors show a dealer fanning a row of bills. Swish pan to ACE and SHERBERT watching the monitor. ACE lights a cigarette.

ACE (V.O.)

Plus...

SWISH PAN TO SURVEILLANCE CATWALKERS ADJUSTING CAMERAS AND SPYING ON PLAYERS BELOW WITH BINOCULARS.

ACE (V.O.)

...we had a dozen guys up there, most of them ex-cheats, who knew every trick in the house.

INT. TANGIERS CRAPS TABLE - NIGHT

Ginger squeals as she throws the dice across the table.

HIGH ROLLER

Come on, come on.

She rolls a winner.

GINGER

Yes!

HIGH ROLLER

Thank you. Very nice.

GINGER

(Chuckles)

I told you I was hot tonight.

INT. TANGIERS EYE-IN-THE-SKY MONITOR ROOM - NIGHT

Sound out: The monitor shows GINGER and the HIGH ROLLER cheering, she throws her arms around him. The crowd goes crazy.

SWISH PAN TO ACE LOOKING ON INTENTLY.

On screen, GINGER's hand sneaks a chip from the rack and subtly moves it towards her purse.

INT. TANGIERS CRAPS TABLE - NIGHT

Sound in: GINGER slips the chip quietly into her bag.

HIGH ROLLER

(Off-screen)

Let's go. This is for Ginger. Come on. This is for Ginger.

The HIGH ROLLER notices GINGER's hand on her purse. She pretends to have taken out her lipstick.

GAMBLER #1

Let me have a hundred on the hard ten. Thank you.

GAMBLER #2

Hard ten. One hundred.

INT. TANGIERS EYE-IN-THE-SKY MONITOR ROOM - NIGHT

ACE continues to look at the monitor. SHERBERT and a security man seated at a video console also look on.

INT. TANGIERS CRAPS TABLE - NIGHT

A craps stick pushes some dice towards GINGER. She rolls again, only this time she craps out. Gamblers groan, then applaud her. She's made so much money for the table that the winners toss chips in her direction.

HIGH ROLLER

I'm sorry.

GINGER

Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

(To the table)

Thank you very much. Thank you very much.

ACE and two casino execs are now on the floor watching her.

GINGER

Thank you, sir, I appreciate that. Everybody, thanks. Gives some chips as tips to the dealer and box man. Thanks. Take care, Steve. Take chances

and drive fast.

HIGH ROLLER

Ginger, honey.

DEALER

Thank you very much, now.

HIGH ROLLER

Ginger, honey, this is for you love.
Thanks for your time.

She turns to the HIGH ROLLER, who is handing her a thin stack of chips worth about \$2,000.

GINGER

(Chuckles)

Come on.

HIGH ROLLER

What's the matter?

GINGER

What do you mean, 'What's the matter?'
I made a lot of money for you. I
want my cut.

HIGH ROLLER

What money? I've seen you stealing
from me.

GINGER

What money? Look at this stack of
chips. Don't give me that shit. I
want my end.

HIGH ROLLER

Ginger, I've been watching you all
night. You've been stealing from me.

GINGER

Don't give me that shit. I want my
money.

HIGH ROLLER

That bag's full of fuckin' chips you

GINGER

(Interrupts)

What do you mean 'stole'? I didn't
steal anything from you.

ACE watches the argument heat up.

HIGH ROLLER

Get lost, Ginger! Get lost!

GINGER

Get lost?

HIGH ROLLER

Yes.

GINGER

Get lost?

HIGH ROLLER

Yes.

GINGER knocks the chip rack out of his hands.

GINGER

Well, how 'bout that?

HIGH ROLLER

Come on!

(He bends down to
pick them up.)

Gamblers and dealers shout and yell. She picks up another rack of chips and tosses them into the air, then another, and another. Chips fly all over the casino. Everyone starts diving for chips. Dealers. Players. Security guards. Waitresses. Pit bosses. Bedlam.

ACE and the two execs with him are the only ones not diving for chips. He looks at GINGER. She looks at him.

FREEZE FRAME ON GINGER.

Slow motion: GINGER smiles at ACE and walks off.

ACE (V.O.)

What a move. I fell in love right
there.

INT. COCKTAIL LOUNGE - NIGHT

GINGER and ACE are seated on a banquette. Close up of his hand attaching a diamond and ruby pin to her dress. Tilt up to GINGER's smiling face beaming at ACE.

ACE (V.O.)

But in Vegas, for a girl like Ginger,
love costs money.

They kiss.

GINGER

I'm going to go powder my nose.
(ACE hands GINGER a
single \$50 bill. She
smiles coyly. He
hands her another

fifty.)

ACE (V.O.)

Ginger's mission in life was money.

GINGER

I'll be right back.

ACE (O.S.)

(from following scene)

See you, Ginger.

FLASHBACK - EXT. CASINO ENTRANCE - NIGHT

GINGER waves goodbye to the DOORMAN and walks towards two VALET PARKERS who greet her warmly. She gets a bottle of pills from one of them and slips some cash into his hand in return.

GINGER

Okay, thank you for asking.

ACE (V.O.)

She was a queen around the casino.
She brought in high rollers and helped
them spread around a lot of money.

GINGER

(To VALET PARKERS)

Hello.

VALET PARKER

Hey, Ginger, how you doin'?

GINGER

Great.

(Handing the VALET
some money.)

And I have something for you. You
got me covered?

The VALET PARKER places a vial of pills in her hand.

VALET PARKER

Yes. Something for you, there.

GINGER

And you do. Thank you very much.

VALET PARKER

Take care of yourself.

FLASHBACK - INT. HOTEL SUITE BATHROOM - NIGHT

GINGER hands the pills to HIGH ROLLER #2 in his hotel bathroom, where he is washing his face and trying to energize himself.

GINGER

I got some lucky pills for you, honey.

HIGH ROLLER #2

Oh, yeah?

ACE (V.O.)

Who didn't want Ginger? She was one of the best-known, best-liked and most respected hustlers in town. Smart hustlers like her could keep a guy awake for two or three days before sending him home broke to the little woman and his bank examiners.

INT. COCKTAIL LOUNGE - NIGHT

GINGER comes back from the ladies room. She kisses ACE.

ACE

Any change?

GINGER

(Chuckles)

I hit a few... uh, games on the way back.

ACE (V.O.)

That was all bullshit. She just pocketed the cash.

FLASHBACK - INT. TANGIERS CASHIER'S CAGE - NIGHT

GINGER converts her chips into a pile of \$100 bills.

GINGER

(To CASHIER)

How you doin' tonight?

CASHIER

Good. How are you?

GINGER

(Sighing)

Oh, beat.

ACE (V.O.)

Ginger had the hustler's code.

CASHIER

Okay.

GINGER

Take one for you.

CASHIER

(While she counts out
the cash)
Thank you.

ACE (V.O.)

She knew how to take care of people.
And that's what Vegas was all about.

CASHIER

(As she pushes a stack
of \$100 bills across
the counter)
Sixty-eight hundred.

GINGER

Thanks

She picks up the cash.

CASHIER

You're welcome.

ACE (V.O.)

It's Kickback City.

GINGER

You have a good night.

CASHIER

Thank you. You too.

Close-up of GINGER folding a \$100 bill and placing it in her palm. She slips the folded bill deftly into the palm of a floor manager.

ACE (V.O.)

She took care of the dealers...

GINGER

Hey, Mitch.

ACE (V.O.)

...pit bosses, floor managers.

GINGER

Thank you.

ACE (V.O.)

But mostly...

EXT. TANGIERS ENTRANCE - NIGHT

GINGER, on her way out of the casino, passes a folded \$100 bill to a smiling older SHIFT BOSS.

ACE (V.O.)

...she took care of the valet parkers,

the guys who could get you anything
and take care of anything.

GINGER

Thanks a lot.

SHIFT BOSS

Thank you, Ginger.

EXT. TANGIERS ENTRANCE - NIGHT

GINGER exits and gets into her car, slipping a VALET PARKER
a \$100 bill.

ACE (V.O.)

Ginger took care of the parkers
because they took care of the security
guards, who took care of the metro
cops, who let her operate.

VALET PARKER #3

Thank you, Ginger.

GINGER

(Getting into her car)
I need that stuff tonight.

VALET PARKER #3

No problem.

GINGER

You're a doll.

ACE (V.O.)

The valet parking job was such a
money-maker that they had to pay off
the hotel manager just to get the
concession.

INT. GINGER'S APARTMENT - DAY

GINGER enters the room with \$25,000 in her hands. She taps
LESTER DIAMOND's leg with it and he turns to her.

ACE (V.O.)

But one thing I could never
understand, was that she could have
everything under control, except for
her old pimp boyfriend, Lester
Diamond.

LESTER

Look, Gin, you know I got other people
in this. I got partners. But I want
you to understand that I am lookin'
out for you in this thing. Okay?
You're going to get yours back...

and you're gonna get it back first.
Okay?

GINGER

All right.

LESTER

Okay?

GINGER

Yeah.

LESTER

Where are you goin'? Where are you?
You're in that place. Where are you?

GINGER

I'm here.

LESTER

No, you're not. Where are you? Where
are you?

GINGER

I'm always here for you.

LESTER

You are.

GINGER

I am.

He hastily kisses GINGER and slips out the door.

ACE (V.O.)

The Ginger I knew wouldn't even look
at this creep.

GINGER

Good luck.

LESTER

Yeah.

ACE (V.O.)

He was a moocher, a card cheat, a
country-club golf hustler. A
scumbag... chasing dentists for a
few bucks.

GINGER

Careful.

GINGER looks out of the window and sees LESTER get into a
convertible and drive off.

ACE (V.O.)

I mean, the guy was always broke, he always had a story. And somehow, she could never turn him down. The way Ginger saw it, I guess, was that Lester was just an unlucky guy. Somebody had to take care of him.

INT. BACK HOME AIRPORT/CUSTOMS - DAY

NICKY, his wife JENNIFER, with a beehive hairdo, and their eight-year-old son LITTLE NICKY, are detained while their luggage is searched by a customs agent.

TITLE IN: 'BACK HOME'

ACE (V.O.)

But nobody had to take care of Nicky.

NICKY

(To customs agent)

You find any cash in there, we'll whack it up with you.

ACE (V.O.)

I mean, he took care of himself only too well. And that's why every badge back home wanted to nail him.

JENNIFER

(To customs agent)

Excuse me, but I folded these things beautifully and I would appreciate a little respect. Jesus Christ!

NICKY

Don't look at me, pal. I gotta live with her.

We see MARINO waiting for NICKY outside the customs area. Two COPS push past him.

ACE (V.O.)

Even after a little vacation, they hassled him at the airport.

COP #1

(To MARINO)

Excuse me.

ACE (V.O.)

I mean, Frank Marino was there to meet him, but so were the cops. This time they wanted to pinch him for some diamond burglary in Antwerp.

CAMERA DOLLIES IN ON JENNIFER'S BEEHIVE.

JENNIFER

Oh, yes. Will you help me fold these,
please?

ACE (V.O.)

They were ready to blame him for
anything, no matter where it happened.

FLASH FORWARD - INT. NICKY'S HOUSE/BACK HOME - DAY

NICKY, JENNIFER, LITTLE NICKY and MARINO walk in.

JENNIFER

(To LITTLE NICKY)

You go and put your things away.

ACE (V.O.)

And they were usually right.

NICKY, JENNIFER and MARINO are gathered around the kitchen
table. JENNIFER leans over and starts to shake her hair.

MARINO

Whoa, whoa, whoa.

NICKY

Hold it, hold it. Here.

NICKY places a red towel down on the table. JENNIFER leans
over again, tugs and shakes her hair until diamonds begin to
fall out of her beehive.

ACE (V.O.)

Because Nicky enjoyed being a
gangster, and he didn't give a damn
who knew it.

JENNIFER

Come on. There we go. Look at that.
Beautiful.

Diamonds fall on the red towel in slow motion.

ACE (V.O.)

I mean, that's what worried me, 'cause
it turns out Nicky was about to be
sent to Vegas.

JENNIFER

All right, we're clear.

NICKY

There's more!

JENNIFER

I think that's it.

NICKY

There's more! There's a couple stuck
in there. I know there's more.

JENNIFER

God, I'm telling you, they're out!

NICKY

Come on, damn it. Don't get so
defensive. It could be stuck in your
hair, you know.

NICKY grasps JENNIFER's hair.

JENNIFER

Look, there aren't...
(A diamond falls out
of her beehive.)
There aren't but...

NICKY

Oh, there aren't?
(Showing her the
diamond.)
What's that?
(Slaps her.)
Huh? What's that.
(FRANK chuckles.)
There's no more. Thanks, hon.

INT. BACK HOME AIRPORT/CUSTOMS - DAY

ON NICKY.

NICKY (V.O.)

I couldn't wait to get my hands on
Vegas. But the bosses didn't send me
out there to have a good time.

**INT. SAN MARINO ITALIAN GROCERY/BACK ROOM, KANSAS CITY -
NIGHT**

Mob bosses FORLANO, CAPELLI, GAGGI, BORELLI and PISCANO seated
around the back room table eating and talking as in the
opening vignette.

NICKY (V.O.)

They sent me out there to make sure
that nobody fucked with Ace and...

INT. ACE'S TANGIERS PENTHOUSE, LAS VEGAS - DAY

ACE opens the door to NICKY and JENNIFER.

NICKY (V.O.)

...nobody interfered with the fuckin'
skim.

ACE

(Opening door)

Hey.

JENNIFER

Hey, how you doin'?

(Kisses ACE.)

NICKY

Hey. Hey, Sammy, how are you?

JENNIFER and NICKY take in ACE's spectacular Vegas-style penthouse.

JENNIFER

(Whispering)

Wow.

NICKY

Boy, look at this place, huh?

JENNIFER

Incredible.

NICKY

All right.

ACE

Welcome to Vegas.

CAMERA TILTS UP TO REVEAL A SWEEPING VIEW OF THE LAS VEGAS SKYLINE.

NICKY

Okay, Sammy.

ACE

Somethin', huh?

NICKY

Yeah.

ACE

(Calling her over)

Ginger.

GINGER emerges from the bedroom. NICKY and JENNIFER are both stunned by her beauty.

NICKY

(To ACE)

Holy shit, what've you been doin' out here?

ACE

Honey, come here.

She walks to them

ACE

This is Jennifer and Nick. They're dear friends of mine.

JENNIFER

(Shaking hands)
Good to meet you.

GINGER

Hi, Jennifer.

NICKY

Pleasure.
(Grasping GINGER's hand and kissing it.)
Very nice to meet you.

GINGER

Hi, how are you?

NICKY

Okay, Sammy.

INT. ACE'S CAR, LAS VEGAS STRIP - NIGHT

ACE and NICKY are driving through town, the neon lights of Vegas reflected in the windshield.

ACE (V.O.)

After we ate, we left Jennifer and Ginger alone and we took a ride to talk. And then... he hit me with it.

NICKY

What do you think about me movin' out here?
(ACE looks away.)
What's the matter? You got a problem with that?

ACE

No, of course not.

NICKY

(Playfully)
You mean, I have your permission?

ACE

Sure, you have my permission. But I - I just gotta tell you it's no joke out here. It's no joke, you know? You gotta keep a low profile. It's not like back home. Right off the bat, they don't like guys like us.

And this sheriff's a real cowboy.
Even the coppers aren't afraid to
bury people out in the desert here.

NICKY

I don't care. I want to get away
from back home for a while. I'm tired
of that shit back there.

(Referring to the
Vegas lights.)

Look at this place. It's made of
money. You know what the best part
is? Nobody's gonna know what we're
doin'! There's nobody here to see
us! Everybody's back home.

ACE

Nick, I gotta tell you, I got pinched
twice for no reason. You really gotta
be careful. I'm running a licensed
place. Everything's legit.

NICKY

Don't worry about it. I'm not gonna
do anything. What am I gonna do?
I'm especially not gonna involve you
in anything.

ACE gives NICKY a look.

EXT./INT. LAS VEGAS SPORTSBOOK - NIGHT

NICKY and MARINO pull up in their car and get out.

NICKY (V.O.)

Ace saw Vegas one way.

NICKY

You call this guy and tell him I'm
comin'?

MARINO

Of course.

They walk into the sportsbook, past numerous bar patrons and
gamblers to TONY, the bookie at a betting counter.

NICKY (V.O.)

But I saw it another. I saw it as
untouched. I mean, they had bookies,
pimps and drug dealers I could shake
down. Who the fuck were they gonna
run to? So, I started getting
everybody in line. Best of all, for
the first time in my life, I figured
out a way not to lose.

ACE (V.O.)

Yeah, he had a fool-proof scheme,
all right. It wasn't very scientific
but it worked. When he won, he
collected. When he lost, he told the
bookies to go fuck themselves. What
were they gonna do? Muscle Nicky?
(Chuckles.)
Nicky was the muscle.

NICKY grabs TONY by the back of his neck.

NICKY

Tony.

TONY

Hey.

NICKY

How you doin'?

TONY

How you doin'?

NICKY

All right, yeah. You got that thing
for me?

TONY

What thing? Oh, Nicky... I thought
you was layin'.

NICKY

I was layin'? No, no, I'm taking it.
I was takin' it.

TONY

You sure?

NICKY

I'm positive.

TONY

Well, I'm a little confused here.

NICKY

You're a little confused?

TONY

Yeah.

NICKY

(Pointing to a window,
above a counter with
a tiny opening to
talk through)
Maybe if I stick your fuckin' face

through this window over here like,
you know, you'll - you'll get
unconfused. Give me the fuckin' money!

TONY takes some money out of his coat pocket.

TONY

(Groaning)
I'm sorry, Nicky. I didn't mean
anything by it.

NICKY

Yeah, I know, that's why you had it
ready. You thought I was fuckin'
layin' it?!

He smacks the bookie on the head with the wad of money.

TONY

(Gasps)
My fuckin' head.

NICKY

Your fuckin' head, huh? Don't fuck
around, Tony.

MARINO

(Pointing to TONY)
Smarten up.

NICKY

(Walking out)
You jag-off.

CLASSROOM NUN (O.S.)

(From following scene)
And now...

INT. CATHOLIC SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

NICKY and JENNIFER stand in the background with other parents
listening to a NUN school teacher. LITTLE NICKY and other
youngsters are seated at small children's desks.

CLASSROOM NUN

...Nicholas Santoro will come up and
tell us about our first president.

LITTLE NICKY

(Stepping up in front
of the class to begin
a speech)
George Washington was born in a...

ACE (V.O.)

But still, it was nice and quiet for a while. Ginger and I presented Nicky and Jennifer all over town, like regular Ozzie and Harriets.

LITTLE NICKY

...typical Virginia farmhouse.

EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD - DAY

NICKY and DETECTIVE BOB JOHNSON are coaching their sons. JOHNSON pats LITTLE NICKY on the back and with encouraging words sends him running on to the field.

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

(To LITTLE NICKY)

Beautiful. You got a beautiful swing.

NICKY (V.O.)

Ace got my son, little Nicky, involved with Little League, and it was great.

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

Now, I want you to get out there and get me singles and doubles, okay? 'Cause that's what's gonna win this game.

NICKY (V.O.)

Turned out to be one of the other coaches was a fuckin'...

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

Now go out there and show your dad what you can do.

NICKY (V.O.)

...metro intelligence cop. But it didn't matter. I mean, it was all about the kids, you know.

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

You know, he's gotta realize everything can't be a home run that he does.

NICKY

Yeah, well, that's exactly what I keep tellin' him, but that's the kind of kid he is ever since he's born.

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

It's instinctive, you know.

NICKY

He tries to do everything...

LITTLE NICKY hits the ball, NICKY and DETECTIVE JOHNSON applaud.

NICKY

Ohh!

ACE (V.O.)

And, Nicky being Nicky, he made his presence known.

INT. TANGIERS CASHIER'S CAGE CREDIT WINDOW - NIGHT

NICKY saunters through the casino and up to EDDY and JERRY, two well-dressed hoods who are signing papers at the cashier's credit window near ACE and SHERBERT.

ACE (V.O.)

Especially at the casino, where he definitely did not work, people got the message.

NICKY (V.O.)

Me? That's why the bosses sent me out here. They wanted me to make sure none of the other crews robbed the joint. Like these two fuckin' balloon-heads over here [EDDY and JERRY]. They were gonna try and bang us out of two hundred fuckin' grand?
(Chuckling.)
Yeah, right, I'm sure.

JERRY

(Shakes NICKY's hand)
Hey, Nicky. How are you?

NICKY

Hey, Eddy.

EDDY

Hey, Nicky, how are you? What are you doin' here?

NICKY

I'm over here now.

JERRY/EDDY

(In unison)
You're over here?

JERRY

You're over here?

NICKY

Yeah, I'm over here with him.

SWISH PAN TO ACE WITH SHERBERT OFF TO THE SIDE.

EDDY

Oh.

JERRY

Oh.

EDDY

We're waiting on Carmine.

JERRY

Yeah, we're lookin' for Carmine.

NICKY

Carmine? He was here before. I saw him. He had a suitcase and everything, and then he left.

EDDY

Carmine left?

NICKY

Uh-huh.

JERRY

Carmine left?

EDDY

He's gone?

JERRY

He's not here?

EDDY

Carmine's gone.

NICKY

I think, you know, maybe he went across the street or somewhere else or somethin'. I don't know.

EDDY

Well, listen, uh... Good luck with the joint, huh?

(Shakes hands with

NICKY.)

NICKY

Oh, thanks, Eddy.

JERRY

(Shakes NICKY's hand)

Yeah, lots of luck. Lots of luck.

NICKY

Hey, great, Jerry.

They walk away.

NICKY

Good luck to you too.

CREDIT CLERK

(To NICKY from behind
the cage)

Hey, they forgot to sign their papers.

NICKY

What?

CREDIT CLERK

They forgot to sign their papers.

NICKY

Yeah, they don't need those anymore.

He looks over to ACE and SHERBERT. NICKY smiles.

ACE (V.O.)

Out of respect, guys from other crews
got away with a warning.

ACE taking a drag off his cigarette, nods an 'okay'.

ACE (V.O.)

Everybody else: watch out.

INT. TANGIERS CASINO/BLACKJACK TABLES - DAY

A blackjack WINNER, who looks like a school teacher, with
over \$100,000 in chips before him has gathered a crowd.

ACE (V.O.)

Like these yokels here who never
heard of Nicky or the bosses back
home, 'cause they're the morons who
give you the most trouble. Even after
we'd catch 'em, they'd try sneakin'
back with beards and wigs and fake
noses.

ACE and SHERBERT walk up to watch the WINNER who is playing
all six hands at the blackjack table.

ACE (V.O.)

You can spot these assholes by
watching the way they bet. Like this
guy. He's bettin' lavender chips at
five hundred each with only one little
problem. He's always guessed right.
If he wasn't so fuckin' greedy, he'd
have been tougher to spot. But in
the end, they're all greedy.

ACE walks around the WINNER's table, past the crowd, to the pit. Behind him are more blackjack tables, dealers and players. ACE bends down and ties his shoelace.

ACE (V.O.)

I saw that the dealer was weak, but he wasn't in on it.

The DEALER's hands lift the corner of his hole card a half an inch to determine the casino's hand against the WINNER. The slightly exposed hole card is a six of clubs.

ACE (V.O.)

He just wasn't protecting his hand. He was lifting his hole card way to high.

ON ACE'S FACE THEN TO HIS POV OF THE CARD, PAST A PIT BOSS, PANNING TO THE SIGNALER AT THE BLACKJACK TABLE TO THE RIGHT. THE SIGNALER IS SLUMPED DOWN IN HIS SEAT, TOSSING DOWN SOME CARDS AND SNEAKING LOOKS AT THE DEALER'S HAND AT THE WINNER'S TABLE.

ACE (V.O.)

Now, here's this guy...

OVERHEAD PAN FROM THE SIGNALER SLUMPED IN HIS SEAT.

ACE (V.O.)

...reading the dealer's hole card...

PAN CONTINUES PAST ACE TO REVEAL THE WINNER'S TABLE.

ACE (V.O.)

...and signaling his buddy [the WINNER] at this table.

OVERHEAD DOLLY IN ON SIGNALER WHO APPEARS TO BE NERVOUSLY TAPPING HIS THIGH.

We see through his trousers, that he is tapping a copper transmitter with a battery pack attached.

Back at the WINNER's table we see inside his pant leg where a device strapped to his leg is receiving the impulse signal - buzz - buzz - buzz - from the SIGNALER.

ACE (V.O.)

And that's just what these hustlers look for. They cruise from casino to casino, lookin' for weak dealers the way lions look for weak antelope.

ACE starts to get up.

ACE (O.S.)

(From following scene)
Operator?

INT. TANGIERS BLACKJACK TABLES/TELEPHONE - DAY

ACE is on the house phone right near the SIGNALER's table.

ACE

This is Mr R. Get me Armstrong and
Friday over at pit two right away.

He hangs up, and fixes his tie in the mirrored panel above
the phone.

**OVERHEAD VIEW OF THE SIGNALER'S TABLE. VARIOUS SECURITY GUARDS
SLOWLY BEGIN TO GATHER AROUND IT.**

ACE, waiting, lights a cigarette. ARMSTRONG joins ACE. They
look towards the SIGNALER's table.

ACE

(To ARMSTRONG)

BJ nineteen, second base, the beard
[Blackjack table number 19, second
position, man with the beard]

ACE

(Picks up the phone
again.)

Operator... I need Mr Happy, loud.

On ACE's signal, WAITRESSES, one carrying a cake with a
sparkling candle, start singing 'Happy Birthday', attracting
the crowd's attention.

WAITRESSES

(In unison)

Happy Birthday to you. Happy Birthday
to you. Happy Birthday, dear Jeff.
Happy Birthday to you.

Gamblers cheer and applaud.

ACE nods and ARMSTRONG lets a long metal object drop out
from under his jacket sleeve and moves in close behind the
SIGNALER, as though looking at the game.

He presses the object - a cattle prod - under the SIGNALER's
arm near his heart. The SIGNALER instantly goes into
convulsions, falling to the floor gasping and groaning.
Several SECURITY GUARDS grab the SIGNALER as he falls.
ARMSTRONG walks away.

SECURITY GUARD #1

Man down!

The WINNER sees what happened to his partner.

SECURITY GUARD #1

Notify medical! We got a cardiac
arrest here!

SECURITY GUARD #2

He's fine, folks. Just give us some
room, please!

ACE watches the scene. The guards lift the stunned SIGNALER
to his feet and help him away from the table. Play is
immediately resumed.

ACE (V.O.)

Watch it now.

The WINNER hurriedly places his chips into racks.

SECURITY GUARD #1 (O.S.)

Stand back!

ACE (V.O.)

They never know what hit them. And
if and when...

SECURITY GUARDS drag the SIGNALER out.

ACE (V.O.)

...they do find out they just got
zapped by a cattle prod...

SHERBERT follows the WINNER as he rushes away.

ACE (V.O.)

...they wish they really did have a
heart attack.

ACE exits behind the GUARDS and the SIGNALER.

INT. BASEMENT MAINTENANCE ROOM - NIGHT

A grim, windowless utility room with tools on racks along
the walls, some plain wooden chairs, and a workbench table.

ACE (V.O.)

Turns out this guy and his fuckin'
pals, they were knockin' this place
dead for years.

SECURITY GUARD #1

He's got a wire on him.

The SIGNALER is roughly shoved into the room. A SECURITY
GUARD tears his trousers down revealing the signaling device
strapped to his leg.

SIGNALER

Hey, hey, what are you doin', man?

SECURITY GUARD #2

(Exposing the device)

There it is! On the table!

SECURITY GUARD #1

Cheater's justice!

The SIGNALER is slammed down face first on the bench and the two GUARDS spread his arms out on the table.

SIGNALER

(In pain)

Oh, God! Oh!

Another GUARD starts up a power saw and approaches the SIGNALER who is now pinned to the table. He starts to scream.

SIGNALER

Hey, no! No! No!

ACE walks toward the table, gesturing for the GUARD to turn off the saw.

ACE (V.O.)

We had to make an example of these pricks that the party was over.

ACE

(To relieved SIGNALER)

I'm just curious. I saw you shuffling your checks with your right hand. Can you do that with both hands?

SIGNALER

No.

ACE

Can't do it with both hands?

SIGNALER

No, Sir.

ACE

Can you do it with your left hand?

SIGNALER

Well, I... I never tried.

ACE

So, you're a righty?

SIGNALER

Ye-yeah.

ACE nods to one of the GUARDS. Instantly a large rubber mallet

smashes onto the man's right hand four times to the sound of screams. ACE watches.

ACE

Now, you're gonna have to learn with your left hand.

SIGNALER

God!

(He moans and sits back.)

WINNER (O.S.)

(From following scene)

It's a hundred...

INT. CASINO CASHIER'S CAGE AREA - NIGHT

The WINNER has been standing outside the cashier's cage waiting for his \$110,000 in chips to be cashed. SHERBERT walks up behind him.

WINNER

...a hundred ten.

CASHIER

Yes, it is.

WINNER

I think.

CASHIER

Yes.

WINNER

Okay.

SHERBERT

Hiya. That's a lot of money to be counting out in public.

WINNER

Yeah.

SHERBERT

(To CASHIER)

Why don't I take him over to the office and verify it, huh?

CASHIER

Yes.

SHERBERT

A little privacy. And, by the way, send over a... nice bottle of champagne on ice, huh?

CASHIER

Sure will.

SHERBERT

Real special. Somethin'...

(To WINNER.)

By the way... I'm Billy Sherbert,
your casino manager.

He shakes hands with the WINNER.

WINNER

Hi.

SHERBERT

Having a good time?

SHERBERT leads him away from the cage.

WINNER

Yes, uh...

SHERBERT

You'll want to count the money in
privacy. You know, you don't need...

WINNER

Uh, I have a plane to catch to
Cleveland... Can I get my winnings?

INT. BASEMENT MAINTENANCE ROOM - NIGHT

The WINNER is pushed through the door by two GUARDS followed
by SHERBERT and sees his pal moaning in pain and holding his
broken hand.

SIGNALER

Look what they did to my hand, man!

ACE

(Walks over to the

WINNER)

All right, I'm gonna give you a
choice. You can either have the money
and the hammer or you can walk out
of here. You can't have both. What
do you want?

SHERBERT stands next to the WINNER

WINNER

I just wanna get out of here.

ACE

And don't forget to tell your friends
what happens if they fuck around in
here. You understand?

WINNER

I'm sorry. I made a bad mistake.

ACE

You're fuckin' right, you made a bad mistake. 'Cause if you come back here - we catch either one of you - we're gonna break your fuckin' heads and you won't walk out of here. You see that fuckin' saw? We're gonna use it. You don't fuck around in this place. You got it?

WINNER

Yeah.

ACE

Get out of here.

WINNER

Thank you.

The GUARDS usher the WINNER out of the room.

ACE

(To the GUARDS,
referring to the
SIGNALER)

Throw him out in the alley. And just tell the cops he got hit by a car.

INT. ACE'S TANGIERS PENTHOUSE

ACE and GINGER are alone in the living room. The apartment looks out on the glittering neon signs of the Strip.

ACE (V.O.)

Within no time, everything was set in place. We got rid of the freelance scamsters. The per was way up. The gods were happy, or as happy as the gods can ever be. And I, I decided to complicate my life. For a guy who likes sure things, I was about to bet the rest of my life on a real longshot.

ACE

We're not getting any younger. Don't you think it's time? Aren't you gettin' tired of all this shit? Bangin' around, hustlin' around?

GINGER

What, are you trying to handicap me?

ACE

I'm gonna do you one better. I'm trying to marry you. You want to marry me?

(GINGER looks doubtful.)

I'm serious. I mean, I - I want to settle down. I want a family.

GINGER

(Sighs, laughing)

You got the wrong girl, Sam.

ACE

I know I'd be a good father. I know you'd be a good mother.

GINGER

You don't know me. What, you've known me, two, three months. What do you know?

ACE

I'm forty-three years old. I don't want to wait. I know you well enough to know that I really love you very much. And I can't think of anybody better to be with. And I don't feel like waiting anymore.

GINGER

You know a lot of happily married people, Sam? 'Cause I don't.

ACE

Yeah, I know all that.

GINGER

I care about you, a - But I just don't have those kind of feelings for you. I'm sorry. I'm not in love with you.

ACE

(Brushing cigarette
ash off his dressing
gown)

I - I - I...

GINGER

Understand?

(Pause)

I'm sorry.

ACE

No, I - I... mean... that can grow as I - as long as there's a mutual

respect... that kind of thing can grow. I'm realistic. I can accept that. But, you know, what is... What is love anyway? It's a... it's a mutual respect. It's - it's a devotion. It's a... it's a caring from one person to another. And if we could set up some kind of foundation... based on that mutual respect... I feel that eventually you would care enough about me... that I could live with that.

GINGER

If it doesn't work out. You know, if it doesn't play out, then what happens to me?

ACE

You know I'm doin' well now. And I'm gonna do even better. And so, whatever happens, if it doesn't work out between us, I'm gonna make sure you're okay for the rest of your life. And if there are kids, especially, you know, I'll take care of you better than you'd ever imagine.

GINGER

(Interrupts)

What're you... what're you pitching me, here?

ACE

Just what I said. You'll be set up for the rest of your life. That I can promise you.

(Pause)

Want to take a chance?

She looks at him. ACE is holding her hand tightly.

INT. RIVIERA BALLROOM MARRIAGE - NIGHT

ACE and GINGER are seated at a banquet table with various guests, drinking champagne. AMY, their six-month-old child is in a cradle. NICKY and JENNIFER are hovering around the baby with LITTLE NICKY and are blissfully happy. It is an elegant affair. City Officials, politicians and gaming officials are there, plus, SHERBERT and Ace's boss, PHILIP GREEN. A photographer takes pictures of the guests.

ACE (V.O.)

When I married Ginger I knew all the stories, but I didn't give a fuck. 'I'm Sam Rothstein,' I said. 'I can change her.'

NICKY (V.O.)

It was typical Ace. He invited the biggest people in town and he knew they'd show. Because he knew they all wanted somethin' from him. With Ace, nobody ever got a free ride. Even Ginger. With her -

We see AMY in the cradle.

NICKY (V.O.)

- he still covered his bets. They had to have the baby first, before they got married. Even made Jennie and me watch Amy for a few days when they went on their honeymoon. But I didn't mind, we loved the kid.

IN SLOW MOTION CAMERA MOVES IN ON ACE AND GINGER, STANDING NEXT TO A LARGE WEDDING CAKE. THEY ARE KISSING. NICKY, SHERBERT AND OTHER GUESTS LOOK ON.

CAMERA MOVES IN CLOSER AS THEY KISS, THEN PAST THEM TO THE BRIDE AND GROOM FIGURINES ON THE CAKE.

LESTER's and GINGER's telephone conversation is heard in voice-over this scene.

LESTER

(Over telephone)

Can you feel my eyes on you? Can you feel me look into your heart? Can you feel me in the pit of your stomach? Can you feel me in you? In your heart?

We see a wide view of the elaborate wedding, guests mill about the banquet hall.

LESTER

Don't make me come there. Answer me.

GINGER

(Over telephone,
sobbing)

I love you.

INT. LESTER DIAMOND'S LOS ANGELES APARTMENT - NIGHT

LESTER DIAMOND is talking on the phone softly, cutting up cocaine on a piece of glass.

LESTER

(Into telephone)

Bub-ut, baby, do you know that I love you too?

GINGER

(Over telephone)
No, Lester.

LESTER

(Into telephone)
Do you know that?

GINGER

(Over telephone)
Yeah. This is the best thing I can
do for my life right now.

LESTER

(Into telephone)
That's right.

INT. RIVIERA BALLROOM CORRIDOR - NIGHT

GINGER is sitting alone on the phone. She's crying.

LESTER

(Over telephone)
So, it's gonna be okay, isn't it?

GINGER

(Sobbing, into
telephone)
Promise?

LESTER

(Over telephone)
God... I wish you...

INT. LESTER DIAMOND'S LOS ANGELES APARTMENT - NIGHT

There is a beautiful scantily dressed blonde girl in the
apartment with him. She bends down to the table in front of
him, snorts some cocaine, then walks away.

LESTER

(Into telephone)
...all the luck in the world.

GINGER

(Over telephone)
You do?

LESTER

(Into telephone)
Yeah, I do. I mean, it's - it's the -
it's the best thing you can do right
now. I mean this. And you'll have
real security. Sweetheart... you're
gonna be situated just right in Vegas.

INT. RIVIERA BALLROOM CORRIDOR - NIGHT

ACE enters from the ballroom and sees GINGER on the phone. He walks towards her, listening to her conversation.

LESTER

(Over telephone)

Come on, this is great for us. You know I'm gonna be here for you. I ain't going no place. Huh? I'm lookin' at you right now. I'm seein' you for the very first time, right this minute. I'm seein' you, and I can feel my heart click. I see you fourteen years old. I see you the first second I ever saw you. I see you, long-legged little colt -

GINGER notices ACE behind her.

LESTER

- with stupid braces on your teeth.

GINGER

(Into telephone, sniffing, trying to cut him off)

Okay, then.

LESTER

(Over telephone)

Every time I ever see you, that's what I see.

GINGER

(Into telephone)

Uh, talk to you later. Bye.

(She hangs up the phone quickly.)

ACE

You all right?

GINGER

(Drinking some champagne, wiping away tears)

Yeah.

ACE

Why're you crying?

GINGER

(Laughs)

I'm not crying.

(Sniffs.)

ACE walks up behind GINGER.

ACE

Maybe you shouldn't drink so much.

GINGER

I'm okay. I just -

(Sniffs)

You just have to understand. I've been with Lester since I was a kid. I just wanted to say goodbye. I - I just... I don't... I think I have a right to do that. Okay?

ACE

It's all right. That part of your life is over with. Right?

GINGER

Yeah.

ACE

You're with me now.

GINGER

Yeah.

ACE

Right?

GINGER

Uh-huh.

ACE

You sure?

GINGER

Yeah. Yeah.

They are reflected in a mirror behind the telephone.

ACE

Want to go? Let's go back in.

GINGER

(Sniffs)

Okay.

ACE's hands pick up a white rose and GINGER's gloves from the desk.

EXT. ACE'S HOUSE - DAY

ACE and GINGER drive up to an expensive house which backs on to a country-club golf course.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE - DAY

ACE takes GINGER inside. It is fancy and lush.

GINGER

Oh...

Through sliding glass doors, we see a patio and a pool area.

GINGER

(Sighing)

It's great.

The living-room has exposed white brick along the walls, bronze ostrich figurines, a white baby grand piano, and a zebra print rug surrounded by a few couches.

GINGER

Oh, it's great.

INT. ACE'S BEDROOM CLOSET - DAY

ACE takes GINGER past the bedroom to their huge room-sized closet. There are racks and racks of clothes.

GINGER

(Running into the closet)

Oh! It's all my stuff. Oh, my God.

ACE presents her with a long chinchilla coat.

GINGER

You brought all my stuff. I can -

She sees the coat.

ACE

Try it on. It's yours.

He puts it on her.

GINGER

(Whispering)

You're kidding? My God. What is it?

ACE

It's chinchilla.

GINGER

(Looking at herself in the mirror)

Oh, it's so soft.

ACE

It's nice isn't it?

GINGER

Oh...

ACE Kisses her.

GINGER

No one's ever been so nice to me.

They kiss and embrace.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - DAY

ACE's hand opens a leather case full of gold Bvlgari jewelry.

GINGER

(Gasps)

Oh, my God.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - DAY

ACE and GINGER lie on the bed, surrounded by jewelry. GINGER is swathed in the chinchilla coat. Ace watches as a transfixed GINGER tries on gold necklaces, rings, bracelets and earrings.

GINGER

So, do you think it's too much if I wear these in the same day?

ACE

You do whatever you want. Do I keep my promises, or do I keep my promises?

ACE kisses GINGER.

GINGER

You're so wonderful. The jewelry's not so bad, either.

ACE

The only thing is... you shouldn't keep this in the house. We gotta put it in a bank.

GINGER

(Putting on a gold bracelet)

Come on. Can I keep this one in the house?

ACE

Now look,
(gently holding her face, gathering her total attention)
pay attention to me. What I'm gonna tell you is very important.

GINGER

Okay.

ACE

All this stuff doesn't mean anything.
Money, this, doesn't mean anything
without trust. I have to be able to
trust you with my life.

EXT. BURBANK PRIVATE AIRPORT - DAY

TITLE IN: 'LOS ANGELES'

ACE and GINGER get off the Tangiers jet carrying two
suitcases. ACE gives a chauffeur the luggage and follows
GINGER into a brown Rolls Royce.

ACE (V.O.)

With over a million in cash and jewels
tucked in a bank in Vegas only for
Ginger, she was secure and happy.

INT. BEVERLEY HILLS BANK - DAY

ACE and GINGER walk into the bank lobby carrying the
suitcases.

ACE (V.O.)

She loved that shit. But a guy in my
line of work has to have a lot of
pay-off cash around.

INT. BEVERLEY HILLS BANK/VAULT - DAY

There are several safe deposit boxes filled with cash. ACE
and GINGER are closing a large box so crammed with cash that
ACE has to lean on it for the clasp to lock.

ACE (V.O.)

Crooked cops and kidnapers, they
don't take checks.

GINGER

Need a little help with that, Mr
Collins?

ACE (V.O.)

So, I put two million in cash in a
Los Angeles bank under the name of
Mr and Mrs Tom Collins. This was
strictly my shakedown and kidnapping
money.

ACE and GINGER struggle to push the crammed box into a slot
in the wall.

ACE (V.O.)

And, since I'd either be in jail or

locked in a closet when I needed the money the most...

The BANK PRESIDENT joins them, and he and ACE simultaneously double-lock the outer safe box door with two separate keys, after which, ACE gives GINGER his key.

ACE (V.O.)

...I gave Ginger the only key to the cash that could get me back alive.

INT. BANK PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - DAY

GINGER is on the other side of a glass wall, signing papers.

BANKER

Now this is just a signature card.

ACE

So, once she signs those papers, she'll be the only person to have total access to the box? No one else, including myself?

BANKER

That's right.

We see GINGER looking at ACE.

BANKER

That's the way you wanted it, right?

ACE nods

BANKER

(Quietly.)

Sam, let me ask you a question. You must really trust your wife.

ACE

(Quietly)

Yeah, sure I do. Why?

BANKER

No, tha-that's good. It's just unusual. To tell you the truth, so many of my clients don't.

ACE

Well...

ACE looks over to GINGER, smiles and winks. She looks back at him.

INT. TANGIERS LOUNGE - NIGHT

JERRY VALE sings to a seated audience. ACE sits alone at a

table.

ACE (V.O.)

With Ginger and the money in place,
I felt covered, and to play it safe
I switched job titles again and made
myself, um, Food and Beverage
Director. This way nobody would bother
me about a license. I mean, Vegas
was like a dream for me. Trouble
was...

NICKY is seated at another table with MARINO, peeling off
money and giving it to MIKE, a crooked dealer.

ACE (V.O.)

...Nicky was dreamin' his own kind
of Vegas.

NICKY (V.O.)

To begin, I put money out on the
streets, chargin' three points a
week. You know - juice to the fuckin'
dealers.

MARINO

(To MIKE)

Don't make us come lookin' for you.

MIKE

Oh, you won't have to look for me. I
appreciate it. Thanks, Nicky.

NICKY

All right, Mike.

MIKE gets up from the table.

NICKY (V.O.)

They were degenerate gamblers, coke
freaks. In no time, I had half the
dealers in the Tangiers in my pocket.
Then...

INT. TANGIERS POKER TABLE - NIGHT

NICKY is at a table with his gang of card sharks: SLIM, ROCKY,
MOOSH and COWBOY, all secretly signaling each other,
sandbagging a mark. MIKE, the crooked dealer from the previous
scene, deals NICKY a winning hand.

NICKY (V.O.)

...the next thing I did, I started
bustin' out high-stakes poker players.

ACE (V.O.)

It was so obvious. I mean, all of

Nicky's half-assed mechanics, they were real signal happy.

MOOSH

(Scratching his arm)
I'm gonna open for five hundred.

ROCKY

Moosh, you open?
(Taps his fingers on some chips before picking them up.)

ACE (V.O.)

Signaling back and forth.

CARD SHARK

I bet thirty-five hundred.

NICKY wiggles a toothpick back and forth in his mouth.

DOCTOR DAN

I've been losing for three days straight, non-stop.

Another shark pulls on his ear.

ROCKY

Oh, why're you crying, with three loaves of bread under your arm?

ACE watches their signals with concern.

ACE (V.O.)

Nicky thought nobody was watching him. But he was wrong.

We see two undercover gaming agents, looking like tourists, sneaking looks at NICKY's table.

ACE (V.O.)

And I didn't want any of those agents near my place.

NICKY

Four aces, Doc.

His hands spread five cards on the table, showing four aces.

NICKY

What do you got?

DOCTOR DAN

(Getting up in disgust)
Jesus Christ. I can't believe it.

COWBOY, the card shark with the cowboy hat, rakes in a large

pot toward his side of the table.

DOCTOR DAN

If I didn't have bad luck, I wouldn't have any luck. I'm out of here, you understand?

ACE (V.O.)

I mean, I wished to God Nicky and his whole crew would just get lost.

He walks towards NICKY's table.

ACE (V.O.)

What am I gonna do? Go back home and start a war?

ACE leans down to talk to NICKY.

ACE (V.O.)

I mean, Nicky's a made guy and I'm not. I can't do that.

ACE

(Whispering in NICKY's ear)

Be careful. Gaming agents are all over the place.

NICKY

So, I'm lucky. I'm not allowed to get lucky in this place?

ACE

You been lucky all week. They're lookin' to nail ya.

ACE walks away. NICKY looks over at the gaming agents.

NICKY (V.O.)

Ace was so fuckin' worried about his casino, he forgot what we were doin' out here in the first place.

INT. TANGIERS CASINO - NIGHT

Security people are pulling apart a husband and wife who are fighting. Camera picks up ACE as he passes by them.

NICKY (V.O.)

A million times I wanted to yell in his fuckin' ear: 'This is Las Vegas! We're supposed to be out here robbin', you dumb fuckin' Heeb.'

INT. TANGIERS CASINO POKER TABLE - NIGHT

Closeup of the COWBOY's white-socked feet with no shoes on a poker table.

ACE

(To SHERBERT, referring
to COWBOY)

I don't give a shit who he's connected
to. Tell him to take his fuckin'
feet off the table. What's he think
this is, a goddamn sawdust joint?

SHERBERT approaches COWBOY.

SHERBERT

Sir, would you mind taking your feet
off the table and putting your shoes
on, please?

COWBOY

(Sighs)

Yeah, I would mind. I'm havin' a bad
night.

COWBOY remains the same with his feet on the table.

SHERBERT

(Returning to ACE)

Fuckin' asshole won't budge.

ACE

Call security.

ACE approaches COWBOY.

ACE

How are you?

COWBOY

Good. How are you?

ACE

Good. You want to do me a favor? You
want to take your feet off the table
and put your shoes back on?

COWBOY

Fuck you.

ACE walks to nearby SECURITY GUARDS.

ACE

(To GUARDS)

I want you to exit this guy off the
premises, and I want you to exit him
off his feet and use his head to
open the fuckin' door.

Three SECURITY GUARDS approach COWBOY.

SECURITY GUARD #1

Sir, you're gonna have to leave. You mind accompanying us outside?

COWBOY

Bullshit, I ain't goin' anywhere with you!

SECURITY GUARD #1

Bullshit, you're out of here, cowboy!

SECURITY GUARD #1 knocks his feet off the table, as GUARDS #2 and #3 lift him off his seat.

COWBOY

Fuck you! Fuck you!

SECURITY GUARD #1

Yeah?

COWBOY

You know who you're fuckin' with?! Huh? Do you?!

SECURITY GUARD #1

Now move along.

COWBOY

(Screaming at ACE who follows him)

You fuckin' faggot! Do you know who you're fuckin' with?

The GUARDS carry him out and forcefully shove him towards a side exit.

COWBOY

Leave me alone!

SECURITY GUARD #1

Here we go!

COWBOY

(Grunting)

You've gotta be kidding me!

(Groans.)

The GUARDS lift him off his feet and, holding him like a battering ram, smash his head into the door.

ACE (V.O.)

(As COWBOY is thrown out the door)

Sure enough, an hour later, I get the call.

INT. VEGAS BAR - NIGHT

NICKY is on a public wall-phone talking to ACE. MARINO is staring at the disheveled COWBOY.

NICKY

(Into telephone)

Ace, what happened over there? I mean, did you know that guy you threw out was with me?

INT. TANGIERS CASINO - NIGHT

ACE is on a Tangiers house phone. SHERBERT looks on.

ACE

(Into telephone)

No, I didn't know that. But you know what he did?

NICKY

(Over telephone)

No.

INT. VEGAS BAR - NIGHT

NICKY gives COWBOY a look.

ACE

(Over telephone)

He insulted Billy. And then I walked over to him politely...

INT. TANGIERS CASINO - NIGHT

ACE

(Into telephone)

...and he tells me to go fuck myself.

NICKY

(Over telephone)

What?

ACE

(Into telephone)

Then he called me a faggot.

INT. VEGAS BAR - NIGHT

ACE

(Over telephone)

So what do you think I do? I threw that cocksucker out.

NICKY

(Into telephone)

What? Ho-
 (He puts down the
 phone; to COWBOY:)
Hey, come here.

COWBOY walks up to him.

NICKY
You called my friend a faggot? You
tell him to go fuck himself?

COWBOY
Nicky, I did -

NICKY
Is that what you did?

COWBOY
I did - I didn't -

NICKY
Tell him to go fuck himself? You
fuckin' hick! Fuckin'...

NICKY hits him on the head with the phone. COWBOY falls back,
groaning.

INT. TANGIERS CASINO - NIGHT

ACE listens to the noise of NICKY roughing up COWBOY.

NICKY
 (Over telephone)
...you big fuckin' hick, you. Come
here. Come here. Get him up. Come
here.

ACE LOOKS AT SHERBERT.

MARINO
 (Over telephone)
Get up.

INT. VEGAS BAR - NIGHT

NICKY
 (To COWBOY)
Come here, come here.

MARINO
Get up.

NICKY
You go over there right now and you
apologize. You better hope he lets
you back in.

INT. TANGIERS CASINO - NIGHT

NICKY

(Over telephone)

If you ever get out of line over there again, I'll smash your fuckin' head so hard...

INT. VEGAS BAR - NIGHT

NICKY

(To COWBOY)

...you won't be able to get that cowboy hat on. You hear me? Fuckin' hick.

(Into telephone)

Sammy, listen...

INT. TANGIERS CASINO - NIGHT

NICKY

(Over telephone)

...this guy obviously doesn't know who he was talkin' to, you understand? He doesn't...

INT. VEGAS BAR - NIGHT

NICKY

(Into telephone)

...know that, uh, we're dear friends. I mean, he's already very sorry. But, uh, if you could do me a favor to let him back in, I swear to you he'll never get out of line again. I promise you that.

INT. TANGIERS CASINO - NIGHT

ACE

(Into telephone)

If he does it again, he's out for good. I don't care what it is, Nick, I'm gonna ha- I'll - I'll never let him in the place again.

NICKY

(Over telephone)

I'm sorry about this. Really.

INT. VEGAS BAR - NIGHT

NICKY

(Into telephone)

All right, Ace?

ACE

(Over telephone)
Okay.

NICKY
(Into telephone)
Thanks, pal.

NICKY hangs up the phone and turns to COWBOY.

NICKY
You took your boots off? You put
your feet on the table... you shit-
kicking, stinky, horse-manure-smellin'
motherfucker you! You fuck me up
over there, I'll stick you in a hole
in the fuckin' desert! You understand?
(Slapping him.)
Go over there and apologize.
(Kicking the chastened
COWBOY away.)
Go! Get the fuck out of -

COWBOY
Nicky, I'm sorry.

EXT. TANGIERS CASINO - DAY

A tiger leaps towards the camera, which pans over to two showgirls and then to ACE's hand holding the key to a Rolls Royce. He gives it to JONATHAN and DAVID as reporters rush in to photograph the moment.

NICKY (V.O.)
You know, Ace could be a very touchy
guy, especially when he got bigger
and bigger in town. Like when he
hired that Jonathon and David and
their tigers away from the Palace by
buildin' them a new stage and then
givin' them a silver Rolls Royce.

INT. BACKSTAGE TANGIERS THEATER - DAY

ACE and SHERBERT watch as a STAGE MANAGER weighs in the 'Femme Fatale' Showgirls.

NICKY (V.O.)
But I'll tell you, he knew how to
bring in the crowds. He knew all the
fuckin' angles. He brought over the
whole 'Femme Fatale' show from Paris.
But he forgot how lazy them European
dancin' broads can get. I mean, he
had to weigh 'em in once a week to
make sure they didn't blow up like
fuckin' balloons.

ACE

(To SHOWGIRL)

You're still eight pounds over.

(To MANAGER.)

What's the reason for this?

STAGE MANAGER

Mr Rothstein, sir, let me put her on suspension.

ACE

Never mind the 'sir'. Never mind the 'sir'.

STAGE MANAGER

Well, sir, I was just...

ACE

Why is she eight pounds over?

STAGE MANAGER

...trying to offer you the respect that your...

ACE

I...

STAGE MANAGER

...position...

ACE

'Mr Rothstein' is good enough.

STAGE MANAGER

Mr Rothstein... well, sometimes, when you reach that pressure point, when you put that pressure point on them, you know, it shows...

ACE

She could at least lose half a pound or a quarter. Listen...

STAGE MANAGER

...and she doesn't always -

ACE

...all you do is give me answers. Just - just give me the right answer.

STAGE MANAGER

But, sir. Well, I don't know why. I guess, maybe, because she's frightened that if she doesn't lose the weight she may even get fired.

ACE

That's right. She will get fired. In fact, I want you to send her back to Paris.

STAGE MANAGER

It's always been our policy -

ACE

No. Just stop everything.

SHERBERT and ACE walk away across a huge stage.

SHERBERT

(To ACE)

This woman's an institution.

ACE

I don't care what she is. She's an institution, that's the problem. She's lazy.

INT. TANGIERS CASINO SPORTSBOOK - NIGHT

ACE standing in a large space surrounded by giant TV screens showing sports events. Around him, long rows of bettors are seated at betting stations, lined up at windows, or wandering around at the bar. It's like a NASA control room on launch day.

NICKY (V.O.)

Hey, I gotta give the guy credit. He does the most obvious thing. This is the only town in the country where a bookie joint is legit, so, why not take advantage, right? So... he took bookie joints off the street and then opened them up inside the casino. Well, within a few years, by doin' all of this, he had every casino on the Strip trying to copy off him.

ACE (V.O.)

Between...

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

NICKY, with MARINO, punching and kicking a man next to the open door of his luxury car.

ACE (V.O.)

...my innovations...

The man falls to the ground.

ACE (V.O.)

...and Nicky's dedication to his job...

NICKY starts kicking him.

ACE (V.O.)

...I soon had the best operation on
the Strip.

NICKY lifts an empty trash can and shatters the car's
windshield.

INT. TANGIERS CASINO FLOOR - NIGHT

ACE and NICKY are standing on the casino floor near the slot-
machines. Gamblers are milling about behind them.

ACE

You better watch yourself. There's a
lot of heat on you already.

NICKY

Why, somebody's complaining?

ACE

I'm - I'm hearin' things from
security. They're all ex-cops. The
Sheriff's lookin' to bust your balls.
They want to put you in the Black
Book.

NICKY

That Black Book is a bunch of
bullshit. They got two names in there
for the whole country and one of
them is still Al Capone.

ACE

Bullshit or no bullshit, they put
you in that book, you're gonna be in
a lot of trouble. You will not be
able to walk into the casino. I'm
tellin' you.

NICKY

What am I doin' out here? I'm tryin'
to make a livin', that's all.

ACE

I'm just tellin' you. Don't say I
didn't warn you.

NICKY

All right.

INT. VEGAS VALLEY COUNTRY CLUB, 1974 - NIGHT

Tight on the filaments of a flash bulb as they ignite.

TV news crews and still photographers are taking pictures of ACE and GINGER surrounded by clusters of celebrities and the Vegas power elite, including SHERBERT and GREEN, at a black tie event.

PHOTOGRAPHER #1

Mrs Rothstein, look straight ahead.
Very nice. Thank you.

PHOTOGRAPHER #2

Thank you.

PHOTOGRAPHER #1

Yes, nice smile.

PHOTOGRAPHER #3

Just look right at the camera. Hold
that pose.

We hear GREEN making a speech over flashing cameras and freeze frames of himself, SHERBERT, ACE and GINGER.

GREEN (O.S.)

Considering all of his hard work and
dedication and the new lifeblood he
has instilled in Las Vegas...

We now see GREEN at a mike speaking in front of the seated club members.

GREEN

Sam has established himself as an
indispensable member of the gaming
community. As the head of the Tangiers
Gaming Corporation, it's my pleasure
to welcome Sam Rothstein to the Vegas
Valley Country Club.

Members cheer and applaud as GREEN hands ACE a framed citation. It reads: 'This Certificate of Appreciation. Sam Rothstein. Charitable Foundations of Greater Las Vegas'. They shake hands for the photographers.

ACE (V.O.)

Back home, they would have put me in
jail for what I'm doing. But out
here, they're givin' me awards.

ACE

(Into the microphone)
It's with great pleasure that I accept
this certificate of appreciation
from the...

**CAMERA TILTS UP TO A MOUNTED PLAQUE ON THE WALL, READING:
'CHARITABLE FOUNDATIONS OF GREATER LAS VEGAS'.**

INT. VEGAS VALLEY COUNTRY-CLUB BANQUET ROOM - NIGHT

A dazzling GINGER moves charmingly about the room chatting up top executives, lawyers, judges, bankers and their wives. ACE, standing with GREEN and an elderly man, watches her work the room.

COUNTRY-CLUB WOMAN #1

Congratulations, sweetheart.

GINGER

Thank you.

COUNTRY-CLUB WOMAN #2

Sam raised more than we've ever raised before.

GINGER

He worked so hard.

ACE (V.O.)

But my greatest pleasure was watchin' my wife, Ginger, work the room.

COUNTRY-CLUB MAN #1

Thank you for everything.

ACE (V.O.)

They all loved her. How could you not love her?

GINGER

(To COUNTRY-CLUB WOMAN #3)

Hi. Nice to see you.

ACE (V.O.)

She could be the most charming woman you ever saw. People loved to be around her.

COUNTRY-CLUB WOMAN #3

Listen, you've got to bring Amy to Sasha's birthday party because he'd love to have her there.

GINGER

Thanks.

COUNTRY-CLUB WOMAN #3

We'll see you three o'clock Saturday.

GINGER

Thanks. Yes, all right.

COUNTRY-CLUB WOMAN #3

Great.

ACE (V.O.)

She made everybody feel good.

GINGER joins ACE. He smiles proudly.

INT. VEGAS VALLEY COUNTRY-CLUB BANQUET ROOM - NIGHT

GINGER and ACE are off alone by a dining-room table, talking intently. A young casino EXECUTIVE interrupts them.

EXECUTIVE

Congratulations, Sam.

ACE

(Shaking his hand)

Oh, thanks.

The flirting EXECUTIVE looks at GINGER.

EXECUTIVE

Hello, Mrs Rothstein.

GINGER

Hi.

EXECUTIVE

How are you?

GINGER

Oh.

GINGER gives the flirting EXECUTIVE her hand, he kisses it.

EXECUTIVE

You're one of the most gorgeous women
I've ever seen. You're a lucky man
Mr Rothstein.

ACE watches as GINGER flashes one of her dazzling smiles, but he's not sure whether she's flirting. He looks at the young man and back at his wife.

ACE

Thank you. Thanks for that compliment.

ACE (V.O.)

He was a young kid from the casino...
nice kid... bright boy. What balls
on this fuckin' kid! The next day I
fired him.

Freeze frame on ACE smiling at GINGER.

INT. VEGAS BANK VIEWING ROOM - DAY

GINGER, with two-year-old AMY in a stroller, is seated on a

bench going through large bank vault boxes containing her jewels.

GINGER

(To AMY)

Hey, do you want to see this one? Daddy gave me all this jewelry because he loves me so much. (She places a gold bracelet on AMY's hand.) Put your arm in there.

ACE (V.O.)

But as much as they loved her...

GINGER

(To AMY, wearing the bracelet)

Oh, fabulous.

ACE (V.O.)

...they didn't know what really moved her.

She holds up a necklace to the light.

GINGER

Look at this. Look at this.

CAMERA PULLS AWAY FROM THE DOOR LEADING TO THE VIEWING ROOM REVEALING A BANK MANAGER SEATED AT A DESK. WE HEAR GINGER AND AMY BEHIND THE DOOR.

GINGER (O.S.)

(From the viewing room)

Daddy gave me this pin when we were dating.

ACE (V.O.)

And with Ginger happy, I was able to concentrate on what I knew best.

INT. TANGIERS CASINO, SLOT-MACHINES - NIGHT

ACE is talking to DON WARD.

WARD

Loose machines are right back over there.

ACE

What are they doin' way back there? Bring 'em up here where they belong. You can't even see 'em over there.

WARD

Okay, I'll -

ACE

What about the progressives with the high jackpots? Where are they? These machines are hidden.

WARD

Well...

ACE

These are our best machines. They bring all the action. No wonder the drop is off.

WARD

Yeah, okay.

ACE

The action is in the front, not in the back. Bring 'em up front.

WARD

All right, I will, I will.

ACE

Listen to me very carefully. There are three ways of doing things around here. The right way, the wrong way, and the way I do it. You understand?

WARD

I do understand that. I'll get right on it. And thank you.

ACE

Don't thank me, just do it. You're the Slots Manager. I shouldn't have to tell you this.

WARD

Dang, you are right, Mr Rothstein, I am so sorry.

INT. CLASSY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

GINGER follows a snooty MAITRE D' to JENNIFER, already seated at a table.

ACE (V.O.)

So, I ended up workin' what? Eighteen-hour days? Ginger was the one who wound up enjoying the best of Vegas.

MAITRE D'

(To JENNIFER)

Come with me, please. I have a better table for you. Sorry.

He shows the two of them to the best table in the place.

JENNIFER

(Sitting down next to

GINGER)

So, what'd you say to that fuckin' jerk anyway?

GINGER

(Smiling)

I told him I was Mrs Sam Rothstein.

JENNIFER

(Chuckles)

Well, you might as well get somethin' out of it.

GINGER lights a cigarette.

EXT. IDLE SPURS DESERT DINER - DAY

Wide overhead of roadhouse cafe isolated in the middle of the desert with a sign out front that reads '60 miles to Vegas'.

ACE (V.O.)

Well, it wasn't long before what I was afraid was gonna happen, happened. Nicky managed to get himself banned from every casino in Las Vegas, and from then on, I couldn't be seen talkin' to him anywhere in Vegas, or even near it.

NICKY

(From inside the diner)

What the fuck is that supposed to mean?

INT. IDLE SPURS DESERT DINER - DAY

ACE and NICKY are seated at a table in the empty diner.

NICKY

(Reading from a document)

'...detrimental to gaming. And he will be ejected from any casino in Las Vegas... and the casinos can be fined as much as a hundred thousand every time he shows up.'

(He waves the document.)

Do you believe this shit?

ACE

(Smoking a cigarette)

Yeah, I believe it. You got banned.

NICKY hisses.

NICKY

(Reading)

'Who is of notorious and unsavory
reputation...'

He angrily wads the document and tosses it across the table.

NICKY

Motherfucker. Unsavory fuckin'...
Is there any way around this?

ACE

Nope, there's no way.

NICKY

Let's say... for instance... I want
to go in the restaurant which happens
to be in the casino... to get one of
those sandwiches I like?

ACE

Forget it. You can't even set foot
in the parking lot. That's how serious
it is.

NICKY

In other words, I'm fucked.

ACE

In so many words, yes.

ACE (V.O.)

It just didn't sink into his head
about the Black Book and what it
meant. Not being able to go into a
casino is just one thing, but being
in this book etched your name into
the brains of every cop and FBI agent
in the state. I mean, you're listed
in there with Al Capone. But Nicky
didn't care.

NICKY

I gotta do somethin'. I gotta do
somethin'. They ain't gettin' rid of
me. They're not gettin' rid of me.
I'm staying here. Fuck 'em. Fuck
'em.

EXT. GOLD RUSH JEWELER'S - DAY

**WE MOVE PAST THE SKULL OF A STEER MOUNTED ON AN EXTERIOR
WALL AND A WOODEN CIGAR STORE INDIAN STATUE, TO REVEAL**

DOMINICK SANTORO (WHO LOOKS A LITTLE LIKE HIS BROTHER NICKY) AND MARINO WHO ARE WAITING INSIDE THE GOLD RUSH. CAMERA COMES TO REST ON EXTREME CLOSE-UP OF NICKY'S EYES AS HE STANDS ON THE OUTSIDE PORCH.

NICKY (V.O.)

So, once they pulled that shit, I started doin' my own things in Vegas nobody ever thought of doin'. To keep an eye on things, I brought in my kid brother Dominick... and some desperadoes from back home and started knockin' over high rollers, casino bosses, bookmakers, anybody, right here in town. I had a good fuckin' crew goin' for me, I'll tell you that.

SAL FUSCO, JACK HARDY and BERNIE BLUE are getting out of a car and walking into the jewelry store which is designed to replicate an old-fashioned Western town with peaked roofs, wooden planked sidewalks and hitching posts. The camera tracks by each man as they're introduced.

NICKY (V.O.)

I had Sal Fusco, a great second-story guy. Jack Hardy, he worked for a safe company after he did a six-year bit. And then there was Bernie Blue. This guy could bypass any alarm for me. And I opened up my own jewelry store, too: 'The Gold Rush'.

INT. BEDROOM OF LUXURY HOME - NIGHT

NICKY places some jewelry from a vanity table into a sack and turns over some family photos. MARINO and HARDY are struggling with a safe.

NICKY (V.O.)

Sometimes I used to go along on a heist just for the fun of it. But I didn't like the people I was rippin' off lookin' at me, so I used to turn their fuckin' pictures around.

NICKY

(To MARINO and HARDY)
What's takin' so long over there?

MARINO

This peter's a motherfucker.

HARDY

(Grunting)
It's workin'. Just keep workin' it.
It's comin'.

NICKY

Gotta learn how to open these fuckin'
things so you won't have to take
'em.

INT. GOLD RUSH BACK ROOM - DAY

NICKY is looking at diamonds with MARINO, HARDY and BLUE.

NICKY

Frankie, some of these stones got a
lot of niggers in 'em.

ZOOM IN TIGHT ON A DIAMOND.

NICKY

Tell that fuckin' Pepe if he's
switching stones on us, he'd better
take a fuckin' camel -

Phone rings.

NICKY

- back to
(picking up phone)
Nigeria.
(Into telephone)
Yeah.

HOTEL RECEPTIONIST

(Over telephone)
Listen...

INT. TANGIERS RECEPTIONIST'S DESK - DAY

HOTEL RECEPTIONIST

(Talking quietly into
telephone)
...they're in Penthouse K.

INT. GOLD RUSH BACK ROOM - DAY

NICKY

(Into telephone)
They check in alone?

INT. TANGIERS RECEPTIONIST'S DESK - DAY

HOTEL RECEPTIONIST

(Into telephone)
They checked in alone.

INT. GOLD RUSH BACK ROOM - DAY

NICKY

(Into telephone)

Are they out now?

INT. TANGIERS RECEPTIONIST'S DESK - DAY

HOTEL RECEPTIONIST

(Into telephone)
Yes, don't worry.

NICKY

(Over telephone)
All right.

INT. GOLD RUSH BACK ROOM - DAY

NICKY

(Into telephone)
Thanks.

He hangs up.

ACE (V.O.)

He had tipsters...

INT. CASINO HOTEL BELL STATION - DAY

We see some luggage on the floor. A BELLMAN is on the phone with MARINO.

ACE (V.O.)

...all over town. Bellmen.

BELLMAN

(Into telephone) This one looks good.
But you got to hurry.

MARINO

(Over telephone)
Yeah...

INT. GOLD RUSH - DAY

MARINO

(Into telephone)
...yeah, okay.

He hangs up.

EXT. CASINO - DAY

A VALET PARKER standing outside a casino.

ACE (V.O.)

Valet parkers.

VALET PARKER

(Into telephone)
They're just checking in now.

INT. GOLD RUSH BACK ROOM - DAY

FUSCO

(Into telephone, seated
on a couch)
Okay, I'll tell him.

INT. CASINO FLOOR - DAY

A PIT BOSS is on the phone.

ACE (V.O.)

Pit bosses.

PIT BOSS

(Into telephone)
Yeah, room twelve-thirty, at the
Sirocco.

INT. GOLD RUSH BACK ROOM - DAY

MARINO

(Into telephone)
Twelve-thirty, right.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

A SECRETARY seated at a desk.

ACE (V.O.)

Secretaries.

SECRETARY

(Into telephone)
It's all in mint condition coins.

INT. GOLD RUSH BACK ROOM - DAY

HARDY

(Into telephone)
Mint condition. All right.

ACE (V.O.)

And they all...

EXT. WAREHOUSE/JEWELRY STORE - NIGHT

HARDY and a hood are in a van parked in front of a warehouse
next door to a jewelry store.

ACE (V.O.)

...got a piece of the score.

HARDY

(From inside the van,
into a walkie-talkie)

Car's comin'.

We move past the van to a larger truck parked in an alley. Unseen, the truck has an open side door abutting the jewelry store's wall. SAL FUSCO and BERNIE BLUE are inside the truck drilling into the wall using a heavy-duty battery-powered drill. The drill is muffled with sheets of insulation material.

ACE (V.O.)

They were always very careful. And they always bypassed the alarms, or else... if not, they'd drill enough holes to knock through the walls with a sledgehammer...

BLUE widens the hole with a hammer muffled with insulation.

EXT. JEWELRY STORE WALL - DAY

A flashbulb explodes.

Cops and detectives are photographing and inspecting holes drilled in the wall of the shop, through which the thieves have come and gone. The camera moves in through the hole.

ACE (V.O.)

Nobody out there was expecting a guy like him.

INT. JEWELRY STORE - DAY

The stunned STORE OWNER looks at the rubble and the empty jewelry boxes.

Detectives collect evidence.

ACE (V.O.)

For Nicky, Las Vegas was the fuckin' Wild West.

STORE OWNER

(Leading a detective to his showroom)
I just got a shipment of diamonds from Israel...

NICKY (V.O.)

But what the fuck they expect from me? I had to earn, didn't I?

INT. PALM SPRINGS JEWELRY STORE - DAY

MARINO stands above two IRANIANS who are looking at the stolen gems.

IRANIAN #1

You know, this diamond has flaws in it.

MARINO

No, no, there's no flaws in it.

IRANIAN #2

Don't tell me. I'm doing this for twenty-five years.

MARINO

You better clean your fuckin' loupe. 'Cause there's no flaws in these diamonds.

The two IRANIANS speak to each other in Farsi.

NICKY (V.O.)

Whenever we got local merch, we'd usually send it to Palm Spring or Arizona... LA. I had a couple of sand niggers out there. You know, Arabs.

MARINO

What, are you gonna have a fuckin' meeting here, or are you gonna buy some diamonds?

IRANIAN #2

(Chuckling)

No, no. I know his language. I'm talking with him.

MARINO

Forty thousand dollars, you can buy the whole package.

IRANIAN #1

Twenty thousand, and that's my final offer and...

MARINO

(To IRANIAN #2)

All of a sudden he talks English, now.

(To IRANIAN #1.)

Let's talk turkey here, how 'bout twenty-five thousand?

IRANIAN #1 laughs.

INT. NICKY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

NICKY and MARINO sneak into the house past JENNIFER who is asleep on the sofa in front of a TV set. NICKY takes out a key and opens the metal door into his bedroom.

NICKY (V.O.)

I actually turned my bedroom into a bank vault where I kept the choice stuff.

MARINO

(Referring to JENNIFER as they pass the kitchen)
She asleep?

NICKY

Every night, on the couch.

NICKY (V.O.)

I couldn't leave it at the Gold Rush in case we got raided by the cops... or if my crew got cute.

Opening the metal door to his bedroom.

NICKY (V.O.)

I had the only key.

INT. NICKY'S BEDROOM/CLOSET - NIGHT

Camera pans across bedroom to closet door.

NICKY (V.O.)

Jennifer didn't give a fuck. She used to fall asleep on the couch watchin' television every night. This stuff was all mine. I didn't send any of this back home.

NICKY opens the closet door. He and MARINO walk in and bend down to lift up a small square of carpet to reveal a floor safe.

NICKY (V.O.)

Actually, I couldn't because I wasn't even supposed to be doin' it. The bosses were makin' so much fuckin' money with the casinos
(unlocking the safe)
that they didn't want anybody makin' any waves for them.

In the floor safe, there are several handguns and silencers.

FRANK hands NICKY a roll of money.

NICKY

Give all the guys in your crew a piece of that?

MARINO

I took care of everybody.

NICKY

Yeah?

He searches MARINO's jacket.

NICKY (V.O.)

That's why there was no real organized street stuff in Vegas before I came here.

NICKY throws the cash in the safe and closes the lid.

INT. NICKY'S HOUSE - DAY

NICKY is being shown papers by CHARLIE CLARK, a heavy-set banker with a moustache. They're both seated at a table in the living-room.

CHARLIE CLARK

Yeah, that works out.

NICKY (V.O.)

But how much cash could I bury in my closet, right?

CHARLIE CLARK

You need to understand, and I - I'm sure you do... that in a venture of this kind, you have to be prepared to take some kind of loss.

NICKY

Oh, listen, I understand that there's always a risk... you know, I might have to take a loss somewhere.

NICKY (V.O.)

So I put some of the money into legitimate deals with Charlie Clark. He was Ace's banker.

NICKY

I mean, you will try to push it through, won't you, Mr Clark?

CHARLIE CLARK

Yes.

NICKY

Well, you gotta understand, I'm giving you fifty thousand cash.

CHARLIE CLARK chuckles

NICKY (V.O.)

Then I put some more of the money...

INT. LEANING TOWER RESTAURANT, KITCHEN - NIGHT

A prosciutto sandwich is being prepared on a kitchen counter.

NICKY (V.O.)

...in some legitimate places, like my restaurant.

DOMINICK

(To COOK preparing sandwich)

Is that the last one?

COOK

Yeah.

He hands the sandwich to DOMINICK who spits in it.

NICKY (V.O.)

I had my kid brother, Dominick, run it for me.

DOMINICK

(Spits)

Fuckers!

DOMINICK wraps it in plastic and puts it into a brown paper bag.

INT. LEANING TOWER RESTAURANT - NIGHT

DOMINICK sets the bag with the wrapped sandwich in it on top of pizza boxes being held by two uniformed Vegas COPS.

DOMINICK

Here you go, guys.

COP #1

All right. Thanks, a lot.

DOMINICK

Yeah... yeah, enjoy.

COP #2

Yeah.

He shakes COP #2's hand before heading back into the restaurant.

DOMINICK

Have a good time.

(Muttering to himself.)

Choke on it, ya motherfucker!

MAN #1

(Passing DOMINICK on
his way out)
Hey, Dom.

DOMINICK

Hey, how you doin'?

DOMINICK walks over to some patrons in the bar area. NICKY enters, kissing his brother.

ACE (V.O.)

Yeah, Nicky loved restaurants. He was a real restaurant buff. And over the years, he always made money with them.

NICKY

(Looking at one of
the patrons)
Hey, Rich.

THE CAMERA FOLLOWS NICKY AROUND THE RESTAURANT PAST LAS VEGAS TYPES - DEALERS, LOUNGE ACTS, SHOWGIRLS, TV AND MOVIE CELEBRITIES, WAITRESSES AND BARMEN - WHO USE THE JAMMED PLACE AS THEIR HANGOUT.

ACE (V.O.)

In Vegas, he had The Leaning Tower. It was a very popular spot. He had politicians, showgirls and movies stars hangin' out all over the place.

NICKY walks up to STEVE ALLEN and JAYNE MEADOWS seated at a table, he whistles their theme tune as he approaches from behind.

NICKY

Listen, that show over at the Flamingo gets better and better.

STEVE ALLEN

By the way, Sammy said whenever you have a minute, give him a call.

NICKY

Made a messenger out of you too, huh?

STEVE ALLEN

(Laughs)
I'll do anything for a buck.

NICKY

He does it. He does it to everybody. Enjoy your dinner.

JAYNE MEADOWS

(Chuckles)

Thanks.

STEVE ALLEN

Okay, thanks.

ACE (V.O.)

But I gotta tell you, the thing Nicky liked the most was the showgirls, naturally. I mean, to them, Nicky was the movie star.

NICKY walks across the room to MARINO and two showgirls, SHELLY and STACY.

NICKY

(To MARINO)

You walk past me?

MARINO

Hey. This is Shelly.

NICKY

Hey, Shelly.

(Kisses her hand.)

SHELLY

Hi.

NICKY

How are you? Nice to meet you.

MARINO

(Pointing to STACY)

And this is Stacy.

NICKY

Stacy.

(Kisses her hand.)

MARINO

(To the SHOWGIRLS)

This is Nick.

NICKY

Pleasure.

STACY

Hi, Nick.

MARINO

We're gonna have dinner. Come on.

NICKY

All right, uh,

(To SHELLY)

Let's just check the kitchen first.
Excuse us one second. Come on, I'll
show you.

He takes SHELLY's hand and leads her out.

NICKY (V.O.)

(From following scene)

'Cause I fly stuff in fresh every
day.

INT. LEANING TOWER RESTAURANT, PARKING LOT - NIGHT

NICKY and SHELLY walk across the parking lot and get into
his two-tone, red and white car.

NICKY

I get bread from back home. I get
fish from California. And you can
always tell a great kitchen like
ours because of the milk-fed veal.
That's the secret.

Opening the car door from the passenger's side, she gets in.

NICKY

See, milk-fed veal is pure white.
Out here, they got that pink veal.
Slide over, honey.

She slides over, he gets into the passenger's seat and closes
the door.

NICKY

Now, pink veal, you can pound that
shit for two days and it'll never
get tender, you know what I mean?

SHELLY's head disappears into NICKY's lap.

INT. LEANING TOWER RESTAURANT - NIGHT

FRANK and DOMINICK are at the bar watching as NICKY chastises
AL, a gambler. The restaurant is empty except for a waiter
milling around in the background, setting a few tables.

AL

When I left here with the money...

NICKY

Mm.

AL

...I got muscled on the street.

NICKY

Mm.

AL

A couple of guys, I owe them. So, that's what I did. I gave 'em the money. That's what I did.

NICKY

Yeah?

AL

Yeah.

NICKY

You call yourself a man? You know you're a lyin', low-life, motherfuckin' gambling degenerate prick? You know that's what you are? Two small kids at home. I gave you money to pay the fuckin' rent and buy groceries, put the heat on. You know your wife called Frankie and told him the fuckin' heat's off?

AL glances over to MARINO.

NICKY

Huh? And you didn't gamble that fuckin' money? You're gonna stand here and tell me that?

He shakes his head 'no'.

NICKY

No, no? You didn't?

AL

I didn't give 'em the m-

NICKY

Don't fuck with me, Al! Don't make a fuck out of me! You want to embarrass me and make a fool out of me?! You didn't gamble?! Tell me you gambled the fuckin' money, I'll give you the fuckin' money to put the fuckin' heat on! Did you gamble?! Huh?!

The chastised gambler nods 'yes', bowing his head in shame.

NICKY

Fuckin' degenerate, you.

NICKY takes some money from his coat pocket and starts counting out some bills.

NICKY

Fuckin' kids at home! Here.

(Giving him the money.)
Get the fuck out of here.

AL

Thanks, Nick.

NICKY

Yeah, thanks.

AL walks out.

NICKY

Let me find out you fucked up, I'll
leave you wherever I find you.

INT. NICKY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

NICKY, worn out from the night before, is making pancakes
for LITTLE NICKY.

NICKY

(To LITTLE NICKY)

How many of these you gonna eat,
huh?

LITTLE NICKY

Two.

NICKY

Two?

ACE (V.O.)

But around six-thirty in the morning
when he finished his day -

NICKY hugs and kisses his son.

ACE (V.O.)

- no matter where he was or what he
was doing, he always went home to
make breakfast for his son, Nicky-
Boy.

NICKY

(Pouring some syrup
on his son's pancakes)

Here, let's put a little of this on
for you. I know you like this. A
little butter, right, not a lot?

LITTLE NICKY

Mm-hm.

NICKY

You know why, right?

LITTLE NICKY

Yeah.

NICKY

Why?

LITTLE NICKY

'Cause it clogs up your heart.

NICKY

What a smart kid you are!

(Kisses him.)

Okay, eat.

INT. ALL-AMERICAN GAS STATION, BACK HOME - DAY

MARINO walks through an office past a few hoods.

NICKY (V.O.)

Every couple of weeks I used to send Marino back to the bosses with a piece of what I made.

TITLE IN: 'BACK HOME'

MARINO walks out of the office and through the garage.

NICKY (V.O.)

Not a big piece, but fuck them, what did they know? They were fifteen hundred miles away...

EXT. ALL-AMERICAN GAS STATION, BACK HOME - DAY

Wide shot of gas station. There is snow on the ground. The cloudy, Midwestern skyline of warehouses and skyscrapers can be seen behind the gas station sign: 'All-American Gas'.

NICKY (V.O.)

...and I don't know anybody who can see that far. Their drop was a truck stop/garage where...

INT. ALL-AMERICAN GAS STATION, GAGGI'S BACK OFFICE - DAY

REMO GAGGI is seated in a chair as MARINO walks in. CURLY, one of Gaggi's men, and two of the bosses are there.

NICKY (V.O.)

...Remo and the guys used to hang out and count their millions.

MARINO

Remo.

He bends down and kisses him.

GAGGI

Hey, Frankie.

MARINO

How are you?

GAGGI

Fine, fine.

NICKY (V.O.)

I mean, the cops knew, but they didn't give a fuck. I mean, you know, they all worked it out together.

MARINO

Nicky sends his warmest regards.

MARINO unzips a small sack and hands GAGGI a thick stack of cash. GAGGI inspects it before handing it over to one of his men.

GAGGI

Uh-huh. Good.

NICKY (V.O.)

But I knew how to keep the bosses happy. Whenever they gave me little jobs to do, you know, to send a message, I would carry things out...

GAGGI

And how are things going down there?

MARINO

Fine. Everything's goin' good.

NICKY (V.O.)

...to a tee. Like the time Tony Dogs...

INT. OUTSKIRTS OF VEGAS BAR - NIGHT

Flash cut of TONY DOGS and two men shooting up a bar with automatics hitting the owner, bartenders and a waitress.

NICKY (V.O.)

...who was supposed to be the new maniac tough guy in town, shot up one of Remo's bars. Here's a fuckin' guy, kills two of Remo's guys and a poor fuckin' waitress, who was just workin' on her night off, of all things.

SLOW MOTION ON TONY DOGS.

NICKY (V.O.)

I mean, this guy's just beggin' to

be made an example of.

The men and the waitress lie dead on the floor. The bar is left in shambles.

GAGGI (V.O.)

(From his office)

Frankie...

INT. ALL-AMERICAN GAS STATION, GAGGI'S BACK OFFICE - NIGHT

An enraged GAGGI gives MARINO orders.

GAGGI

...I want all the names of all the other people he had with him. And I don't care what you have to do to him to get 'em. You understand?

MARINO

I'll take care of it, Remo.

GAGGI

E mo va! [Italian-American slang for 'Now, go!']

INT. SLOT-MACHINE SHOP, LAS VEGAS - NIGHT

MARINO and BLUE are dragging TONY DOGS, who is beaten to a pulp, across the floor towards a workshop table. NICKY follows them.

NICKY (V.O.)

To be truthful with you, I had to admire this fuckin' guy. He was one of the toughest Irishmen I ever met.

NICKY

This fuckin' guy, he got some stamina, don't he?

NICKY (V.O.)

This son-of-a-bitch was tough.

NICKY

Personally, I don't give a fuck who was with him anyway. As long as he gives me a name I could give to them.

NICKY (V.O.)

For two days and two fuckin' nights, we beat the shit out of this guy. I mean, we even stuck ice-picks in his balls.

NICKY

You better hope he gives me a fuckin'

name soon, or I'm gonna give him
yours, Frank.

MARINO and BLUE lay DOGS on the table and put his head in a
vise. They're exhausted from beating him.

MARINO

(To NICKY)

Yeah, thanks a lot.

NICKY (V.O.)

But he never talked.

NICKY

(To MARINO)

I know you would have ratted by now.

NICKY (V.O.)

In the end, I had to put his fuckin'
head in a vise.

NICKY

Dogs. Dogs, can your hear me, Dogs?

DOGS gasps and mumbles.

NICKY

Listen to me, Anthony. I got your
head in a fuckin' vise. I'm gonna
squash your fuckin' head like a
grapefruit if you don't give me a
name. Don't make me have to do this,
please. Come on. Don't make me be a
bad guy. Come on.

TONY DOGS

(With what strength
he as left)

Fuck you!

NICKY

(To MARINO and BLUE)

This motherfucker, do you believe
this? Two fuckin' days and nights!

(To DOGS.)

Fuck me?

NICKY begins to tighten the vise.

NICKY

Fuck me, you motherfucker?

(Turning the vise.)

Fuck my mother? That's what you
fuckin' tell me?

NICKY angrily keeps spinning the vise handle until suddenly
one of DOGS's eyes bulges out of the socket.

NICKY

Huh? You motherfucker, you, huh?

MARINO and BLUE are horrified by the sight. Everybody freezes.

NICKY

Oh, God! Give me the fuckin' name!

TONY DOGS

Ch-Charlie M!

NICKY

Charlie M?

TONY DOGS

(Blood streaming out
of his mouth)

Charlie M.

NICKY

(Screaming)

Charlie M? You make me pop your
fuckin' eye out of your head to
protect that piece of shit? Charlie
M? You dumb motherfucker!

TONY DOGS

(Pleading)

Kill me, you fuck, kill me.

NICKY

Kill you,
(unwinds the crank)
You motherfucker you!
(To MARINO.)
Frankie, do him a fuckin' favor.

ACE (V.O.)

The word got around that finally...

MARINO places a knife against DOGS's neck.

ACE (V.O.)

...there was a real gangster in town.
Nicky was the new boss of Las Vegas.

We hear DOGS gasp as the knife slices his throat.

NICKY

Charlie M!

INT. TANGIERS CASINO - DAY

Extreme close-up of a slot-machine. Four reels with sevens
across. Suddenly, the power goes out. Lights die down..
Machine 'waaaaoows' down to a dead stop.

Security guards, on their hands and knees, are pulling the plugs on the three giant \$15,000 progressive machines, as ACE talks to DON WARD.

ACE

Four reels, sevens across, three fifteen-thousand-dollar jackpots? Do you have any idea what the odds are?

WARD

Shoot, it's gotta be in the millions, maybe more.

ACE

Three fuckin' jackpots in twenty minutes? Why didn't you pull the machines? Why didn't you call me?

WARD

Well, it happened so quick. Three guys won. I didn't have a chance to call you.

ACE

You didn't see the scam? You didn't see what was goin' on?

WARD

Well, there's no way to determine that, Sam.

ACE

Yes, there is. An infallible way! They won!

WARD

Well, it's a casino. People gotta win sometimes.

ACE

Hey... Ward, you're pissin' me off. Now, you're insulting my intelligence. What do you think, I'm a fuckin' idiot? You know goddamn well somebody had to get into those machines and set those fuckin' reels.

SHERBERT enters, stands next to ACE.

ACE

The probability on one-four-reel machine is a million and a half to one. On three machines in a row, it's in the billions. It cannot happen... would not happen, you fuckin' momo! What's the matter with

you! Didn't you see you were bein'
set up on the second win?

WARD

I really think you're -

ACE

(Interrupts)

You - Wait! You didn't see that you
were being set up on the second win?

WARD

I really think you're overreacting
in this whole -

ACE

(Interrupts)

Listen, you fuckin' yokel, I've had
it with you. I've been carryin' your
ass in this place ever since I got
here. Get your ass and get your things
and get out of here.

WARD

You're firin' me?

ACE

I'm firin' you? No, I'm not firin'
(mocking WARD)
I'm firin' you, you -

Gives SHERBERT a look.

WARD

You might regret this, Mr Rothstein.

ACE

I'll regret it even more if I keep
you on.

WARD

This is not the way to treat people.

ACE

Listen, if you didn't know you're
bein' scammed, you're too fuckin'
dumb to keep this job. If you did
know, you were in on it. Either way,
you're out! Get out! Go on.

(To SHERBERT.)

Let's go.

ACE and SHERBERT walk off, WARD turns to leave.

INT. TANGIERS CASINO, AKU-AKU LOUNGE - DAY, AN HOUR LATER

ACE and GREEN are seated having coffee and muffins in the

Hawaiian lounge by the casino floor.

ACE

I mean, the guy is history as far as I'm concerned. History.

GREEN

But you can't just fire him. Webb's his brother-in-law. He's County Commissioner.

ACE

So what? Everybody out here with cowboy boots is a fuckin' county commissioner or related to a county commissioner. I'm fuckin' sick of it.

GREEN

This is his state. His uncle's Chief Judge. His brother-in-law runs the County Commission. I don't know how many other relatives he's got in town. There's gotta be a way to work him back in.

ACE

Phil, I can understand. You're in the finances, you're upstairs, but you are not on the floor. I got thousands of players. I got five hundred dealers. They're all lookin' to rob me blind, twenty-four hours a day. I have to let them know I'm watching all the details, all the time; that there is not one single thing I will not catch as I am over here.

Breaks open his blueberry muffin, puts it down and points to Green's.

ACE

Look at yours.

GREEN

What?

ACE

Look at that. Look at this. There's nothin'... look how many blueberries your muffin has and how many mine has. Yours is falling apart. I have nothing.

GREEN

What are you talking about?

ACE

It's like everything else in this place. You don't do it yourself, it never gets done.

GREEN follows ACE to the kitchen.

GREEN

Where you goin'?

INT. TANGIERS KITCHEN - DAY

ACE, GREEN and the BAKER are gathered around the BAKER's counter surrounded by muffin tins and batter.

ACE

(Handing the BAKER
the two muffins)

From now on I want you to put an equal amount of blueberries in each muffin. An equal amount of blueberries in each muffin.

BAKER

You know how long that's going to take?

ACE

I don't care how long it takes. Put an equal amount in each muffin.

ACE leaves, GREEN looks on in amazement as the BAKER holds the muffins. GREEN follows ACE out.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

ACE, seated at the kitchen table, is feeding AMY in a high chair. The nanny is in the background.

ACE

Come on, honey, just a little. That a girl, that a girl. Oh, boy, look.

GINGER enters and goes to the sink.

ACE

(To AMY, who is sobbing
and mumbling)
Okay, want to go with Mommy?

ACE

What do you need?

GINGER

(Giving AMY to the
NANNY)

You get her? Okay.

(To ACE.)

Well, I need a lot. I need more than usual.

ACE

Well, why don't you take it out of your account? There's a lot there.

GINGER

Well, I would, you know, Sam. It's just that... well, I need more than that. I need twenty-five thousand.

She sits down at the table next to him.

ACE

Twenty-five thousand? For yourself?

GINGER

(Picking up an empty carton of milk)

Yeah.

ACE

Why do you need that much?

GINGER

Well, what's the difference? I just need it.

ACE

Well, I mean... you know, I gotta ask you. That's a lot of money. You're not asking for a box of popcorn, you know. I mean...

GINGER

I'm aware of that. We don't have to turn this into a big deal.

(Getting up to the refrigerator.)

Okay? We don't have to have a fight. It was important to me. But forget it. Just something I wanted to do for myself.

ACE

Who's fighting? I mean, I'm, you know, tell me what it's for.

GINGER, annoyed, closes the refrigerator door.

ACE

Why can't you tell me what it's for?

She stirs her coffee.

ACE

Huh?

(Pause)

Well, you know what? Now, I want you to tell me. I mean, my wife comes to me and asks me for twenty-five thousand. I mean, what do you want? Do you want a coat?

GINGER

No.

ACE

Well, if you want a coat, you got it. You know that. It's not the money, it's just why do you want it? That's all I'm askin'. Am I not entitled to that?

GINGER

Look - Sam, I've been independent my whole life. I never had to ask anybody for anything. Now you're making me beg you for this.

ACE

What are you talkin' a- ?

GINGER

(Interrupting)

Okay? And you're embarrassing me. Why do you want to make me feel so bad?

ACE

You're askin' me for twenty-five thousand. I'm not out to make you feel bad. I want to just be able to trust you. You now, it's about trust. I have to be able to trust you with my life. Do you understand? Can I trust you?

(She doesn't answer.)

Can I trust you?... Can I trust you?... Answer me. Can I trust you?

GINGER

(Quietly)

You can trust me.

ACE

Good, so then you could tell me what the money is for.

GINGER gives him a look and leaves.

INT. VEGAS BANK VAULT - DAY

GINGER takes about two inches of \$100 bills out of a safe deposit box and slips it in an envelope.

EXT. VEGAS/BANK/PUBLIC PHONE - DAY

NICKY is on a phone watching GINGER leave the bank.

NICKY

(Into telephone)

Yeah, she's leavin' the bank now.

All right, I'm gonna follow her.

(He hangs up.)

INT. SALVADORAN DINER BOOTH - DAY

GINGER is in a booth with LESTER DIAMOND, handing him the envelope filled with money.

LESTER

What does that mean? No, I know that look. What does that mean?

GINGER

It means I got the money.

LESTER

You got money. That's a - That's a good look.

SWISH PAN TO ACE ENTERING, FOLLOWED BY A HOOD. HE SITS DOWN AT THE BOOTH WITH LESTER AND GINGER.

ACE

How you doin', Les? It's Lester, right? Sam.

Extends his hand to LESTER, who shakes it.

ACE

From my recollection, aren't you the card shark... the golf hustler... the pimp from Beverly Hills?

LESTER gives GINGER a 'how did you fuck this up?' Look.

ACE

If I'm wrong, please correct me, 'cause I never knew you to be a heist man.

(LESTER sighs.)

But if you are, you know what... here, take mine too.

ACE takes some money out of his coat and puts the thick wad of bills on the table.

ACE

Go ahead, take it. 'Cause you already have hers.

LESTER turns and sees two HOODS standing by the front and back doors of the diner.

ACE

She's my wife.

(To LESTER.)

Look at me. You did know that, didn't you? You knew that she's my wife? Huh? Hey, look at me.

LESTER

Yeah, yeah. I know that.

ACE

You do? Yeah? Well, if you ever come back again... ever... to take her money... next time bring a pistol. That way you got a chance. Be a man, don't be a fuckin' pimp. Now, you want to do me a favor? Get out of here. I want to be alone with my wife. Get the fuck up and get out of here.

After stammering for a moment, LESTER gets up and begins to move towards the back door.

LESTER

(Quietly)

Okay.

ACE

You fuckin' piece of shit.

LESTER

Hey, that's just fuckin' - That's bullshit. You know, you know, what the fuck?

The thugs follow him out of the back door. GINGER freezes.

ACE

You remember when you called him that night? When you said goodbye to him? He didn't say, 'Don't get married, I'll be right down, we'll get married.' He didn't say that to you, did he?

GINGER

(Whispering)

No, he didn't.

ACE

(Picks up the money)
Didn't. No, instead, what did he
say? 'Fuck him. Take him for
everything he's got.'

ACE takes GINGER by the arm to the rear of the diner where
they can see the parking area through a glass door.

ACE

Come here, I want to show you
somethin'.

EXT. REAR OF SALVADORAN DINER, PARKING LOT - DAY

Three HOODS rush LESTER who is running towards his car. GINGER
bursts through the doors, trying to get to LESTER. ACE holds
her back. They struggle. LESTER groans and gasps as the HOODS
start to beat him up.

HOOD #1

You fuckin' shit.

GINGER

No! No! No! Don't!

ACE restrains her.

The HOODS punch LESTER in the face and stomach.

GINGER

Make them stop it!
(Sobbing.)
No! No! No! It's not his fault! It's
my fault!

NICKY watches from a car in a parking lot across the street,
out of GINGER's sight.

ACE forces GINGER into the car as the HOODS finish the
beating.

GINGER

(Sobbing)
No! No!

The HOODS toss LESTER into his car.

LESTER

(Falling into the
front seat on his
back.)
Fuck!

NICKY watches as the HOODS walk away from LESTER's car.

LESTER

Fuck you!

HOOD #2

You piece of shit.

ACE pulls out of the parking lot with a wailing GINGER.

LESTER groans, trying to sit up.

LESTER

(As ACE and GINGER
drive off down the
street)

Couldn't do it yourself, you
chickenshit cocksucker!

INT. GOLD RUSH BACK ROOM - DAY

GINGER and NICKY are in the back room. NICKY is sitting on a couch while GINGER stands by a mirror with a curling iron.

GINGER

(Throwing the iron on
the counter)

He's such a prick. He had some guy
from the hotel beat him up. He didn't
want to do it himself. Oh, no, he
didn't want to get his own hands
dirty.

She takes a pill with a drink.

GINGER

So, why'd he have to do that, huh?

She walks towards NICKY, who is sitting on a couch across the room.

GINGER

Tell me.

NICKY

I know it wasn't a nice thing to do
but -

GINGER

(Interrupts)

Yeah, no shit.

She sits down next to NICKY.

NICKY

Well, you gotta understand it. He
doesn't know if this guy is shaking
you down or taking advantage of you.

GINGER

No! No! I told him all about the guy before we ever got married. This is no fuckin' surprise.

NICKY

Oh, you did? I didn't know that.

GINGER

Yeah. He's just a friend of mine I was trying to help, so... so what?

NICKY

You know... the first time I ever saw your guys together... I never saw him so happy. I mean, I know he's a crazy Jew fuck and everything, but...

She smiles.

NICKY

I never see - You know, I never seen him act like that with anybody else. I think he's crazy about you. I mean, he really loves you. He does.

GINGER

Oh, come on. I went into this with my eyes open, you know. I knew the bottom could drop out at any time. I'm a working girl, right? You don't think I'm gonna go into a situation like this if I don't think I'm gonna get covered on the back end.

NICKY

Sure.

GINGER

Am I right?

NICKY

I can see that. Sure.

GINGER

So, he put aside some jewelry for me. A lot of jewelry.

NICKY

You mean, like a lot of expensive jewelry? About how much?

GINGER

Mm, you want to steal it?
(Cracking a smile.)

NICKY

No. I - I'm just curious, you know. I was wonderin' how much he would put into a thing like that. That's all.

GINGER

I'm told it's worth about a million dollars, maybe more.
(Sniffs.)

NICKY

Well, there you go. But what does that tell ya? A million dollars in jewelry. Does that tell you the guy is crazy about you, or what?

GINGER

I should have never married him. He's a Gemini. A triple Gemini... duality.
(Breaking down.)
Gemini's the snake. You know you can't trust the snake.
(Sniffs.)
I mean it.

NICKY

I know what you mean.

He moves closer to her.

NICKY

Listen, Ginger... you know, this is probably not... I don't have the answers anyway... and this is probably not what you want to hear right now, because you're a little upset with Ace.

GINGER

I do.

NICKY

I understand that. But, you know, I think you should try to make the best of it now. Go slow, you know. See what happens.

GINGER

He could have killed him! Okay? He could have killed him.

She gets up and walks to the counter by the mirror.

GINGER

He didn't have to hit him. It's not exactly like I'm sleepin' with the

guy! And he makes me sneak around to see my own friends! What the fuck is that all about?

NICKY

Well, I guess it's 'cause he loves you so much. He's jealous and worried.

GINGER

(Sighs, her voice starts to crack)
He gives a fuck what I do?

NICKY

(Getting up)
Look, I'll try to find out what the hell's goin' on. When I see him I'll talk to him.

GINGER

Okay.

NICKY

All right?

GINGER

Yeah.
(Walking over to him, smiling.)
Thanks.

Towering over NICKY, holding a drink in one hand and his shoulder in the other, she leans down and kisses him.

GINGER

Thanks for puttin' up with me.

NICKY takes the drink out of her hand.

NICKY

And take it easy with this shit, will you? I mean, this can only make matters worse.

GINGER

Oh, come on.

NICKY

You're a beautiful girl. You don't want to ruin your looks. I've seen a lot of girls get shot to hell from this stuff.

GINGER

(Fidgeting with his jacket, then holding his face in her hands,

smiling.)
You're so nice.
(She begins to cry.)

NICKY

Come on, now, I don't want to see
you unhappy.

She kisses him.

GINGER

(Tenderly strokes his
head)
Thanks.

NICKY

Yeah.

She embraces NICKY, wrapping her arms around him.

GINGER

(Through tears)
Thank you.

NICKY

(Feeling a little
awkward with the hug)
It's all right.

She kisses him again. NICKY doesn't move, holding back.

INT. ACE'S OFFICE - DAY

Pull back from a sign, with a tiny 'yes' on top of a gigantic
'no', leaning on a window overlooking the sportsbook. We see
ACE, behind his desk, taking a swig of Mylanta. His SECRETARY
telephones.

INT. ACE'S OUTER OFFICE, SECRETARY'S DESK - DAY

We see past PAT WEBB's cowboy hat down onto Ace's SECRETARY
on the phone.

SECRETARY

(Into telephone)
Mr Rothstein? County Commissioner
Pat Webb is here to see you.

ACE

(Over telephone)
Okay...

INT. ACE'S OFFICE - DAY

ACE

(Into telephone)
...give me a minute.

SECRETARY

(Over telephone)

Okay.

ACE hangs up the phone.

INT. ACE'S OUTER OFFICE, SECRETARY'S DESK - DAY

SECRETARY

(To WEBB)

It'll just be a minute.

INT. ACE'S OFFICE - DAY

ACE gets up from his desk and we see he is in his boxer shorts. He opens the closet and carefully puts on the trousers hanging inside.

INT. ACE'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

A very patient WEBB is leaning against some double doors across from Ace's SECRETARY.

SECRETARY

Mr Webb... Can I get you anything?

WEBB

Oh, no.

(Cordially tipping
his hat.)

No, thank you, little lady.

INT. ACE'S OFFICE - DAY

ACE

(Into telephone)

Okay, send him in and call me four
minutes after.

WEBB walks in. He is big, tough and western, wearing a Stetson, tooled boots, jeans, an elbow-patched jacket and a turquoise bear claw string-tie. His headband contains a rattlesnake head. Ace's SECRETARY shuts the door on her way out.

WEBB

Mr Rothstein...

(With hand outstretched
to ACE.)

I'm Pat Webb.

ACE

How do you do?

They shake hands.

WEBB

Hey, it is my pleasure.

ACE

Yeah, I heard a lot about you.

WEBB

Oh, thank you, sir.

Looking out Ace's office picture window overlooking the sportsbook.

WEBB

Hey, house is doin' well.

(Chuckling.)

Hey, all that money is rollin' in. I appreciate you takin' the time to see a poor ol' civil servant.

ACE

No, that's quite all right.

TILT UP FROM WEBB'S SNAKESKIN COWBOY BOOTS AND ACE'S BLUE SHOES AS THEY CONTINUE TALKING.

ACE

Why don't you have a seat?

WEBB

Hm? Oh. Thank you, sir.

WEBB sits down in a chair in front of ACE's desk.

WEBB

Uh, I come here personally to kind of smooth over a fracas about a certain matter. See, uh, maybe you didn't know it, but, uh, Don Ward is a very well-liked man in this town. He's got lots of friends here. Now, his family and their money go back many, many years. Now, friends vote... family and money votes. That's important to me... and you. And if you'll think about our little problem along them lines... and you forgive me for sayin' it, maybe he did not deserve to be fired.

ACE

I'm sorry, but he knew about our gettin' hit on three big machines in a row and he did nothing about it. That means either he was in on it or, forgive me for saying this, he was too dumb to see what was going on. Either way, I cannot have a man

like that workin' here.

WEBB

Before we point the dirty end of the stick at 'ol Don, uh, we better be sure we can prove them charges.

ACE

Believe me, if I could prove it, he would be under arrest.

WEBB

Are, uh -

(Clears throat.)

- are we certain that you want the Gamin' Control Board eyeballin' your record and your gangster pals like Nicky Santoro?

ACE

I think you're way out of line talkin' to me like that. What you're sayin' is libelous, and you're in no position to challenge my expertise. I went way out of my way to be very helpful and courteous to that kid. He's weak, he's incompetent. He jeopardizes the whole place. There's not much more I can do for him.

WEBB

(Chuckling)

You have got me there. Old Don is as useless as tits on a boar.

(Chuckles.)

But, he is my brother-in-law, and I would look on it as a personal favor if you'd think some more on hirin' him back.

ACE

I can't do that. And I appreciate the fact that he's your brother-in-law, and I do want to help you and I like to do favors, and I know who you are, but I cannot do that.

WEBB

Well, could there be any position... further down the trough?

ACE

(Pause)

I'm sorry, I can't do anything. He's too incompetent. And the bottom line is, he cannot be trusted.

The telephone rings. ACE picks it up.

ACE

(Into telephone)

Okay, thanks.

(To WEBB.)

Um... you know, that's it. I'm sorry.

WEBB

Mr Rothstein. Your people never will understand the way it works out here. You're all just our guests. But you act like you're at home. Let me tell you somethin', partner... you ain't home. But that's where we're gonna send you if it harelips the Governor.

(Pause.)

Thank you for your time.

ACE

No problem.

(Getting up and shaking hands.)

Sorry.

WEBB

(Smiles slightly)

You bet.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, BATHROOM/BEDROOM - DAY

ACE, in pain from his ulcer, opens a bottle of pills in his bathroom and sees that it is almost empty.

ACE

What happened to my pills?

He leaves the bathroom and walks into the bedroom where GINGER is stretched out on their imperial bed.

GINGER

Huh?

ACE

(Waving the pill bottle)

Isn't it bad enough you're drinkin' too much, you're takin' all my pills too?

GINGER

I didn't take your pills.

ACE

Look - for my ulcer, I take a half a one of these, a half a one of these. And that's when I have extreme pain. I had a three-month supply. What'd

you do with 'em?

GINGER

(Sobbing)

You didn't have to beat him up!

ACE

(Walking back to the
bathroom)

What?

ACE puts the bottle into the medicine cabinet.

GINGER

(Sobbing)

I was just tryin' to help him. It's
not like I'm sleeping with the guy!

ACE

Yeah, how do I know?

GINGER

(Sobbing)

You can't make me stop caring...

ACE

What? What?!

GINGER

I said, you can't make me stop caring
about people.

She starts to cry.

ACE

(Trying to calm her)

Listen.

(Stepping up to the
bed.)

Ginger. I'm tryin' to make the best
of everything here, you know? I
mean, you're my wife, for chrissakes.
Uh, I mean... people look up to you
in this town. I don't know what to
think -

GINGER

(Interrupts)

You know what, Ace? I don't give a
shit! I'm gettin' out of here.

(Crying.)

I am.

She sits up woozy, and tries to pull on her trousers.

ACE

(Walking around the

bed to her)
It's okay. Look...
(holding her face,
gently)
...you gotta get a hold of yourself.

GINGER

Okay.

ACE

If not for me, at least for Amy.

GINGER

(Sobbing)
Okay, okay.

ACE

(Gently)
You understand? Your drinking's
gettin' way out of hand. I'm gonna
get you into a program. They got
plenty of good ones.

GINGER

I don't need one.

ACE

Yes, you do. It's very discreet.
There's no names in the papers. You
don't have to worry about any of
that stuff.

GINGER

That's all you care about.
(Collapsing on the
edge of the bed.)
You don't care about me at all.

ACE

(Bending down to her)
Yes, I - yes, I do.

GINGER

No, you don't.

ACE

How could you say that? You're a
beautiful woman. You're destroying
yourself. You don't need that stuff.
You don't need that fuckin' leech
livin' off you. I know you better
than you know yourself. You're a
tiger, you're stronger than I am.
And when you set your mind on doing
something, you do it better than
anybody.

(Strokes her hair.)

Then, quietly:)
You can do it.
(Kissing her.)
You can do it.

GINGER

(Sobbing)
Oh, God. Oh, God. Okay. Okay...
I'll try. I'll try.

She sits up and puts her arms around ACE's waist. He strokes her head.

GINGER

I'll try. I will. Don't be mad at me, okay... I will.

INT. TANGIERS HARD COUNT ROOM - DAY

Move in on a door that reads: 'Notice - No Admittance - Caution - Hearing Protection Must Be Worn In This Area'. NANCE opens it with a key to reveal the hard count room. Coins tumble of a conveyor belt.

NICKY (V.O.)

No matter what the problems were outside the count room, it was all worth it. The cash kept rollin' in. And the...

EXT. CASINO REAR LOADING PLATFORM - DAY

NANCE, dumping two large suitcases in the trunk of a car.

NICKY (V.O.)

...suitcases kept comin' and goin'.
And let me tell ya, the fuckin' bottom line here is... cash.

The trunk lid is shut.

INT. TANGIERS SOFT COUNT ROOM - DAY

The counters sort through a pile of cash on a table. The camera moves on one counter as he pockets some cash.

NICKY (V.O.)

The only problem was that, after a while, the bosses noticed that the suitcases were gettin' a little light.

FREEZE FRAME ON THE COUNTER POCKETING A \$100 BILL.

INT. SAN MARINO ITALIAN GROCERY/BACK ROOM, KANSAS CITY - DAY

NANCE is seated at a table eating with FORLANO, CAPELLI, CAPP, BORELLI, PISCANO and GAGGI.

BORELLI

Aspett'. [Italian-American slang for 'Wait'] Wait a minute. You mean to tell me that the money we're robbing is bein' robbed? That somebody's robbing from us? We go through all this fuckin' trouble, and somebody's robbin' us?

GAGGI

(To NANCE)

Eh?

NANCE

Like I said, you know, i-it's part of the business. I-it's considered leakage.

BORELLI

Leakage, my balls. I want the guy who's robbin' us.

INT. TANGIERS HARD COUNT ROOM - DAY

NANCE enters through a door and walks past a man picking up a bucket of coins and dumping them into a trough. A clerk, seated at a coin weighing scale, places a ticket into a small tray. NANCE reads the printout of the machine.

NICKY (V.O.)

Even John Nance, that's the guy who ran the skim, he knew there wasn't much you could do about it. You gotta know that a guy who helps you steal, even if you take care of him real well, I mean, he's gonna steal a little bit extra for himself. Makes sense, don't it? Right? Well, you go try and make these hard-headed old greaseballs understand that.

INT. SAN MARINO ITALIAN GROCERY/BACK ROOM, KANSAS CITY - DAY

BORELLI

What's the point of skimming if we're being skimmed? Defeats the whole purpose of what we're doin' out there.

GAGGI

(To NANCE)

Huh?

NANCE

You know, they take this money because they're my guys. So you gotta give 'em some leeway.

NICKY (V.O.)

But the bosses never believed in
leeway, so listen to what they do:
they...

INT. SAN MARINO ITALIAN GROCERY/BACK ROOM, KANSAS CITY - DAY

BORELLI is talking to PISCANO, his underboss.

NICKY (V.O.)

...put Artie Piscano, the underboss
of KC, in charge of making sure nobody
skimmed the skim.

BORELLI

What the hell have you been doin'
out there?

PISCANO

I was out there with my cumma [Italian-
American slang for 'girlfriend'.]

BORELLI

Your cumma? What are you doin' with
your cumma?

PISCANO

What else? I gave her a schaff
[Italian-American slang for 'tap'.]

NICKY (V.O.)

The only trouble was, Piscano was a
disaster. This guy could fuck up a
cup of coffee.

BORELLI

Artie, what the hell have you been
doin' out there, Artie?

PISCANO

I'm out there more than I'm here.

NICKY (V.O.)

And little did anybody know where
this would all lead. If they did,
they would have been better off makin'
fuckin' novenas.

BORELLI

You gotta go back there and talk to
that guy.

PISCANO

Come on, go back there? I never got
paid my expenses for the last trip.

BORELLI

What expenses?

PISCANO

Well, I'm goin' all over, layin' money out of my own pocket, and I never get anything back. What the hell's goin' on?

BORELLI

You gotta go back out there.

PISCANO

Well, then, from now on, I'm gonna start keepin' records.

BORELLI

Artie, no records, Artie. What are you gonna do with records? Pay taxes?

PISCANO

Well, I keep layin' out my own fuckin' dough for these trips and nothin' ever comes back. I mean, what hell's goin' on? What are we doin' over here?

BORELLI

You're goin' out to Las Vegas, you're havin' a good time at my expense. What the fuck? I mean, after all, you're the one having a good time, not me.

ACE (V.O.)

No matter how many novenas you could make, nothin'...

INT. TANGIERS, GREEN'S OFFICE - DAY

GREEN is arguing with ANNA SCOTT, a fifty-year-old no-nonsense businesswoman.

ACE (V.O.)

...was gonna stop what came up next at the casino.

GREEN

I can't believe you're doing this.

SCOTT

We made a deal. You came to me, remember?

GREEN

Yes, I appreciated your advice...

ACE (V.O.)

It turned out Phil Green, Mr Integrity, had a partner nobody knew about... and when she showed up and started demanding some money from the Tangiers...

GREEN

Why are you doing this to me?

SCOTT

Because you're wrong.

GREEN

I'm not wrong.

SCOTT

Yes, you are.

GREEN

No, I am not wrong.

ACE (V.O.)

...Green tried to stonewall her.

SCOTT

And you're not going to get away with this! I will see to it that you do not get away with this!

She walks out.

ACE (V.O.)

So...

INT. COURT-ROOM - DAY

A JUDGE is seated at his bench. SCOTT and GREEN, surrounded by their lawyers, take their seats. NANCE watches from the back row.

ACE (V.O.)

...she sued him in court.

JUDGE

The court will now hear the matter of the plaintiff, Anna Scott, against Tangiers Corporation and its president, Philip Green.

LAWYER #1

Good morning, your Honor. John Momet on behalf of Mr Green.

LAWYER #2

Mitchell Logan on behalf of Anna Scott, your Honor.

JUDGE

Mr Logan, you may proceed.

LAWYER #2

Thank you, Judge.

As the JUDGE pounds his gavel, we see ANNA SCOTT and a grim **GREEN**.

INT. COURT-HOUSE CORRIDOR - DAY

ANNA SCOTT holds an impromptu press conference.

SCOTT

I believe he was absolutely fair and
I'm delighted with the decision.

NANCE is talking at a pay phone, SCOTT and the reporters are in the background.

NANCE

(Into telephone)

We got a problem.

INT. ALL-AMERICAN GAS STATION, GAGGI'S BACK OFFICE, BACK HOME - DAY

CURLY hands GAGGI the phone. He listens.

NANCE

(Over telephone)

It didn't go too well.

INT. COURT-HOUSE CORRIDOR - DAY

NANCE

(As GREEN and his
lawyers walk past
him, exiting the
court-house)

Green has to open up the books...
has to show how he got the financing.
And, hey, that's - that's not good.

INT. ALL-AMERICAN GAS STATION, GAGGI'S BACK OFFICE, BACK HOME - DAY

GAGGI, holding a cigarette, snaps his fingers in disgust, grunts, and slams down the phone. He men watch in silence.

GAGGI

Shit.

CURLY takes the phone away.

NICKY (V.O.)

She was doin' pretty good with her lawsuit, but before she could start countin' her money, the boys back home decided to settle the case out of court instead.

INT. ANNA SCOTT'S HOME, KITCHEN, LAS VEGAS - DAY

SCOTT, alone, is sitting at her kitchen table.

NICKY (V.O.)

So, they send me.

NICKY swiftly enters the room, grabs SCOTT around the neck, and fires three shots into her head.

He leans SCOTT back against the chair, then gently, while stroking her hair, sets her head to the side. Blood flows from her mouth on to her pink robe.

NICKY grabs his gun and leaves.

Reporters are heard shouting 'Mr Green'.

EXT. LAS VEGAS PRIVATE AIRPORT - MORNING

GREEN gets off the Tangiers corporate jet and is assaulted by questions about the Scott murder. GREEN is stunned.

REPORTER #1

Can you comment on the murder of Anna Scott?

GREEN

What are you talking about?

REPORTER #1 (O.S.)

She was found last night, shot in the head.

REPORTER #2 (O.S.)

Was this just a real-estate partnership?

REPORTER #3 (O.S.)

Her lawyer said you were partners.

GREEN

We were - We were involved in minor real estate deals many years ago. It was never a partnership.

Reporters chase CHASE as he walks down the ramp and across the tarmac to his white limousine.

REPORTER #1

Police are calling this a mob-style

killing.

REPORTER #2

Did you ever hear of the twenty-two-caliber killer?

GREEN

I'm a little in shock, quite frankly...

ACE (V.O.)

Now, instead of the cops only lookin' at Nicky, they started looking at Green too. And he was supposed to be our squeaky...

INT. ACE'S OFFICE - DAY

ACE is being interviewed by a female Business Week REPORTER. SHERBERT and RONNIE are sitting on a couch, listening to the interview. The REPORTER is seated across from ACE, at his desk.

ACE (V.O.)

...clean front man. So, I had to start giving interviews to make sure everybody knew the casino was on the up and up.

REPORTER

So, actually, how often do you really fill in for him?

ACE looks at SHERBERT.

SHERBERT

(to REPORTER, who looks his way.)
Green's here about two or three times a month, and he's busy -
(REPORTER glances back at ACE.)
- with other real-estate deals and -
and things, you know.

REPORTER

(To ACE)
So, in Green's absence, then, you're the boss.

ACE

I serve at the pleasure of the chairman of the board and... my, uh, responsibilities are to run the day-to-day operations.

REPORTER

So, day-to-day, then, you're the boss?

ACE

Well, in a sense, you could say that... I am the boss, when Mr Green is away. You could say that.

INT. GAMING CONTROL BOARD OFFICE - DAY

A magazine headline reads 'Sam Rothstein: "I'm the Boss!" '.

WEBB (O.S.)

Hm. Have you read this?

The magazine shows a photograph of ACE. A caption reads: 'Rothstein asserts authority at Tangiers Casino'.

WEBB (O.S.)

Hm? It's 'bout Mr Rothstein.

We see WEBB holding up a copy of Business Week in the gaming board office of investigators RONNIE DUPREY and MATT AUSTIN.

WEBB

It says

(Reading)

'The Midwest bookmaker with mob ties says that he is the real boss of the new hundred-million-dollar Tangiers Casino empire.'

(To DUPREY and AUSTIN)

You believe that?

DUPREY

Did he really say that?

WEBB

Why, of course, he really said that. It's right here. Has that man even filed for his license yet?

AUSTIN

I don't know. We'll have to check the files.

WEBB

Well, without gettin' your shorts in a knot, would you do that? And kinda check closely, 'cause we may have to kick a kike's ass out of town. Thank you.

He exits.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

ACE is watching the television news which features his photo and a police photo of NICKY.

NEWSCASTER

(On television)

A Gaming Control Board investigation of Tangiers executive Sam Rothstein's application for a (photo of ACE) gaming license is underway. Rothstein, who heads the Tangiers Casino operation and is a boyhood friend of Las Vegas mob boss Nicky Santoro, (photo of NICKY) Could lose his ability to work in the casino.

The phone rings. It's NICKY.

ACE

(Into telephone)

Hello.

NICKY

(Over telephone)

Listen...

EXT. STRIP MALL PUBLIC PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT

We see NICKY through the telephone booth glass.

NICKY

(Into telephone)

...I gotta meet Clean Face right away. What about the Chez Paree?

SUPER SUBTITLE

'I gotta meet Charlie the Banker right away at your house, okay?'

ACE

(Into telephone)

No, you, you can't. You gotta make a reservation.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

ACE

(Into telephone)

It's all booked up.

SUPER SUBTITLE

'I don't want a meeting at my house.'

NICKY

(Over telephone)

No, no it's okay.

ACE

(Into telephone)
It's impossible. It's booked up, and
you gotta make a reservation. It's...

EXT. STRIP MALL PUBLIC PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT

ACE

(Into telephone)
...very difficult to get in.

NICKY

(Into telephone)
Well, it's okay. I'll use the service
entrance. I'll see you at nine.

SUPER SUBTITLE

'I'll come in from the golf course
side. See you at six.'

ACE

(Over telephone)
Uh...

INT. ACE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

ACE

(Over telephone)
...all right.

He hangs up and takes a drag off his cigarette.

NEWSCASTER

(On television, from
following scene)
The battle between...

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS DEN - DAY

ACE and the banker, CHARLIE CLARK, are upstairs in the den,
which has a patio overlooking a swimming pool and golf course.
CHARLIE is seated on a couch watching TV. GINGER enters and
walks across the room, getting another drink from the bar.
ACE, taking his ulcer medicine, watches her.

NEWSCASTER

(On television)
...state gaming officials and Tangiers
Casino boss Sam 'Ace' Rothstein is
heating up. Tonight, an up-to-the-
minute look at Ace Rothstein's attempt
to get state licensing despite law
enforcement allegations of Rothstein's
organized crime connections. Will
Sam Rothstein's friendship with
alleged organized crime figure Nicky
Santoro keep Rothstein from running

the Tangiers Casino? And can the integrity of state gaming laws be jeopardized by a boyhood friendship?

ACE walks over to GINGER at the bar.

ACE

(Quietly)

Why don't you take it easy with that stuff? Huh? Come on. Let me help you. Come on. We're talkin' about some stuff.

NEWSCASTER

(On television)

State officials say 'yes' when that relationship and those connections are with anyone as notorious as Nicky Santoro.

ACE takes GINGER's arm and leads her out of the room toward the stairs.

NEWSCASTER

Tonight at six: 'Will a boyhood friendship unseat Rothstein as the Tangiers' Casino boss?' Exclusive on the KVVO Special News Report.

(Reading commercial.)

...Promise to keep my money fears away?

ACE

(To GINGER)

Just go downstairs. Just... go downst-

She struggles to break away from his firm grip, gives him a look and starts to walk down the stairs.

NEWSCASTER

(On television,
continuing commercial)

Promise to be financially secure? Money Time can help you keep those promises.

ACE looks down on GINGER as she slips on the stairs.

CHARLIE CLARK

You can't let this concern you, Ace. Don't worry about that stuff.

Outside the glass door NICKY arrives via the stairs from the golf course.

CHARLIE CLARK (O.S.)

It's just a political witch hunt.

ACE opens the sliding glass door and NICKY enters.

NICKY

Hey, Ace.

ACE

Hey.

NICKY walks over to CHARLIE CLARK.

ACE

Want something to drink? Charlie you want a refill?

CHARLIE CLARK

Yeah, refill'd be great.

NICKY

(Approaching CHARLIE)

No, I don't want one.

(Smiling, extends his hand.)

Hey, Mr Clark, how you doin'?

CHARLIE CLARK

(Shaking hands)

Hi. Good.

NICKY

(Sitting down with him on a couch)

I've been trying to reach you. You're tougher to get than the President.

CHARLIE CLARK

Well, I've been busy.
(Chuckles.)

NICKY

Yeah, least you could do is return my phone calls, though.

CHARLIE CLARK

Listen... Nicky... we talked about this... and, uh, I explained to you that there was the possibility you might have to take some kind of loss.

NICKY

Yeah.

(Pause.)

I think I want my money back.

CHARLIE CLARK

(Chuckling)

What're you gonna do? Strong-arm me?

NICKY

You know... I think that you've gotten the wrong impression about me. I think in all fairness, I should explain to you what it is that I do. For instance, tomorrow morning I'll get up nice and early, take a walk down over to the bank and walk in and see you, and, uh... if you don't have my money for me, I'll crack your fuckin' head wide open in front of everybody in the the bank. And just about the time that I'm comin' out of jail, hopefully, you'll be comin' out of your coma. And guess what? I'll split your fuckin' head open again. Because I'm fuckin' stupid. I don't give a fuck about jail. That's my business. That's what I do. And we know what you do, don't we, Charlie? You fuck people out of money and get away with it.

CHARLIE CLARK

(As he puts a notepad
in his briefcase)
You can't talk to me like...

NICKY

(Grabbing CHARLIE by
his jacket)
Hey, you fat Irish prick. You put my fuckin' money to sleep. You go get my money, or I'll put your fuckin' brain to sleep.

CHARLIE CLARK

(To ACE, panting)
Sam?

NICKY

Never mind fuckin' Sam. This is personal.
(Walking with CHARLIE
to the stairs.)
I'll be there in the morning. You can fuckin' try me, fatso.

A frightened CHARLIE hurries down the stairs.

NICKY

You fuckin' try me.

He turns to ACE who's behind the bar.

NICKY

You think he got the point?

ACE

(Walking to NICKY)

What're you doin'? He's a square guy, for chrissakes. You can't treat him like that. He's gonna run to the **FBI**.

NICKY

Fuck the FBI! That prick's been dodging me for three weeks. And what is it with you? All of a sudden, you're tryin' to tell me what to do all the time.

ACE

I'm not tryin' to tell you what to do. But you were way out of line, Nick. What're you doin'? Where's your head?

NICKY

Where's my head? Where's your fuckin' balls? Huh? You know I'm tryin' to put somethin' really big together out here. You know what I'm talkin' about, huh? You know! If you're actin' like this now, how can I depend on you? There's a lot of things gonna change out here. And if you wanna be there with me, Sammy, you're gonna have to go my fuckin' way.

ACE

Listen, Nick, you gotta understand my situation. I'm responsible for thousands of people. I got a hundred million a year goin' through the place. It's all over, I'm gonna tell you, it's all over, if I don't get that license. And believe me, if it goes bad for me, it's gonna go bad for a lot of people, you understand?

NICKY

Yeah, forget about your fuckin' license. I plant my own flag out here, you ain't gonna need a fuckin' license.

(Pause.)

You know, I don't know what it is, Sammy, but the more I talk to you, the more I feel like you just don't wanna go along with me, is that it?

ACE

No, I don't wanna come -

NICKY

You should say so.

ACE

I don't wanna come along with you.

NICKY

Just say so.

ACE

I'll be honest with you.

NICKY

All right, fine.

ACE

I don't wanna be involved in anything
you're talkin' about...

NICKY

Fine.

NICKY walks to a table and flips through Business Week
magazine.

ACE

...okay? I just wanna run a square
joint. That's it. I just want my
license. I want everything nice and
quiet. That's it.

NICKY

(Holding up the
magazine)

You mean, quiet like this: 'I'm the
boss.' That's quiet?

ACE

That's all taken out of context.
Okay.

NICKY

Yeah, that's out of context. Okay.

ACE

I have no control over that. Ronnie
and Billy were right there. They'll
tell you exactly what happened.

NICKY

Well, back home they don't know about
fuckin' control. That looks bad.

ACE

Looks bad? I'm gonna tell you what looks bad.

NICKY

Yeah?

ACE

Every time you're on television I get mentioned. That looks bad. That looks bad.

NICKY

What the fuck happened to you? Will you tell me?

ACE

What happened to me? What happened to you?

NICKY

Yeah.

ACE

You lost your control.

NICKY

I lost control?

ACE

Yes, you lost your control.

NICKY

Look at you. You're fuckin' walkin' around like John Barrymore.

ACE

All right.

NICKY

A fuckin' pink robe and a fuckin'...

ACE

All right.

NICKY

...uh, uh, cigarette holder. I'm - I lost control?!

ACE

Yeah.

NICKY

You know, I didn't want to bring this up, but you have treating a lot of people with a lot of disrespect. Even your own wife.

ACE

My wife?

NICKY

Yeah.

ACE

Now, what does she have to do with all this?

NICKY

Well, she comes to see me. She was upset about a lot of things, especially that whole fuckin' Diamond - that Lester Diamond incident.

ACE

All of a sudden, you're the shoulder to cry on? Did you at least tell her about your little role in that whole situation?

NICKY

No, I didn't. What good would that do? That's not the fuckin' point.

ACE

Listen, I would -

NICKY

(Interrupting)

The point is that she's upset. She's - and you got a fuckin' problem.

ACE

I - I would appreciate it if you'd stay out of my personal life, okay? You wouldn't like it if I did it to you.

NICKY

Hey, she came to talk...

ACE

Please...

NICKY

...to me.

ACE

...don't do it to me...

NICKY

She came to talk to me...

ACE

Okay?

NICKY

And I - what was I supposed to do, throw her out?

ACE

Ju-just stay away from her. It's none of your business, okay? There are certain things you don't do, and you know that.

NICKY

It's none of my business?

ACE

That's right, yeah.

NICKY

A week ago it was my business, now it's none of my business. In other words, when you need me to take care of somethin' for you, then you need me.

ACE

Yeah, that's right, the way you need me to vouch for you as a citizen and get you out of one of your jams. I'm gonna have to straighten out what you just did with this guy.

NICKY starts to walk out.

ACE

This guy is gonna run to the FBI.

NICKY

Your fuckin' head is getting' bigger than your casino. That's your problem, pal.

ACE (V.O.)

I knew what he wanted, and I didn't want any part of it.

NICKY

(Walking to the glass doors leaving ACE standing there)
Fuckin' walking around with a big head. You better check yourself...

ACE (V.O.)

Nicky wanted to take over. He wanted to go after Gaggi, go after the skim, go after everything and everybody.

NICKY shuts the door behind him and walks down the stairs to the golf course.

ACE (V.O.)

Plus, he had stopped askin' permission from back home for every little thing.

EXT. VEGAS STREET - NIGHT

QUICK ZOOM OUT FROM A DEAD BODY WITH A GUNSHOT WOUND IN THE CHEST. COPS AND PRESS ARE MILLING AROUND.

EXT. VEGAS HOUSE - DAY

CAMERA SPIRALS OUT FROM THE BODIES OF A CASINO EXECUTIVE AND HIS WIFE WHO HAVE BEEN GUNNED DOWN ON THEIR FRONT LAWN.

ACE (V.O.)

A casino boss and his wife were killed. The bulls questioned Nicky.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Police photographers taking pictures of a dealer, dead behind the wheel of his car, his eyes and mouth frozen wide open in a silent scream.

ACE (V.O.)

A dealer from the Sirocco... they questioned Nicky.

INT. UNDERGROUND GARAGE - DAY

Two policemen open the trunk of a car and find a trussed-up dead body. They cover their noses because of the stench.

ACE (V.O.)

A bunch of stool pigeons wound in the trunks of their cars... they questioned Nicky.

EXT. LAWYER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

We see a brand-new car explode.

ACE (V.O.)

A lawyer... they questioned Nicky.

EXT. HOUSE DOORWAY - DAY

A front door where a pile of newspapers have accumulated. Another newspaper is thrown at the door.

ACE (V.O.)

And when some guys who didn't pay their Shylocks began disappearing,

Nicky's name was in every one of those newspapers.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE COURT-HOUSE - DAY

NICKY and OSCAR GOODMAN, his lawyer, leave the court-house, surrounded by reporters and photographers. They wait at the curb for the light and NICKY, smiling, politely cautions a photographer to be careful of the on-coming traffic.

ACE (V.O.)

Nicky was questioned in two dozen murders, but they always had to let him go. There were never any witnesses.

NICKY (V.O.)

The coppers blamed me for everything that went wrong out here, and I mean every little fuckin' thing too.

NICKY

(To photographer)

Watch yourself. You're gonna get runned over there.

NICKY (V.O.)

If a guy fuckin' tripped over a fuckin' banana peel, they'd bring me in for it.

NICKY

(To reporters)

Come on, huh. That's enough now. Be nice, huh? Be nice.

INT. ALL-AMERICAN GAS STATION, GAGGI'S BACK OFFICE, BACK HOME - DAY

MARINO walks through a doorway to GAGGI's office. CURLY pats him on the back. He shakes BEEPER's hand, then FORLANO's, who is on the phone.

NICKY (V.O.)

And the bosses were no better. I mean, they complained day and night because things don't run smooth. Well, in my line of work, things don't run so smooth, I'm sorry. I mean, I'm dealing with degenerate animals out here. But the bosses, what do they give a fuck? They're sittin' on their asses, drinkin' anisette. Meanwhile, I'm the guy in the trenches. Fuckin' bosses, they think it's a fuckin' free lunch out here.

MARINO hands a brown-paper bag filled with \$100 bills to
GAGGI.

GAGGI

(Ignoring the money)
Frankie... they found a guy's head
in the desert. Do you know about
that?

MARINO

Yeah, I heard, yeah.

GAGGI

Yeah. Everybody's talkin' about it.
They're makin' a big deal out of it.

MARINO

I know.

GAGGI

It's in all the papers.

MARINO

What're you gonna do?

GAGGI

And I mean... that's no good.

MARINO

I know.

GAGGI

You gotta tell him... to take care
of things a little better.

MARINO

I'll tell him, Remo.

NICKY (V.O.)

Fuckin'...

EXT. VEGAS STRIP BUS STOP BENCH - DAY

NICKY is talking quietly to MARINO. They are surrounded by
people waiting for the bus.

NICKY (V.O.)

...bosses. I mean, they're smokin'
their Di Nobilis and they're eatin'
a trippa [Italian-American slang for
'tripe'.] and fuckin' suffritt', you
know, fried pigs guts? While, if I
wanna talk private, I gotta go to a
fuckin' bus stop.

NICKY

(To MARINO)
But, hey, what do they care, as long
as I keep sendin' money back.

MARINO
Yeah, but they're complaining.

NICKY
Let 'em complain. I'm the one who's
here.

The bus arrives, obscuring our view of them.

NICKY
I do all the work. Somebody don't
like it, fuck him.

MARINO
It's up to you.

NICKY
They want a fuckin' war, I'm ready.

When the bus departs it reveals NICKY and MARINO alone on
the bench, talking.

NICKY
I know one thing. All I gotta do is
take care of four or five of those
fuckin' guys, the rest will fall
right into place. Believe me.

INT. GOLD RUSH - DAY

NICKY is watching a police surveillance car with two agents
through binoculars.

NICKY (V.O.)
Peekaboo, you fucks, you.

NICKY
I see you, you motherfuckers.

ACE (V.O.)
The problem was, Nicky was not only
bringin' heat on himself, but on me
too. The FBI watched every move he
made. But he didn't care. He just
didn't care.

**THE CAMERA MOVES PAST NICKY TO REVEAL MARINO, SEATED IN FRONT
OF TV SECURITY MONITORS ON THE PARKING AREA IN FRONT AND
BEHIND THE GOLD RUSH.**

NICKY (V.O.)
If they're gonna watch me, fuck 'em,
I'm gonna watch 'em right back. I

spent a few dollars. Top dollar, who gives a shit?

HARDY, seated next to MARINO, is adjusting a knob on one of the may police radio scanners. There are a couple of cameras on the table next to him.

A debugging expert is going over the walls with a metal detector.

NICKY (V.O.)

I got the latest anti-buggin' equipment from the same places that sell to the fuckin' CIA. I had all the special police frequency radios, FBI descramblers, cameras that see in the dark, and because of that, the miserable sons-of-bitches that they are, they never once caught me doin' anything I couldn't handle.

DOMINICK and FUSCO are at a table arguing.

ACE (V.O.)

I got my job...

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAY

NICKY swings a gold club. MARINO, and two men, are with him.

ACE (V.O.)

...on the line and this guy's out havin' the time of his life. He has every cop in the state watchin' him, and he's out playin' golf.

NICKY

Practice enough this week, you prick?

ACE (V.O.)

And at the...

EXT. ACE'S PATIO - DAY

ACE is with the Control Board investigators AUSTIN and DUPREY. They are all pouring over legal files and record books out on a table by the swimming pool.

ACE (V.O.)

...worst possible time for me.

AUSTIN

A record of the arrests...

ACE (V.O.)

I had my license hearing coming up and I didn't wanna leave anything to

chance.

ACE

That was nineteen years ago, and
they were simple gambling pinches.

ACE (V.O.)

I mean, if I can't work in Vegas,
where am I gonna go?

AUSTIN

You've been very open with us. I
mean, uh, your books and papers and...
that - that's gonna mean something
when you go before the Commission.

ACE

Well, that's all I ask, gentlemen, a
fair hearing.

DUPREY

Well, this kind of honesty will
guarantee that fair hearing.

ACE

Good.

AUSTIN

All right, well, we'll move on to -

Suddenly a sputtering airplane flies right over Ace's house.

AUSTIN (O.S.)

(As he looks at the
plane)

I wanted to hear something about...
Kansas City.

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAY

NICKY

(Looking at the
airplane)

What the fuck is this? Where's this
fuckin' guy gonna land, on the
fairway?

EXT. ACE'S PATIO - DAY

ACE and the board investigators follow the plane as it lands
on the fairway. ACE has taken off his sunglasses to get a
better look. Two men in suits get out.

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAY

NICKY

(To MARINO)

They're fuckin' agents, Frankie.
Look at this.

EXT. ACE'S PATIO - DAY

The AGENTS run across the golf course, past ACE and the investigators, who look on open-mouthed.

ACE (V.O.)

The Feds were watchin' Nicky play golf for so long, they ran out of gas. Just what I needed. Right in front on the Control Board.

The agents run behind the hedges by ACE's pool. AUSTIN and DUPREY stare at ACE as if he had something to do with it.

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAY

NICKY

A hundred dollars, whoever hits the plane.

NICKY, MARINO, and the other men swing their clubs.

EXT. ACE'S PATIO - DAY

ACE (V.O.)

(putting his sunglasses
back on)
And, as if things weren't bad
enough...

EXT. SAN MARINO ITALIAN GROCERY, KANSAS CITY - DAY

ACE (V.O.)

...in comes Piscano, the Kansas City underboss. He ran that little grocery store in Kansas City where they brought the suitcases.

INT. SAN MARINO GROCERY, KANSAS CITY - DAY

PISCANO and his MOTHER are at the counter of his elderly BROTHER-IN-LAW's store.

PISCANO

They're fightin' over those suitcases again. You know what that means, right? You know what that means, right? That means I gotta take another trip out to Vegas, and it's gonna cost me another couple of grand.

ACE (V.O.)

He ran it with his brother-in-law, but mostly what he did was complain,

complain about his trips to Vegas,
to his brother-in-law and to his
mother, all the time.

BROTHER-IN-LAW

(Seated)

You gotta lay down the law. Otherwise
they're gonna make a fool out of
you.

PISCANO

They're not gonna make a fool out of
me. I write it all down in this book,
(holding up a notepad)
every fuckin' nickel that goes down.
Right here, receipts...

PISCANO'S MOTHER

(Chastising her son)

Hey! Oh!

PISCANO

Oh, sorry -

PISCANO'S MOTHER

What's the matter with you?

PISCANO

Receipts and bills and... everything's
here.

PISCANO'S MOTHER

Since when do you talk like that?

PISCANO

I'm sorry.

PISCANO'S MOTHER

There's a lot of people here.

PISCANO

Nance gives me trouble and I'll tell
him... screw around with those
suitcases and I'll take the eyes out
of his frickin' head.

PISCANO'S MOTHER

Again!

PISCANO

I didn't curse. I said 'frickin'
head'.

PISCANO'S MOTHER

That's enough.

PISCANO

I'm sorry.

ACE (V.O.)

And what happens next?

THE CAMERA TILTS UP TO THE CEILING AIR VENT TO A TINY MICROPHONE AND TRANSMITTER AT ITS BASE.

ACE (V.O.)

You can't believe it. I mean, who the hell would believe that the FBI had a wire in the place lookin' for some information about some old homicide about some guy who was whacked-out, God knows when, over God knows what?

PISCANO

Plus, what's to prevent him with the suitcases, that he can take what he wants? Fuckin' Nance, he brings us back two suitcases from the Tangiers, and what about three or four?

INT. POST OFFICE ACROSS THE STREET, KANSAS CITY - DAY

A pen write 'NANCE' on a piece of paper.

INT. SAN MARINO ITALIAN GROCERY, KANSAS CITY - DAY

PISCANO

We got nobody in the room to watch. That's the law. You know, we can't even go into the count room to watch our money? Could you believe this cowboy bullshit?

His MOTHER shakes her head.

PISCANO

And sure he's got his people in there. But how do you know? They could all be in on it together, those miserable fucks.

His MOTHER reacts to his language.

PISCANO

I'll find out and, if it's Green himself, I'll bury that bastard.

INT. POST OFFICE ACROSS THE STREET, KANSAS CITY - DAY

A pen writes the word 'GREEN'.

PISCANO

(Over transmitter)

I've never trusted him. And you know
I got eyes...

INT. SAN MARINO ITALIAN GROCERY, KANSAS CITY - DAY

PISCANO

...behind my head. They trust that
scumbag, I don't. Right now, the way
I feel, I'll hit the two of them in
the head with a fuckin' shovel.

PISCANO'S MOTHER

All right, take it easy now, take it
easy.

PISCANO

Mom, I'm sorry, they're beatin' me
left and right.

(Knocking down some
bottles of olive
oil.)

Ma, I'm sorry. I'm all upset.

PISCANO'S MOTHER

(Tapping the counter)
I know, but that's enough.

PISCANO

You know - You know - You know what
they're doin' to me?

PISCANO'S MOTHER

I know it, I know it.

PISCANO

I can't take this no more. Back and
forth, back and forth.

PISCANO'S MOTHER

Take it easy, though.

PISCANO

All right, all right. But I - I -

PISCANO'S MOTHER

You'll get a heart attack like that.

PISCANO

You know, I - I'm too upset right
now. And - An end has to be put to
this.

ACE (V.O.)

And the damn...

**CAMERA PANS OFF THE LISTENING DEVICE IN THE VENT TO A WINDOW
AND THE POST OFFICE ACROSS THE STREET.**

ACE (V.O.)

...thing is, they go and hear all this stuff about Las Vegas and the casinos and the suitcases, and that's it.

PISCANO (O.S.)

If I have to start handlin' things the way I...

INT. POST OFFICE SMALL ROOM, KANSAS CITY - DAY

Behind a window overlooking the grocery store are two FBI agents listening to Piscano's conversation.

PISCANO

(Over transmitter)

...did years ago, start kickin' ass, I - I'll do it, and I'll use the goddamn shovel! I mean, I...

We see an agent looking out of the window with a pair of binoculars.

PISCANO'S MOTHER

(Over transmitter)

You are right.

The other agent, with headphones, is seated at a desk by a tape recorder, writing.

PISCANO

(Over transmitter)

...everything's comin' out of my pocket. I gotta pay for all these trips back and forth, back and forth.

PISCANO'S MOTHER

(Over transmitter)

You are right. What can I...

INT. WASHINGTON FBI OFFICE - DAY

PISCANO'S MOTHER

(On tape recorder)

...tell you.

TITLE IN: 'WASHINGTON, D.C.'

THE CAMERA TILTS DOWN AN AMERICAN FLAG TO REVEAL THE TAPE NOW BEING TRANSCRIBED BY AN FBI STENOGRAPHER

ACE (V.O.)

Would you believe that such a thing could happen?

PISCANO

(On tape recorder)
I'm in this to make money, not to
lose money. And...

ACE (V.O.)

Every FBI man across the country had
their ears open now.

PISCANO

(On tape recorder)
Because...

The stenographer's pen writes: 'BORELLI' on a piece of paper.

PISCANO

(On tape recorder)
...if you want somethin'...

Stenographer writes: 'TANGIERS'.

PISCANO

(On tape recorder)
...done right, you gotta do it
yourself.

PISCANO'S MOTHER

(On tape recorder)
Then do it the way you want.

Pen writes: 'VEGAS'.

PISCANO'S MOTHER

(On tape recorder)
What can I tell you?

ACE (V.O.)

I mean...

Pen writes: 'SANTORO'.

ACE (V.O.)

...Piscano, this guy basically...

The stenographer's pen taps twice on the word 'SANTORO'.

ACE

...sunk the whole world.

Pen writes: 'SANTORO'.

FOCUS ON STENOGRAPHER, LISTENING.

PISCANO'S MOTHER

(On tape recorder)
That's the way people are. There are
some that are good and some that are

bad.

INT. GAMING CONTROL BOARD HEARING ROOM, LAS VEGAS 1980 - DAY

ACE is in the court with OSCAR GOODMAN, his lawyer, facing the Control Board's Chairman and six COMMISSIONER MEMBERS. The Chairman is the SENATOR we saw earlier in the casino suite taking chips out of the bureau drawer. The room is jam-packed: GREEN, GINGER, SHERBERT, as well as WEBB, reporters and other spectators. ACE's secretaries carry in legal papers. There are piles of briefs and law books on OSCAR's and ACE's table.

OSCAR

Mr Chairman and members of the Commission. Mr Rothstein is pleased to be here today.

ACE (V.O.)

And when the day finally came, I was ready. I felt so confident that all I had to do was present my case.

OSCAR

...evidence... and we have documents, one of which is a report by retired FBI agents, which completely absolves
(holding up a large
file folder)

Mr Rothstein from any wrongdoing. I'd like this marked, please, Mr Chairman.

SENATOR

(Into microphone)
Pardon me, counselor. Before you continue...

OSCAR

No, I want to have this marked, Mr. -

SENATOR

(Into microphone)
...this, uh, this Commission is prepared to act on a motion denying the Rothstein application.

OSCAR

Denying?

SENATOR

(Into microphone)
Do I hear a motion seconded?

OSCAR

Mr. Chairman -

CONTROL BOARD MEMBER #1

(Into microphone)

Mr. Chairman, I second the motion.

SENATOR

(Into microphone)

Do I have a vote on the motion?

OSCAR

Mr. Chairman -

The COMMISSIONERS quickly repeat:

CONTROL BOARD MEMBER #2

(Into microphone)

Aye.

CONTROL BOARD MEMBER #3

(Into microphone)

Aye.

CONTROL BOARD MEMBER #4

(Into microphone)

Aye.

SENATOR

(Into microphone)

The ayes have it. This hearing is adjourned.

The CHAIRMAN bangs his gavel and prepares to leave. The COMMISSIONERS hurriedly pack up their papers. An enraged ACE rises and approaches the SENATOR. TV CAMERAS ROLL.

ACE

(Getting up)

You guys have to be kidding.

The SENATOR picks up his briefcase.

ACE

Adjourned! What do you mean, adjourned?

OSCAR

Mr. Chairman, please.

ACE

Mr. Chairman...

The SENATOR picks up his folder.

ACE

Senator, you promised me a hearing.

We see WEBB seated in the first row, watching.

ACE

You won't allow me a hearing? You didn't even look at the FBI reports.

A reporter holds a microphone up to the SENATOR.

ACE

When you were my guest, Mr. Chairman, Senator, at the Tangiers Hotel, did you not promise me that I would have a fair hearing -

The SENATOR bends down to a microphone.

SENATOR

(Interrupting, into microphone)

I was never - I was never your guest at the Tangiers.

ACE

You were never my guest?!

SENATOR

(Into microphone)

That's right.

ACE

I never comped you?! I don't comp you at least two or three times a month at the Tangiers?!

SENATOR

(Into microphone)

Uh, I - I'd... I'd like to answer - answer that at this time.

ACE

Liar.

SENATOR

(Into microphone)

Mr Rothstein is being very typical to this point.

ACE

He's lying.

WEBB starts to leave.

SENATOR

The only time I was at the Tangiers was when I had dinner with Barney Greenstein.

ACE

Was I at that dinner? Just tell me -

SENATOR

You were wandering around.

ACE

Was I at that dinner?

SENATOR

You were wandering around.

ACE

Was I at that dinner?

SENATOR

You were wandering around.

ACE

Was I at that dinner?

SENATOR

You were in the m- You were in the building.

ACE

I was in the building!

GREEN, embarrassed by ACE's behaviour, starts to get up.

ACE

You know damn well I was at that dinner, and you swore to me that I would have a fair hearing at that dinner! Did you not?! Did you not?!

(Pause, ACE looks at

OSCAR.)

Well, tell me I was at least at the dinner! A-allow me that much.

(Pause.)

Give me that much at least!

SENATOR

(Hesitates)

Yes, you were.

The SENATOR starts to walk out.

ACE

Yeah, thanks for not callin' me a liar. You son-of-a-bitch. You son-of-a

FEMALE NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

Good evening, everyone, I'm Paige Novodor.

(On television.)

What should have been a routine licensing hearing turned into bedlam

yesterday when the flamboyant Tangiers
Casino executive, Sam

ACE spots COMMISSIONER CARTER slipping out the door.

FEMALE NEWSCASTER

(Overlapping)
...'Ace' Rothstein, accused the
state's top gaming officials of
corruption.

ACE

(Overlapping)
What are you running for, Bob? What
are you running for?

FEMALE NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

(Overlapping)
...and hypocrisy.

ACE

(Into two reporters'
microphones)
Don't you remember? You promised me
a fair hearing when you were gettin'
comped at my hotel and you were asking
me for copies of your bills so -

SHERBERT and GINGER look on.

ACE

- you could put 'em on your expense
account?

FEMALE NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

In a
(on television)
Wild and unprecedented outburst that
followed his gaming license
(voice-over,
overlapping)
denial, Rothstein followed several...

ACE

(With several
reporters, overlapping)
Bullshit! Bullshit!

INT. CONTROL BOARD LOBBY - DAY

Putting on his sunglasses, ACE emerges from the courtroom
with SHERBERT, GINGER, OSCAR and several reporters. He is
surrounded by the press.

FEMALE NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

...stunned commissioners into the
hallway, where he continued his

harangue until his own lawyers and friends urged him to leave.

ACE

(To COMMISSIONERS standing in the hallway, speaking into a TV news microphone)

We all have a past. You have a past, I have a past. And my past is no worse than yours. But you guys think you have the right to pass judgement on me.

FEMALE NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

(Overlapping)

Long suspected of running the Tangiers without...

ACE

(Overlapping)

...twenty years in order to find nothin' on me -

OSCAR pulls him away, ACE looks back at the COMMISSIONERS.

ACE

- unsubstantiated truths on me. And if you look at your own lives you'd all be in jail.

OSCAR ushers ACE out, past WEBB and Gaming Investigator **AUSTIN**.

FEMALE NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

(Overlapping)

...a gaming license, yesterday's hearing was to determine whether someone with Rothstein's checkered personal history was qualified to officially hold the top gaming post.

INT./EXT. GAGGI'S CAR, BACK HOME ALLEY - DAY

GAGGI hands STONE an issue of the Las Vegas Sun showing a photograph of ACE at the licensing hearing. Headline reads: 'Rothstein out of gaming: Control Board Rules against Rothstein License Application'.

ACE (V.O.)

(from previous scene continued)

Fuckin' hypocrites!

STONE stands beside GAGGI's car door. GAGGI is in the back seat with his window down.

GAGGI

What the hell's he gonna do now?

STONE

I don't know
(Sighs.)

GAGGI

What's he doin'? He knows all those guys he yelled at are friends of ours. What's the matter with him, making all this mess?

STONE

Maybe he could run things with another job title. Wouldn't be the best, but, uh, what are we gonna do?

GAGGI

However he runs things, it's gotta be quiet. Let him hide upstairs in the office. Say he's the janitor, I don't give a shit. But, please, whatever job he takes, make sure it's something quiet.

STONE walks back to his car. Both cars pull out in opposite directions.

INT. TANGIERS SPORTSBOOK/ACES HIGH! THE SAM ROTHSTEIN SHOW - NIGHT

A video monitor shows a title card, reading: 'From the Tangiers Hotel'. TRUDY, Ace's showgirl sidekick, is heard over the opening credit sequence of the show.

TRUDY (O.S.)

Ladies and gentlemen, the Tangiers Hotel proudly presents the all-new Sam Rothstein Show, Aces High.

TITLE CARD: 'ACES HIGH'

The monitor shows a neon sign reading, 'Welcome to Fabulous Las Vegas, Nevada', then shows several gamblers at a craps table.

TRUDY (O.S.)

Tonight, taped live from the all-new sportsbook, we present the premiere showing of Aces High. With the...

The video monitor shows a neon sign: 'Stardust', then another: 'Tangiers'.

WE SEE TRUDY ON A STAGE.

TRUDY

(Into microphone)
...Sasha Semenov Orchestra...

THE CAMERA PANS TO SASHA SEMENOFF CONDUCTING HIS BAND.

TRUDY

...and the Sam Rothstein Dancers.

THE CAMERA PANS TO A GROUP OF DANCERS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STAGE.

We see ACE greeting various guests in the audience as he moves towards the stage.

TRUDY

Mr Rothstein is a professional gambler
and the best football handicapper...

A video monitor shows a montage featuring showgirls, a chef carving beef and three women wearing bathing suits.

TRUDY

...in American, a man who will take
you inside the real Las Vegas as no
one has ever done before. And now,
ladies and gentlemen, the new...

ACE joins TRUDY on the stage.

TRUDY

...Entertainment Director of the
Tangiers Hotel Casino: Mr Sam
Rothstein.

ACE approaches his desk as TRUDY sits on a long sofa. The audience applauds.

The band plays and the dancers complete their number.

ACE

(Seated at a desk a
la Johnny Carson)
Welcome to the Sam Rothstein Show.
We're very happy to have you here
this evening. The young lady to my
left is Trudy, who is a lead new
dancer in our fabulous show from
Paris.

Audience applauds, she waves hello.

ACE

Our first guest this evening... is
Frankie Avalon.

FRANKIE AVALON walks to the stage, embracing TRUDY and shaking ACE's hand.

Audience applauds.

WEBB stands in the rear of the sportsbook/theater with AUSTIN and DUPREY, watching ACE.

WEBB

Keep an eye on him.

He exits.

FRANKIE AVALON (O.S.)

...Well, I've got a large family.

ACE

(Into microphone)

How many kids do you have?

FRANKIE AVALON

(Into microphone)

Uh, I'm very proud to say that we have eight children.

ACE

(Into microphone)

Eight children!

(He encourages the audience to applaud.)

FRANKIE AVALON

(Into microphone)

No, no, no, no, please, please, please, please, no, please.

ACE

(Into microphone, to audience)

That's amazing.

FRANKIE AVALON

(Into microphone)

There was nothing to it.

(Chuckles)

It was my pleasure.

INT. TANGIERS, GREEN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

GREEN and ARTHUR CAPP are solemnly watching another episode of Ace's TV show with an elderly juggler guest.

GREEN

Ace, don't do it.

ACE begins to juggle.

GREEN

Oh, no, no. No, no. Oh, Jesus...
he's juggling!

The audience cheers him on.

ACE (O.S.)

(From next scene)
Let's not take County Commissioner
Pat Webb too seriously.

INT. TANGIERS SPORTSBOOK/ACES HIGH - NIGHT

**WE MOVE PAST TWO TELEVISION CAMERAS TO ACE BEHIND HIS DESK
AT ANOTHER TAPING OF HIS SHOW. TRUDY IS AT HIS SIDE.**

ACE

(Into microphone)
I recently challenged him to a debate
on this program and he declined.
What are you worried about, Pat?
You don't have to send me any
questions. You can ask me anything
you want.

STONE (O.S.)

(From next scene)
What the hell is he doin' on
television, anyway?

**INT. ALL-AMERICAN GAS STATION, GAGGI'S BACK OFFICE, BACK
HOME - DAY**

Vegas Sun newspaper front page photo of ACE on television.
Headline reads: 'Rothstein Sues Gaming Commission'.

STONE is sitting across from GAGGI at his office.

STONE

He's on all night, screamin' about
how he's gonna take his damn lawsuit
all the way to the Supreme Court. He
really must be crazy. He's gonna go
to Washington with this?
(Chuckles.)
He's out of his fuckin' mind.

ACE (O.S.)

(From next scene)
It's a pity in this...

INT. TANGIERS SPORTSBOOK/ACES HIGH - NIGHT

ACE

(Into microphone)
...state that we have such hypocrisy.
Some people can do whatever they

want. Other people have to pay through the nose.

INT. ALL-AMERICAN GAS STATION, GAGGI'S BACK OFFICE, BACK HOME - DAY

ACE (O.S.)

(From previous scene)
But such is life.

GAGGI

Andy, go see him. Tell him maybe it's time he should quit.

EXT. MIGHTY MART CONVENIENCE STORE, REAR PARKING LOT, LAS VEGAS - NIGHT

SHERBERT and ACE pull up beside another parked car. ACE gets out of his car in a robe and pajamas and gets into STONE's car.

INT. STONE'S CAR - NIGHT

ACE

First of all, what they did was totally unconstitutional. We're already on the list to be heard before the Supreme Court of the United States later this year.

STONE

These guys back home don't give a fuck about the Supreme Court and any of this bullshit! They want things to quiet down. They want you to walk away from -

ACE

Walk away? Andy, you can't be serious. How can I walk away? Don't you see what's goin' on here? Don't you see what's at stake?

STONE

The old man said, 'Maybe your friend should give in.' And when the old man says 'maybe', that's like a papal bull. Not only should you quit, you should run!

ACE

Know what my problem is? Every time they mention my name in the papers, these cocksuckers, they mention Nicky, too. How the fuck does that help? I mean, the heat he brought down is murder! We had a police department

who was cooperative. He's pissed them off so much now that nobody can make a move anymore. I mean, what do you do about that?

STONE

What do you propose?

ACE

I don't know, he doesn't listen to me. Maybe he should... get lost for a while. Take a vacation. Would that be so bad?

STONE

They ain't sendin' Nicky nowhere.

ACE

All right, look, if he took a break, it would just give everybody some time to maneuver. That's all I'm saying. It's all that I'm saying.

STONE

I would forget about the maneuver. I would just get out.

ACE

(Sighs)

I can't do that.

ACE (V.O.)

Of course...

INT. NICKY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

JENNIFER is on the phone with GINGER; NICKY listens in.

JENNIFER

(Into telephone)

You know, I don't feel like playin' tennis.

ACE (V.O.)

...as soon as Andy got back home, Nicky heard about our talk in the car.

JENNIFER

(Into telephone)

Let's go to lunch. Do you want to go to the Riviera?

ACE (V.O.)

Next morning bright and early, I get the call.

GINGER

(Over telephone)
One o'clock?

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, LIVING-ROOM - DAY

ACE listens in on GINGER's and JENNIFER's conversation.

JENNIFER

(Over telephone)
Great.

GINGER

(Into telephone)
You know, I've got to do some shopping afterwards. Do you want to go?

INT. NICKY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

JENNIFER

(Into telephone)
Well, you know...

ACE (V.O.)

But just getting a call from Nicky wasn't easy anymore. Even the codes didn't work. So, we figured out another act.

INT. FBI PHONE TAP ROOM - DAY

A bored FBI man, seated at his desk with a tape recorder and headphones, looks at his wrist watch.

ACE (V.O.)

You see, if a phone's tapped, the Feds can only listen in...

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

ACE (V.O.)

...on the stuff involving crimes. So on...

INT. NICKY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

ACE (V.O.)

...routine calls, they have to click off after a few minutes.

INT. FBI PHONE TAP ROOM - DAY

GINGER

(Over telephone)
Yeah, and I get a sprained fuckin' elbow.

The FBI man clicks off the tape recorder.

INT. NICKY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

JENNIFER quickly hands the phone to her husband.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, LIVING-ROOM - DAY

GINGER hands the phone to ACE.

ACE

(Into telephone)

Yeah.

INT. NICKY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

NICKY

(Into telephone)

Meet me at three.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

ACE

(Into telephone)

What - what, Caesar's?

NICKY

(Over telephone)

No, a...

INT. NICKY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

NICKY

(Into telephone)

...hundred yards further down the road.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, LIVING-ROOM - DAY

ACE

(Into telephone)

Why?

INT. NICKY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

NICKY

(Into telephone)

Don't ask questions. Just be there.

NICKY gives the phone back to JENNIFER.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, LIVING-ROOM - DAY

ACE gives the phone to GINGER.

INT. NICKY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN

NICKY
(To himself)
Always asking questions.

He exits.

JENNIFER
(Into telephone)
Suzy Creamcheese has the exact...

INT. FBI PHONE TAP ROOM - DAY

The bored FBI agent clicks on again and hears GINGER and JENNIFER's inane conversation.

JENNIFER
(Over telephone)
...same outfit.

GINGER
(Chuckles, over
telephone)
But I saw something...

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, LIVING-ROOM - DAY

GINGER
(Into telephone)
...something very... cute.

ACE sits down on the couch behind her and lights a cigarette.

INT. FBI STAKEOUT POST, MOTEL ACROSS THE FROM THE GOLD RUSH - DAY

Through a windows of a motel room across the street from The Gold Rush, an FBI AGENT watches NICKY and MARINO exit the jewelry store, get into a parked car and rive away.

IRIS OUT.

FBI AGENT (O.S.)
(Into a radio)
Okay, he, uh, he's out. It's the
ant, uh, Brown unit. And he's with,
uh, bogie. I think it's Frankie.

ACE (V.O.)
Nicky started out before me because
it wasn't that easy...

SWISH PAN TO THE FBI AGENT LOOKING OUT THE WINDOW TALKING INTO A RADIO.

ACE (V.O.)
...for him to get around anymore.

FBI AGENT

(Into radio)
Okay, pulled out...

SWISH PAN TO NICKY AND MARINO DRIVING DOWN THE STREET.

FBI AGENT (O.S.)

(Into radio)
...pretty fast. He's headed upstream.

ACE (V.O.)

Nicky couldn't even go for a ride
without changing...

SWISH PAN TO FBI CAR TRAILING BEHIND.

ACE (V.O.)

...cars at least six times before he
could shake all his tails.

INT. UNDERGROUND PARKING GARAGE #1 - DAY

NICKY's car with MARINO driving pulls in; NICKY jumps out
and gets in another car.

ACE (V.O.)

And because of all the planes, he
had to use underground garages.

MARINO drives off.

INT. UNDERGROUND PARKING GARAGE #2 - DAY

NICKY's second car screeches in to another garage.

INT. UNDERGROUND PARKING GARAGE #3 - DAY

NICKY hurries across the lot to another car.

INT. UNDERGROUND PARKING GARAGE #4 - DAY

NICKY changes cars again.

INT. UNDERGROUND PARKING GARAGE #5 - DAY

NICKY is running to yet another car. He drives off.

EXT. DESERT SCENE - DAY

A solitary ACE waiting in the vast desert, looking around.
ACE looks at a sage brush and sand and a few rocks on the
desert floor. This could be a hole meant for him. He steps
away from it.

ACE (V.O.)

Meeting in the middle of the desert
always made me nervous.

It's a scary place. I knew about the holes in the desert, of course, and everywhere I looked, there could have been a hole.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY

Aerial shot of NICKY driving.

ACE (V.O.)

Normally, my prospects of comin' back alive from a meeting with Nicky were ninety-nine out of a hundred. But this time, when I heard him say, 'A couple a hundred yards down the road', I gave myself fifty-fifty.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

ACE still standing in the desert. NICKY's car suddenly appears as a reflection in ACE's sunglasses, shaking ACE out of his desert-induced reverie. NICKY's car pulls up by ACE. He gets out and storms up to him.

NICKY

Where the fuck you get off talkin' to people about me behind my back? Goin' over my head?

ACE

What people?

NICKY

What people! What'd you think, I wasn't gonna find out?

ACE

I don't even know what you're talkin' about, Nick.

NICKY

No? You said I'm bringin' heat on you?! I gotta listen to people because of your fuckin' shit?! You're ordering me out?! You better get your own fuckin' army, pal!

ACE

I didn't do anything. I mean, I didn't order you or anybody... I only told Andy Stone that you had a lot of heat on you, and that was a problem.

NICKY

You want me to get out of my own fuckin' town?!

ACE

Yeah, I said I - let the bullshit blow over for a while so I can run the casino. Anything goes wrong with the casino, it's my ass. It's not yours, it's my ass.

NICKY

Oh, I don't know whether you know this or not, but you only have your fuckin' casino because I made that possible!

ACE

I -

NICKY

(Interrupting)

I'm what counts out here! Not your fuckin' country clubs or your fuckin' TV shows! And what the fuck are you doin' on TV anyhow?!

ACE

What are you -

NICKY

(Interrupting)

You know I get calls from back home every fuckin' day?! They think you went batshit!

ACE

I'm only on TV because I gotta be able to hang around the casino. You understand that. You know that. Come on.

NICKY

Your fuckin' ass! You could have had the food and beverage job without goin' on television! You wanted to go on TV.

ACE

Yeah, I did want to go on TV. That way I have a forum. I can fight back. I'm known. People see me. They know they can't fuck around with me like they could if I was an unknown. That's right.

NICKY

You're makin' a big fuckin' spectacle of yourself.

ACE

Me?! I wouldn't even be in this situation if it wasn't for you. You brought down so much fuckin' heat on me. I mean, every time I meet somebody here, the big question is do I know you.

NICKY

Oh, sure. Now you want to blame your fuckin' license on me, is that it?

ACE

No, it - it - Nicky, when you asked me if you could come out here, what did I tell you? I mean, you asked me, and I knew you were going to come out no matter what I said, but what did I tell you? Do you remember what I told...

NICKY

(Interrupting)

Back -

ACE

...you? Do you remember what I told you?

NICKY

Back - Back up, back up a fuckin' minute here. One minute. I asked you?! When the fuck did I ever ask you if I could come out here?! Get this through your head, you -

ACE

(Interrupting)

You never - ?

NICKY

Get this through your head, you Jew motherfucker, you. You only exist out here because of me! That's the only reason! Without me, you, personally, every fuckin' wiseguy skell [Skell: the lowest form of wiseguy - a drunken bum] around'll take a piece of your fuckin' Jew ass! Then where you gonna go?! You're fuckin' warned! Don't ever go over my fuckin' head again! You motherfucker, you!

NICKY drives off, leaving an angry and frustrated ACE to ponder the desert and the holes.

INT. JUBILATION NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Overhead of ACE, OSCAR, SHERBERT, TRUDY and showgirls walking down the zebra pattern carpet of the nightclub. They are escorted to their table.

NICKY, MARINO and DOMINICK are seated at another table in the rear of the club so no one can hear their conversation.

MARINO

Well, we got company.

ACE avoids looking at NICKY.

NICKY

Do you see that? Dumb Jew motherfucker. Grew up together and he's actin' like he don't even know me. I know we're supposed to avoid each other, but, you know, there's ways to do things and there's ways not to.

DOMINICK

Yeah. Fuck him.

SHERBERT and the others make a toast.

SHERBERT

To Abraham Lincoln.

ACE

L'chaim. [Yiddish for 'to life']

SHERBERT

Here we go. Good luck.

NICKY watches ACE's entourage.

DOMINICK

Forget about it, Nick. Don't let it bother you.

NICKY

Why, does it look like it's bothering me? What do I give a fuck? Fuckin' Oscar too. All the fuckin' money I've given that prick, he don't even look over here. What's his problem?

MARINO

Mm.

NICKY

Fuckin' Jews stick together, don't they?

MARINO

They're havin' a good time too.

NICKY

So are we.

NICKY, MARINO and DOMINICK are isolated and alone at their table.

INT. ACE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

ACE sleeping. A hot line to the casino rings as a red light blinks.

ACE

(Into telephone)

Yeah?

INT. TANGIERS CASINO SPORTSBOOK - NIGHT

SHERBERT is calling ACE.

SHERBERT

(Quietly into telephone)

Sam, we got a problem.

INT. ACE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

ACE

(Into telephone)

What is it?

SHERBERT

(Over telephone)

The little guy. He's half in the bag, and nobody told him he was eighty-sixed from the joint, so we...

INT. TANGIERS CASINO SPORTSBOOK - NIGHT

SHERBERT

(Into telephone)

...all turned our heads and made out like we didn't know who he was. He's over at the twenty-one table with his...

INT. TANGIERS BLACKJACK TABLE - NIGHT

NICKY is betting every spot on the blackjack table. MARINO is standing behind him. The DEALER is nervous.

SHERBERT

...nose wide open. He took the money out of his own kick. His nose is open for about ten thousand.

SHERBERT and the pit boss look on.

SHERBERT (O.S.)

Now, he's really pissed.

INT. ACE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

ACE

(Into telephone)

Oh, no.

Sits up and throws off the bed covers.

INT. TANGIERS SPORTSBOOK - NIGHT

SHERBERT

(Into telephone)

He wants a fifty-thousand marker.

INT. ACE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

ACE

(Into telephone)

No, just - just give him, give him ten. That's it. Ten. I'll be right down.

INT. TANGIERS BLACKJACK TABLE - NIGHT

SHERBERT

(To NICKY)

He's gonna come up with ten thousand, just the way you wanted.

NICKY

Ten thou? No, no, no.

SHERBERT

...give you ten thousand -

NICKY

(Grabbing SHERBERT's lapel)

Fifty! I said fifty!

SHERBERT

Look, take -

NICKY

(Pushing him away and walking back to the blackjack table)

Fuckin' fifty thousand! Go get it. I don't give a fuck where you get it.

(To FEMALE DEALER.)

Fuckers! They take it, but they don't want to give it back.

NICKY turns up another bad card and looks at the dealer. She smiles as she slides the house winnings over to her side of the table.

NICKY

How the fuck can you grin? How the fuck could you grin?

The FEMALE DEALER looks to her PIT BOSS for help. He steps up to a MALE DEALER at a neighboring table.

NICKY

You know how much I'm stuck? You give a fuck?

The MALE DEALER walks up to the FEMALE DEALER and taps her on the shoulder.

NICKY

Do ya?!

She lays down some cards, claps her hands to show the Eye-in-the-Sky that they are empty, and exits.

NICKY

(To departing FEMALE

DEALER)

Yeah. Give yourself a hand right across your fuckin' mouth.

The MALE DEALER takes her place behind the table.

NICKY

Look at this fuckin' beaut they put in now. Sherbert send you in here to rob me now? Been fuckin' knockin' everybody's dick in all night? Huh? You been beatin' all the customers tonight, motherfucker?

We see the PIT BOSS lock up the chip tray from the table the dealer has just left. NICKY has a diminished stack of chips and an upturned ten and a two.

NICKY

Huh, jag-off? Hit me.

The card is a king or a 'paint', a picture card, meaning that NICKY has lost.

Everyone freezes in fear. NICKY takes the paint and flicks it at the DEALER's chest where it sticks to his shirt.)

NICKY

Take this stiff and pound it up your fuckin' ass! Hit me again.

The DEALER looks to the PIT BOSS who nods 'okay'. He turns over a card. It's another paint, a queen. NICKY flicks the card to the DEALER's face.

NICKY

Take this one and stick it up your sister's ass! Hit me again.

The DEALER looks to the PIT BOSS again.

NICKY

That's it, keep lookin' at him, you fuckin' dummy. If you had any fuckin' heart at all, you'd be out fuckin' stealin' for a livin'.

(Tossing the card at the DEALER.)

Hit me again.

The DEALER looks at the PIT BOSS.

NICKY

What the fuck you keep lookin' at him for, huh, you fuckin' pu-

The DEALER deals him another paint.

NICKY

Look at this, twenty fuckin' paints in a row. Hit me again!

ACE enters the casino with SHERBERT.

MARINO

(To NICKY)

He's here.

NICKY

(To the DEALER)

You should pay as fast as you collect, you know.

NICKY gets up to go over to ACE, glowering at SHERBERT as he walks past.

ACE and NICKY are partially hidden behind a pillar by the slot-machines.

ACE

What are you doin'? You gotta get out of here!

NICKY

Hey, Sammy, tell this Jew motherfucker over here to pay that marker.

ACE

Nicky, Nicky, you're not listenin' to me. I'm here to help you. What's the matter with you? You're gonna bury us both.

NICKY

Just give me the money. Fuckin' give me the fuckin' money, Sammy.

ACE

I'm gonna okay you ten and get you even, and that's it. Then you got to get out of here before the cops and the newspapers are all over you.

To the PIT BOSS, holding up ten fingers.

ACE

Ten and that's it.

He makes a throat cutting gesture with his hand. ACE leaves. NICKY turns to walk back to the table. He sees SHERBERT standing right behind him.

NICKY

What are you starin' at, you bald-headed Jew prick?!

Before SHERBERT can answer, NICKY grabs the receiver off a wall phone and hits him across the face and back. SHERBERT falls to the floor. NICKY pulls the cradle off the pillar and tosses it down on his back. He and MARINO walk back to the table, SHERBERT winces on the floor in shock.

NICKY

Sue me, you Jew fuck!

MARINO

Let's get out of here.

NICKY

What? Get out of here? I got a marker comin'.

He puts some chips down on the table.

NICKY

(To DEALER)

Deal.

INT. OSCAR, THE LAWYER'S OFFICE - DAY

ACE and GINGER are seated across from OSCAR, their lawyer.

OSCAR

I know, but everything's changed

now. You're talking about a divorce. You're even asking for alimony payments and... child support... and now custody.

GINGER

I just want what any divorced woman would get.

ACE

I mean she's only sober about two hours a day. It's usually from eleven in the morning until one in the afternoon. And if I gave her her money and her jewels now, you know what she's gonna do? She's gonna piss it all away in about a year, and then where will she be?

(To GINGER.)

Where would you be then? Comin' right back to me, right back to me.

(To OSCAR.)

Or finding some other excuse to come and I - I -

GINGER

(To ACE)

We had a deal. Remember that?

(To OSCAR.)

He said if it didn't work out between us, that I could get my things and I could leave.

ACE

(To GINGER, leaning closer to her)

Look in my eyes. Look in my eyes.

GINGER turns to him.

ACE

You know me. Do you see anything in these eyes that makes you think I would ever let someone in your condition take my child away from me?

(Pause.)

Do you? You know that won't happen.

ACE (V.O.)

And after all this time... and as hard as I tried, as much as I wanted...

INT. ACES HIGH BACKSTAGE CORRIDOR/SHOWGIRLS' DRESSING-ROOM - DAY

ACE, with Kleenex sticking out of his collar to protect his shirt from his television make-up, walks back to the dressing room with TRUDY. She pecks his cheek before exiting to her own room. A security guard opens the door for ACE.

We follow him past numerous showgirls and costumes.

ACE (V.O.)

...I could never reach her. I could never make her love me. I always felt she should have gone for all that money... being somebody for the first time in her life, a home and a kid. But that's not what happened. It just didn't work out that way.

ACE

(To the showgirls)
Everything all right?

ACE

I mean, what could we do? After a while, we'd just take breathers from each other. You know, little separations. At that time, I remember Ginger took Amy and went to Beverly Hills. She was gonna spend a week or so shopping.

ACE picks up the phone at a make-up table.

OPERATOR

(Over telephone)
Yes, Mr Rothstein.

ACE

(Into telephone)
Operator, the Beverly Hotel in Beverly Hills, please.

EXT. LOS ANGELES. BEVERLY HOTEL - DAY

GINGER, sporting a new short hairstyle, and AMY exit and walk towards camera.

HOTEL OPERATOR (O.S.)

Hello, Beverly Hotel.

ACE (O.S.)

Mrs. Sam Rothstein, please.

HOTEL OPERATOR (O.S.)

I'm sorry. Mr. and Mrs. Rothstein have checked out already.

TRACK BACK, AS GINGER SMILES, TO REVEAL LESTER DIAMOND.

LESTER

Hey.

GINGER kisses LESTER.

INT. SHOWGIRLS' DRESSING-ROOM - DAY

ACE

(Into telephone)

M- Uh, Mr. and Mrs. Rothstein?

EXT. BEVERLY HOTEL - DAY

LESTER

(To AMY)

Hey, little Dale Evans.

GINGER laughs

HOTEL OPERATOR (O.S.)

Yes, they both checked out.

INT. SHOWGIRLS' DRESSING-ROOM - DAY

ACE

(Into telephone)

Thank you.

(He hangs up.)

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

ACE steps up to a public phone as it rings.

ACE

(Into telephone)

Hello.

FORLANO

(Over telephone)

Yeah.

ACE

(Into telephone, sighs)

Uh, my wife is w-with an old friend
of her i-in LA.

INT. ALL-AMERICAN GAS STATION, GAGGI'S BACK OFFICE, BACK HOME - DAY

FORLANO is on the phone, taking notes with a pencil. GAGGI is sitting in the background.

ACE

(Over telephone)

Some low-life. A guy named Lester
Diamond.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

ACE

(Into telephone)

My daughter's with 'em too and I think they're gonna try and kidnap her. Is there anybody you can send?

INT. ALL-AMERICAN GAS STATION, GAGGI'S BACK OFFICE, BACK HOME - DAY

FORLANO

(Into telephone)

We'll take care of it.

FORLANO hangs up and walks over to GAGGI. We hear the doorbell from the following scene.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE - DAY

ACE opens the door to two Tangiers EXECUTIVES.

COUNT ROOM EXEC

(To ACE)

We got a number and an address.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS DEN - DAY

ACE is standing behind his desk on the phone.

ACE

(Into telephone)

Hello.

LESTER

(Over telephone)

Hello.

ACE

(Into telephone)

Yeah, is this Lester? This is Sam...

INT. LESTER DIAMOND'S LOS ANGELES APARTMENT - DAY

ACE

...Rothstein. I want to talk to Ginger. Put her on the phone.

LESTER

(Into telephone)

She's not here, Sam.

ACE

(Over telephone)

Lester...

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS DEN - DAY

ACE

(Into telephone)
...listen to me very carefully. I
want to talk to Ginger. I want my
kid back. I want her put on a plane
immediately.

INT. LESTER DIAMOND'S LOS ANGELES APARTMENT - DAY

ACE

(Over telephone)
I know she's there. Don't fuck around
with me.

LESTER

(Into telephone)
Uh, I'm not. Sam, I wouldn't...

He snaps his fingers to get GINGER's attention.

LESTER

...wouldn't do it. Yeah, no, I, I...

We see GINGER on LESTER's living-room couch, cutting lines
of cocaine with a razor blade in front of MAY.

GINGER

(Whispering to AMY)
You shouldn't do this.

LESTER steps up to the living-room snapping his fingers to
GINGER. She looks up.

ACE

(Over telephone)
You understand? Put her on the fuckin'
phone.

LESTER

(Into telephone)
Sam, I - I don't know where she is,
okay?

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS DEN - DAY

LESTER

(Over telephone)
So, 1-1-1-listen, I te- I te- I tell
you - can I call you back in a few
minutes?

INT. LESTER DIAMOND'S LOS ANGELES APARTMENT - DAY

ACE

(Over telephone)
702 472 1862.

LESTER

Mm-hm.
(Pretending to write
it down.)
1862. Okay, good. I'll call you right
b-

ACE

(Over telephone)
Right away.

LESTER

(Into telephone)
I'll call you right back.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS DEN - DAY

ACE

(Over telephone)
Right back.

INT. LESTER DIAMOND'S LOS ANGELES APARTMENT - DAY

LESTER

(Into telephone)
You got it.
(He hangs up; then to
himself as he walks
through a doorway to
the living-room)
Schmuck.

(To GINGER.)
All right. I just bought us a few
minutes. Want to get back at this
prick?

He sticks his finger in the coke and rubs it on his gums.

LESTER

Hm? Okay, you got, what, two million
dollars in that box?

GINGER snorts some cocaine.

LESTER

Hey... you got a minute? Hey. He's
got two million in the box, am I
right? Okay, you let him keep your
jewels. We take the cash and the
only other thing he cares about.
(He points to AMY.)
Huh? Her majesty. We go to Europe.
You dye your hair, get some pl-

AMY

(Interrupts)

I don't want to go to Europe. I want to go to see The Elephant Man.

LESTER

We're not gonna go see any fuckin' elephants, okay?

GINGER

(To AMY)

We'll go later.

LESTER

(To AMY)

We're going to Europe. Let the adults talk.

(To GINGER.)

You dye your hair... you get plastic surgery, like we talked about. Right? You're the mother. How much do you think he's gonna pay to get this fuckin' kid back?

AMY

I don't want to go to Europe.

LESTER

(To AMY)

Shut your mouth!

GINGER puts her hand over AMY's mouth.

LESTER

You know where she gets this from!

AMY

You shut up.

LESTER

No, you - You want me to come over there? I'll smack your face.

AMY sticks her tongue out at LESTER.

LESTER

Don't give me any of your shit!

(To GINGER.)

Okay, this has always been a dream, but we're going.

GINGER

Lester - he called you here.

LESTER

Right.

GINGER

Here.

LESTER

He was just on the phone.

GINGER

(Sniffs)

He called you right here.

LESTER

I just talked to him.

GINGER

(Sighs)

So, he knows where you are. That means he's sending some guys over here probably right now.

LESTER

Ginger... It means he's sitting by the phone like a dumb-bell, waiting for me to call him back. Now, I -

GINGER

(Interrupting and getting up)

That's - Yeah, he's sitting by the phone like a dumb-bell, just waiting for you to call him back. That's what he's -

LESTER

(Interrupting)

He's sittin' by the phone -

GINGER

(Yelling)

What do you think we're gonna do? He's probably got guys outside the fuckin' house!

GINGER

(Gathering AMY, hysterical)

Get your bag! Come on, get your bag! Get your things! Let's go!

LESTER

It's this bullshit. It's just bullshit right here. This is the fuckin' problem, you know.

GINGER

(Hysterical)

Oh, what bullshit? What, do you want to fuckin' talk it over now?

LESTER

You're done yakkin', okay? You're done yakkin' now?

GINGER

(Grabbing her purse
and rushing AMY out)
Go! Go! Get in the car! Go!

LESTER

(Mimicking GINGER)
'Go! Go! Go!'

EXT. GOLD RUSH - DAY

NICKY is leaning against a public phone. MARINO watches.

NICKY

(Into telephone)
You just relax. Nobody's killin'
anybody, do you hear?

GINGER

(Over telephone)
No, I really do. I think he's gonna
kill me.

NICKY

(Into telephone)
You just relax, and call me back
here in exactly an hour, on this
phone, and I'll see what I can do.

GINGER

(Over telephone)
Yeah, uh-huh... Okay.

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREET, PAY PHONE - DAY

AMY is swinging her purse at LESTER in the background.

GINGER

(Into telephone)
So, I'm gonna call you back in an
hour... at this number, and you're
gonna be there, right?

NICKY

(Over telephone)
I'll be there.

EXT. GOLD RUSH - DAY

NICKY

(Into telephone)
And listen, don't do anything else
crazy, okay? You all right? Okay.

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREET. PAY PHONE - DAY

GINGER

(Into telephone)

Bye.

She hangs up and walks over to LESTER and AMY who are fighting.

GINGER

Just knock it off! Would you two knock it off? Get in the car.

LESTER

She started it. She started the whole thing. I'm just standin' here.

GINGER opens the driver's side door.

LESTER

You're not gonna drive. Don't even think you're gonna drive.

GINGER

No, I'm gonna drive.

LESTER

(Stopping GINGER)

No, I'm not gonna drive with some crazy -

GINGER

(Yelling)

You're driving me nuts!

She walks around to the passenger door.

LESTER

Get in the passenger's side! And I'm sendin' this kid to Bolivia in a fuckin' box.

EXT. ACE'S PATIO - DAY

Through glass doors we see ACE seated in his living-room. NICKY slips into frame and taps on the window, gesturing that he wants to talk. ACE signals for him to go around to the garage.

INT. ACE'S GARAGE - DAY

NICKY walks past GINGER's white Mercedes towards ACE.

NICKY

Ginger -

He's cut off by ACE who points to the passenger's side of

his Cadillac. NICKY walks around and gets in. ACE starts the engine to make it harder for anyone to listen in on their conversation.

ACE turns the volume down. He looks straight ahead, away from NICKY.

NICKY

(After an awkward moment)
Ginger called me.

ACE

(Polite, careful, smoking a cigarette)
Yeah.

NICKY

I just told you. She called me.

ACE

And what'd she want?

NICKY

She was afraid to call you.

ACE

Yeah, she's with that cocksucker again... and they got Amy.

GINGER

Well, that's why I'm here. She wants to come back, but she's afraid you're gonna whack her out.

ACE

Yeah, they're gonna kidnap my kid. What do you want?

NICKY

I know. Why didn't you come to me? I mean, this is family, it ain't business. Meanwhile, you make calls back home. Sammy, it makes us look bad out here, you know what I mean? Back and forth, this one and that one, and, in the meantime, she's gone anyway. Am I right?

ACE

(Sighing)
I don't know. What am I gonna do with this woman? I don't know...
(Pause.)
She's drivin' me fuckin' crazy.

NICKY

I think if you, uh, okay it, you know, assure her that she's gonna be all right, she'll come back.

ACE

She's driving me fuckin' crazy.

NICKY

Well, once you get her here, you think about it, you know? But get the kid back here. She wants to come back. That's the, uh, that's the main thing here. You want your kid, don't you? Huh?

EXT. LOS ANGELES HIGHWAY. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

GINGER is on the phone. In the background, AMY is acting up in the back seat of the car and driving LESTER crazy.

ACE

(Over telephone)

Hello.

GINGER

(Sighs, into telephone)

Hi, it's me.

(Chuckling.)

Just who you wanted to talk to, right?

ACE

(Over telephone)

Listen...

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS DEN - DAY

ACE is seated at his desk.

ACE

(Into telephone)

...uh-uh-uh - I'm not gonna ask you where you are, just please, put Amy on a plane. Just put her on right away, any plane to get her here right away...

EXT. LOS ANGELES HIGHWAY. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

ACE

(Over telephone)

...please. That's all I'm askin' you.

GINGER

(Into telephone)

Do you... I mean... I don't think she should go by herself.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS DEN - DAY

ACE

(Sighs, into telephone)
What do you mean?

EXT. LOS ANGELES HIGHWAY. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

GINGER

(Into telephone,
holding back tears)
What I mean is, you think if, uh, do
you think if I came back... do you
think you could forgive me?

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS DEN - DAY

ACE

(Into telephone)
Uh,
(sighs)
I don't know. I gotta tell you, I
don't know.

GINGER

(Over telephone)
Right.

EXT. LOS ANGELES HIGHWAY. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

GINGER

(Into telephone)
I under-understand that. I-I know I
fucked up.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS DEN - DAY

ACE

(Into telephone)
What about the money? Uh, where's
the box?

GINGER

(Over telephone)
I gotta tell ya...

EXT. LOS ANGELES HIGHWAY. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

GINGER

(Into telephone)
...I-I... made some mistakes and I
spent some money.

ACE

(Over telephone)
What's it...

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS DEN - DAY

ACE

(Into telephone)
...under?

GINGER

(Over telephone)
Pretty serious.

EXT. LOS ANGELES HIGHWAY. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

ACE

(Over telephone)
How serious?

GINGER

It's, uh, it's under twenty-five.

ACE

(Over telephone)
It's under...

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS DEN - DAY

ACE

(Into telephone)
...twenty-five thousand?

GINGER

(Over telephone)
Yeah.

ACE

(Into telephone)
And...

EXT. LOS ANGELES HIGHWAY. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

ACE

(Over telephone)
...the rest of the two million is
still there?

GINGER

(Into telephone)
Yeah, yeah, I got the rest.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS DEN - DAY

ACE

(Into telephone)
Okay, no big deal. That's okay. Yeah.
He got his twenty-five.
(Sighs.)
That I'll live with. Any more I

couldn't.

EXT. LOS ANGELES HIGHWAY. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

GINGER

(Into telephone)
Okay?

ACE

(Over telephone)
All right...

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS DEN - DAY

ACE

(Into telephone)
...all right. Where are you? I'll
send a plane for you right away.

EXT. LAS VEGAS PRIVATE AIRPORT - NIGHT

ACE sees GINGER and AMY coming off the Tangiers private jet.
GINGER wobbles a little as she comes down the ramp.

GINGER

(Waving brightly)
Hi, Sam.

ACE picks AMY up and hugs her, ignoring GINGER. They walk to
the car and drive off.

INT. ACE'S CAR - NIGHT

AMY looks on from the back seat.

ACE

So, what'd ya do with it?

GINGER

With what?

ACE

With the money.

GINGER

He needed some clothes.

ACE

(Sighs)
Twenty-five thousand for clothes.

GINGER

He wanted a watch, too.

ACE

Twenty-five thousand for clothes and
a watch.

GINGER

Mm-hm.

ACE

Mm-hm.

MAITRE D' (O.S.)

(From following scene)

Mr. R...

INT. VEGAS RESTAURANT - NIGHT

ACE and GINGER, dressed for dinner just like any other couple, walk towards a table overlooking the colorful lights of downtown Vegas.

MAITRE D'

...good evening. Signora.

GINGER

Gino.

MAITRE D'

This way.

ACE (V.O.)

(as they are led to
their table)

The good part was, I had Amy back. So, we went home, had the housekeeper stay over, put the kid to bed, I calmed myself down and we went to dinner. I tried to keep things nice and civil, you know. But... hey, twenty-five thousand for three suits? That doesn't make much sense.

ACE

(Seated across from
GINGER at a booth)

First of all, he's not gonna wear f-thousand-dollar suits. But let's say he did, which he won't. How you gonna get fitted for twenty-five suits in three days? I, um, I mean, how could you get fitted that fast? I can't get fitted that fast, and I pay twice as much.

GINGER

I bought him a watch too.

ACE

Yeah.

GINGER

Yeah.

ACE

But even if you bought him a watch, a really nice watch, one that he thought was nice - and he doesn't know what the fuck a good watch is - so, you go, five, ten, twelve grand?

GINGER

Yeah.

ACE

At the most, which is impossible for him.

She glances to the table behind them.

ACE

Plus, at the most, three suits, a thousand apiece. That still leaves what? Around ten thousand?

GINGER

(Staring down at her plate, trying to restrain herself)
Would you knock it off, Sam?

ACE

I'm just tryin' to figure it out.

GINGER

There's nothin' to figure out. I'm home... we're workin' it out.

She lights a cigarette.

ACE

Yeah, but I've been told that before, 'We're workin' it out.' You think that you're home... after what you just put me through with Amy, is a favor to me?

She looks at ACE.

ACE

(Pause)
So, counting the watch, let's say another four thousand for expenses over the weekend... of which you must have had a good time. I know he did. That's for sure. I know that... fuckin' piece of shit had a good fuckin' time. On my money. You might as well have fucked him, which you

probably did anyway.

GINGER glares at him.

ACE

You're lookin' at me a certain way. You - you're teary-eyed, huh? You're upset. You're a good actress, you know that? Good fuckin' actress. You can fuckin' get that pity out of people. I'm not a john, you understand? You always thought I was, but I'm not. And I'm not a sucker. That fuckin' pimp cocksucker. He's lucky I didn't kill him last time. Lucky he's fuckin' livin'. And if you would've stayed with Amy... and you would've ran away... you would've been fuckin' dead.

GINGER scoots out of the booth and leaves.

ACE

Both of you. Dead. Dead.

INT. ACE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Wide overhead of ACE alone in bed. Off-screen, we hear GINGER, a little drunk, on the phone.

GINGER (O.S.)

(Whispering into
telephone)

I cannot do it anymore. I can't fuckin' live like this. It's not right.

ACE's point of view as he moves towards the sound of GINGER's voice. He enters frame and stops to listen.

GINGER (O.S.)

What are you? Yes, of course - He doesn't come home at night. What is the big fuckin' deal? I go - Yes, and I just - I can't fuckin' take it. Why should I fucking take it? That wasn't the deal. He acts like... like I'm the only one around here with a fuckin' past. He'll never let me live it down. Well... well, I mean, I tried. What the fuck do you think I came back here for? No, I'm not!

ACE slips into the foyer where he can see GINGER's reflection in a glass door as she talks on the phone in the living-room.

GINGER

(Whispering into
telephone)

I want to have him killed. Yes, I
want him killed. I've fuckin' had
it.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, LIVING-ROOM - NIGHT

GINGER is on the phone.

GINGER

(Into telephone)

So, are you with me on this?

ACE steps up behind her. She gasps, still holding the phone.
Petrified.

ACE

You want to get rid of me? Here I
am. Go ahead, get rid of me
(ACE grabs the phone.)
Hello.

He hears nothing and throws the phone down near her.

GINGER rises and attacks ACE.

GINGER

(Grunting)

Yes! I fuckin' hate you! I can't
take it anymore!

ACE grapples with GINGER.

GINGER

Yes, I want to kill you! I hate your
fuckin' guts!

ACE

You hate my guts? I want you to come
with me now.

He drags her by her arms across the living-room hallway,
into the bedroom.

GINGER

Get off of me! Stop it!

ACE

Come with me now! Come with me now.
Come with me now. I want you out of
here.

GINGER screams.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

ACE

I want you out of here! I want you
out of here!

GINGER

(Starting to get up)
Let go of me! Let go of me!

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, BEDROOM CLOSET - NIGHT

He pushes her against the closet wall, and throws an overnight
bag at her.

ACE

Take your
(kicking the bag)
fuckin' bag and get out of here!

GINGER

I'll go, but I want my money right
now!

ACE tosses clothes at her.

ACE

You'll get your money! Don't worry.

GINGER squats down and starts to gather her stuff.

GINGER

The arrangement is over!

ACE

(Tossing clothes)
No kidding. NO KIDDING!

GINGER

And I still get my money. I need
some cash right now. You can't just
put me in the street.

ACE

I'll get your cash. You haven't been
straight with me ever since I met
you! You never loved me in the first
place! I need eyes in the back of
my fuckin' head with you, you fuckin'
bitch!

ACE walks past her to his side of the large walk-in closet.
Racks and racks of her clothes are still hanging.

GINGER

Love you?!

She tosses a pair of red shoes at him.

GINGER

How could I love you?! How can I love you?! You treat me like I'm your fucking dog!

ACE leans down and opens a shoe box filled with money. He grabs as much cash as he can hold.

ACE

You're lower than a dog!

GINGER

Fuck you!

He walks up to her.

ACE

(Shoving the bundles of cash in her face)
Here. Here. Is this enough money?! Huh? Will it last you two fuckin' days? Take it, greedy bitch.
(Stuffing the money in her bag.)
Take the fuckin' money you fuckin' want.

GINGER

I'm going to the bank and I'm getting my jewelry too!

She puts on a white fur coat.

ACE

Yeah, no kidding. Good! It opens at 9 a.m. Be there!

GINGER

And don't send your guys down there to stop me! I mean it.

She bends down to pick up her bag, but ACE insists on carrying it.

ACE

I guarantee you, I will not stop you.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, BEDROOM/FOYER - NIGHT

GINGER and ACE walk through their bedroom to the front door. He's carrying her suitcase.

GINGER

Stop! You aren't getting rid of me with one fuckin' suitcase!

ACE

You'll come back tomorrow and get the rest. Just get out of here.

GINGER

Fine.

(Sniffs, walking back.)

I'm takin' Amy.

ACE

(Stopping her)

You're not takin' Amy.

GINGER

I am. I'm wakin' her up right now.

ACE

You're stoned. You're a junkie. Get out of here.

He opens the door and tosses her suitcase out.

GINGER

I am not! She's my daughter too!
Goddamn you!

ACE

Get out of here!

He shoves her out the door.

ACE

Send my lawyers a letter.

(Slamming the door
behind her.)

God-fuckin'-damn you!

He locks the door, and peers through the peep-hole.

GINGER (O.S.)

(Through the doors as

ACE walks away)

You're not getting away with this!
You're not gonna fuck me out of my
end!

EXT. ACE'S HOUSE, FRONT YARD - NIGHT

GINGER is furious. She picks up the suitcase and walks up to her sportscar.

GINGER

Fucker!

(Sobs.)

She drives off.

INT. ACE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT, LATER

ACE is lying awake in bed smoking a cigarette, watching the casino's Eye in the Sky surveillance monitors. He hears a car turn into his driveway. He sees the car's headlight beams

ACE (V.O.)

The funny thing was, that after all that... I didn't want her to go. She was the mother of my kid. I loved her. And later... I realized I didn't want to give her the money, because if I did... I knew I'd never see her again.

ACE reaches over to take GINGER's hand - she slowly takes hold of his.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

GINGER is getting AMY ready for school. ACE enters as AMY is on her way out. He holds her face in his hands and kisses her.

ACE

(Affectionately)

Oh. Have a good day at school.

AMY

Okay.

Amy exits.

ACE

Okay? Okay, angel.

ACE walks over to GINGER who turns sullenly to look at him.

ACE

(Clears throat.)

From now on, I have to know where you and Amy are at all times.

He takes a beeper out of his coat pocket and holds it up to **GINGER**.

ACE

(Gently)

Now, here's a beeper. I want you to keep it on you. It's very light. So I can call you whenever I have to.

GINGER reluctantly takes the beeper.

ACE

(Pause.)

Okay?

She nods silently. He looks at her and turns, leaving her alone in the kitchen.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - EVENING

A very large trailer is in the middle of an empty construction site. GINGER's and NICKY's cars are parked outside.

NICKY (O.S.)

(From trailer)

Well, what are you supposed to do? I mean, what do you want to do? Do you want to stay the way you are? You want to stay like this? You can't do that.

INT. CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - EVENING

GINGER and NICKY are alone in the large trailer. They are sitting close together on a couch.

NICKY

I mean, listen, two people don't get along, at some point you gotta call it... I mean, it's none of my business, but I ... I think that's what you gotta do. You gotta take it somewhere -

GINGER

(Smoking a cigarette)

Oh, you're right, I know. It's... well, I was just -

NICKY

What? What?

GINGER

Nothin'.

NICKY

What were you gonna say? Go ahead.

GINGER

I don't -
(Sighs.)

NICKY

Tell me what you were gonna say. Go ahead.

GINGER

Yeah?

NICKY

Yeah.

GINGER

Well, I was thinkin', maybe... you know somebody at the bank... could help me get my jewelry out? There's a lot of money in there. Lot of money in there, and I'd be willing to take care of anybody who helped me out.

NICKY

(Pauses)

Let me think about that.

GINGER

Okay.

NICKY

See who I got in there. Gotta get somebody I can trust.

GINGER

Mm-hm.

NICKY

You know?

GINGER

Yeah. 'Cause, you know,
(leaning her head
back)
He's never gonna give me my jewelry.

NICKY

Hm.

GINGER

He holds that key so tight, he's probably got it stuck up his ass.

NICKY

(Chuckles)

Yeah, right. That's Sammy. And he's probably got it there too.

Takes a sip of his drink.

GINGER

He's so fuckin' lucky. I could have buried him. I could have gone to Europe and taken the baby. And then he'd've tracked me down and he'd've killed me.

NICKY

No, he wouldn't. I would have.
(GINGER chuckles.)

And he'd've been right, too. I mean, seriously.

(She cuddles closer to him.)

Well, there's one thing you don't do. You don't take a guy's kid and then take off.

GINGER

(Quietly)

I didn't.

(Chuckles.)

I didn't. I mean, I did, but then I did exactly what you told me to do, and I came right back.

NICKY

You did. You're right.

GINGER

Exactly.

NICKY embraces her.

NICKY

You did. I like that. I like that. That's what I like about you. You did the right thing.

GINGER

(Playing with his jacket)

I did what you told me to.

NICKY

Yes, you did.

GINGER

'Cause you always tell me the right thing to do.

NICKY

Yeah.

(Pause, with his arm around her.)

Boy, he really fucked himself up out here -

(She caresses his face.)

- didn't he?

GINGER

Sure did.

NICKY

Everything went to his head.
(He sighs, rubbing

her neck.)

NICKY/GINGER

(In unison)

Changed.

NICKY

He did. He ain't the same person,
right?

GINGER

(Whispering)

No, he's not.

NICKY

He really thinks who the fuck he is,
I'll tell you that.

GINGER

(Holding back tears)

Exactly.

(Sighs.)

He hates me.

She rests her head on NICKY's shoulder, starting to weep.

GINGER

He hates my fuckin' guts.

NICKY

Come on, come on, you're a toughie.
You can take this.

(Runs his hand down
her cheek.)

Don't cry.

GINGER

(Crying)

I'm not as tough as you think I am.

NICKY

Yes, you are.

GINGER

(Sobbing)

I'm not and he scares the shit out
of me. I never know what he's gonna
do.

NICKY

(Whispering)

Come on. Don't be scared.

GINGER

(Softly, through tears)

I need some help. I do. I need some
help.

(Strokes his chest.)
You gotta help me. I need a new
sponsor, Nicky.

GINGER's sobs subside a little and her hand starts to stroke
NICKY's neck.

GINGER
(Whispering)
I do. I need a new sponsor.

NICKY
(Quietly, cheek to
cheek)
Is that what you want?

GINGER
Yeah.

NICKY
A sponsor.

GINGER
Yeah.

NICKY
Mm... okay. Don't worry about it.
Nobody'll fuck with ya anymore.
I'll take care of ya.

GINGER
(Whispering)
Nicky, please...

NICKY
Yes, I will. It's what you want,
isn't it? Huh?

GINGER
(Sobbing)
Thank you. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

NICKY
It's what you want?

GINGER
Yeah. Uh-huh -

NICKY interrupts and kisses her. She kisses him back. He
pushes her head down to his lap.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - NIGHT

NICKY opens the door to the trailer and peers out to make
sure no one is watching.

EXT. FBI SURVEILLANCE CAMPER - NIGHT

We see past a chain-link fence to a camper. We hear the sound of photos being taken with a high-speed camera.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - NIGHT

We see GINGER and NICKY slip out of the trailer in the deserted work site.

FBI AGENT #1 (O.S.)

You see that?

EXT. FBI SURVEILLANCE CAMPER - NIGHT

FBI MEN with long-lens cameras are recording the event on film.

FBI AGENT #1

That's Ace's wife.

Still photos: NICKY and GINGER steal a kiss.

FBI AGENT #1

Fantastic!

Still photos: Click. Click. GINGER and NICKY embrace.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - NIGHT

The AGENTS watch as GINGER and NICKY move towards their separate cars.

EXT. FBI SURVEILLANCE CAMPER - NIGHT

FBI AGENT #1

This is great for the boss.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - NIGHT

GINGER gets into her car.

Still photos: Click: GINGER getting into her car. Click: NICKY getting into his car.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - NIGHT

NICKY and GINGER drive off.

INT. ACE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

ACE is waiting for GINGER. He hears a car pull into the driveway, he gets up and looks out the sliding glass door. It's GINGER. He sits back down, motionless with a glass of milk. She walks in with a sack of groceries and some dry cleaning.

GINGER

Hi.

She puts her purse and the groceries down on the kitchen counter, and hangs up the dry cleaning.

ACE

Hi. You didn't answer your beeper.

GINGER

I threw it away.

ACE

You threw it away?

GINGER

(As she puts some items away)

Look, I tried to do this thing. I know that you want me to, but it's just - You know, I'm driving down the freeway and the fuckin' thing's 'beep-beep-beep-beep'. You know, I'm in a restaurant and it's - it's embarrassing. I don't want to do it anymore.

(Stopping suddenly.)

Where's Amy?

ACE

I put her to bed.

GINGER

Oh.

(Walking away towards their bedroom.)

I got your cigarettes.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, BATHROOM - NIGHT

GINGER sets some items down on her dressing-table, in front of a mirror.

GINGER

Oscar wants you to call him.

ACE

So, who'd you go to lunch with?

GINGER

With Jennifer.

ACE

And where'd you go?

GINGER

To the Riviera.

ACE

(Pause)
What'd you have?

GINGER
I had a... salad.

ACE
What did Jennifer have?

GINGER
(Turning to ACE)
She had the same.

ACE
(Pause)
Okay. I want you to call Jennifer
and I want you to tell her to tell
you what she had for lunch, and I'm
gonna listen in on the other line.

GINGER
Why do you want to do that?

ACE
You know why I want to do it. Just
do it.

GINGER
Fine.
(Walking out and down
the hall.)
Just gonna get the bowl for my thing.

ACE
Mm.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, LIVING-ROOM - NIGHT

GINGER is on the hall phone, dialing. We hear a phone ring
through the earpiece.

She waits a few seconds and hangs up.

GINGER
The line's busy. There's nobody there.

She starts to walk away. ACE stops her, picks up the phone
and dials. We hear JENNIFER answer.

JENNIFER
(Over telephone)
Hello.

ACE
(Into telephone)
Hello, Jennifer, it's Sam -

TIGHT ON GINGER'S FINGERS CUTTING OFF THE CALL.

GINGER

All right... I didn't have lunch
with Jennifer.

ACE

(Hanging up)
Who were you with?

GINGER

(Quietly)
I was with somebody.

ACE

I know you were with somebody. Who
was it?

(Pause.)

I just hope it's not someone who I
think it might be.

(Sighs, then whispers:)

I just hope it's not them.

ACE (V.O.)

(Quietly)
I knew she fucked around.
(Sighing.)
You know...

INT. ACE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The two of them are seated separately. GINGER is on the floor
leaning against a chair, crying softly.

ACE (V.O.)

...she did what she did and I did
what I had to do. But, Jesus, Nicky
was the worst thing she could've
done.

ACE

What if he won't stop?

ACE (V.O.)

I mean, it could get us both killed.

GINGER

I can back him off.

ACE sighs.

ACE (V.O.)

She was very convincing...

EXT. LA CONCHA MOTEL - DAY

A neon sign reads: LA CONCHA MOTEL.

ACE (V.O.)

...when she wanted to be.

WE SEE A CANTED ANGLE OF A ROOM AND BALCONY WITH DRAWN CURTAINS.

ACE (V.O.)

And... this... this is how she backed him off.

INT. LA CONCHA MOTEL - DAY

GINGER and NICKY are making love on the bed, panting, grunting and gasping.

INT. LA CONCHA MOTEL - DAY

They have finished making love. NICKY is zipping up his pants. GINGER still sits on the bed smoking a cigarette.

NICKY

Hey, Ginger... don't forget, if you're challenged, you know, if he asks anything, deny everything.

(He walks up to her.)

Do you understand? I don't want him bringin' beefs back home ... 'cause that could be a problem. You gotta be careful. He's not dumb, you know? You hear what I'm sayin', right?

Her arm and thigh are bruised.

GINGER

I know. You don't have to tell me that. What do you think,
(chuckling)
I'm stupid?

She takes a drag off her cigarette.

NICKY

Do I think you're stupid? No, I think you're beautiful.

(He bends down and
kisses her.)

But I gotta go.

He exits.

ACE (V.O.)

By this...

EXT. ALL-AMERICAN GAS STATION, BACK HOME - DAY

A car moves into the station and stops at a gas pump.

ACE (V.O.)

...time, Nicky had things so fucked up on the streets, that every time Marino went back home, the...

INT. ALL-AMERICAN GAS STATION, OFFICE AND GARAGE - DAY

Slow motion of MARINO walking through the front office past a few men. He tosses his cigarette butt and puts it out with his shoe. He looks nervous.

ACE (V.O.)

...packages got smaller and smaller. It got...

INT. ALL-AMERICAN GAS STATION, GAGGI'S BACK OFFICE - DAY

MARINO takes a small stack of cash out of his coat. A seated GAGGI nods for one of his men to take the money.

ACE (V.O.)

...to the point when he walked into the place... he didn't know whether he was gonna be kissed or killed.

GAGGI's man takes the money.

GAGGI (O.S.)

Frankie, I want to ask you something.

GAGGI

It's private... but I want you to tell me the truth.

MARINO

Of course, Remo.

GAGGI

I want you to tell me the truth, mind you.

MARINO

I always tell you the truth, Remo.

GAGGI

Frankie... the little guy, he wouldn't be fuckin' the Jew's wife, would he? Because if he is... it's a problem.

FREEZE FRAME OF MARINO.

MARINO (V.O.)

What could I say? I knew if I gave the wrong answer, I mean, Nicky, Ginger, Ace, all of 'em could've would up gettin' killed.

FREEZE FRAME OF GAGGI.

MARINO (V.O.)

Because there's one thing about these old timers: They don't like any fuckin' around with the other guy's wives. It's bad for business.

ON MARINO'S FREEZE FRAME.

MARINO (V.O.)

So, I lied... even though I knew that by lyin' to Gaggi, I could wind up gettin' killed too.

UNFREEZE - LIVE ACTION CONTINUES.

MARINO

(To GAGGI)

No. I ain't see anything like that.

GAGGI

Are you sure?

MARINO

I'm positive. Remo... things are very fucked up down there, you know?

GAGGI

Yeah, I know. That's why I'm asking. You see, my main concern is Nicky.

MARINO

Hm.

GAGGI

I want to know... if he's doin' all right. If he's okay.

MARINO

He's good. He's fine.

GAGGI

I'm askin' you, Frankie, to keep an eye on Nicky. Do it for me.

MARINO

No problem.

GAGGI

You see... I wouldn't want to be jeopardizing anything for people who are our friends. You understand?

MARINO

I understand.

GAGGI

Okay.

(Pause.)

Frankie, you're a good boy.

Pats MARINO's hand.

MARINO

Thanks, Remo.

GAGGI drinks from his espresso cup. So does MARINO, looking over cautiously at the old man.

ACE (V.O.)

By now, Nicky and his crew had already hit rock bottom. I mean, Vegas really got to him.

EXT. BAR PARKING LOT, LAS VEGAS - NIGHT

NICKY is punching a man who is leaning against a car. They are surrounded by MARINO, FUSCO, BLUE and HARDY. The man remains erect.

ACE (V.O.)

The booze, the coke, the broads... I mean, he got sloppy. He just wasn't the same Nicky anymore.

DOMINICK takes over. Exhausted, NICKY walks to his car and leans on the open car door.

MARINO

(To NICKY)

You must have drunk too much.

NICKY

Go fuck yourself.

ACE (V.O.)

I heard one night he had to belt a guy three times before he finally went down.

DOMINICK finally knocks the man down.

ACE (V.O.)

In the old days, Nicky would've decked him with one shot.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

EXTREME CLOSE-UP OF A CAMERA FOLLOWING A LINE OF COCAINE AS IT IS SUCKED UP INTO A STRAW.

ACE (V.O.)

You add this into the mix...

EXTREME CLOSE-UP LOOKING THROUGH THE STRAW AS THE COKE IS SNIFFED.

Maybe Vegas just got . . .

EXT. BAR PARKING LOT - NIGHT

NICKY and his crew get into their cars.

ACE (V.O.)

...to all of us. And his crew followed him right over the edge.

The man is left alone on the ground of the dingy parking lot.

ACE (V.O.)

They were all tuned up half the time on coke. I mean, they started doin'...

EXT. BERNIE BLUE'S HOUSE, RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

BLUE gets out of his car with an aluminium foil package to confront the police.

ACE (V.O.)

...stupid things.

COP #1

Watch it, partner, watch it!

ACE (V.O.)

The worst was Blue.

BLUE

(Belligerent)

Hey, what do you guys want out of my life, huh?

COP #1

Police! Stay in the fuckin' car!

ACE (V.O.)

He never knew when to keep his fuckin' mouth shut.

COP #2

He has a gun!

COP #1

Drop your gun or I'll -!

BLUE

Hey, fuck you!

COP #1

Drop the gun!

BLUE is shot several times by both COPS. He falls on the ground, dead.

ACE (V.O.)

The cops shot him. They shot Blue...

FLASHBACK - A LITTLE EARLIER

BLUE is yelling back at the COPS, holding the foil package.

ACE (V.O.)

...because they thought his hero sandwich was a gun!

Freeze frame as the camera moves in on the wrapped sandwich in his hand.

ACE (V.O.)

You know, they could have...

The COPS walk up to BLUE, who is on the ground amid shattered glass.

ACE (V.O.)

...been right, but who knows?

COP #1

Jesus Christ! What gun? He's got a fuckin' hero sandwich here.

COP #2

What do you want? It - It's pitch-black out here. It's tin foil.

COP #1

Pitch-black?! It -

COP #2

It looked like a fuckin' gun!

COP #1

You - You fuckin' moron, I'll be filling out paper work for the next two months because of you and this piece of shit, you...

COP #2

Oh my God, what are we gonna do? I'm sorry.

COP #1

...fuckin' jerk-off.

ACE (V.O.)

And to make matters worse, to get even, Nicky's crew got stoned one night and they started shootin' up the cops' houses.

COP #1 plants a gun on the ground next to BLUE's legs using a handkerchief to avoid leaving fingerprints.

EXT. DETECTIVE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The house explodes as gunfire riddles the front of a detective's home. MARINO, DOMINICK, FUSCO, HARDY and three HOODS in another car are spraying the home with machine-guns and shotguns.

EXT. GOLD RUSH - DAY

NICKY and MARINO emerge from the shop.

ACE (V.O.)

I mean, it got to the point where they couldn't even talk in the Gold Rush anymore because the Feds put a wire in the wall.

EXT. FBI STAKEOUT POST: MOTEL ACROSS FROM THE GOLD RUSH - DAY

Two FBI AGENTS with binoculars are watching NICKY and MARINO, trying to read their lips.)

ACE (V.O.)

And even when they talked outside, they had to cover their mouths because...

LIP-READER

(Lowering his binoculars)
Jeez, he's coverin' up again.

He raises the binoculars and looks through again.

ACE (V.O.)

...the Feds brought in lip-readers.

EXT. GOLD RUSH - DAY

NICKY and MARINO are outside talking. They are covering their mouths with their hands and constantly looking around.

ACE (V.O.)

Nicky found out about it from a teller who owed him money. This guy worked...

Voice-over trails off.

MARINO

He asked me again about you and the Jew's wife.

NICKY

Walk, walk, walk. What'd you say?

MARINO

He asked me again about you and the Jew's wife.

NICKY

Yeah, what'd you tell him?

MARINO

I told him I didn't know nothin'. But Jiggs and, uh, Tony Gorilla said if you did anything, you're fucked up.

NICKY

You think he's goin' home, makin' a beef behind my back?

MARINO

Nah. You would've heard somethin'.

NICKY

Yeah, what's to stop him?

MARINO

I know. I know.

NICKY

I don't trust him anymore. But they'd never okay anything, you know?

MARINO

Yeah, but they keep askin' about it.

NICKY

Well, now, sure they're askin'. They earn with the prick. I got a funny feelin' he's gonna start a fuckin' war or somethin'.

(Pause)

I'm not sure yet, you know. But I w- You know, but you know what I want you to do?

MARINO

What?

NICKY looks suspiciously at a man walking by them.

NICKY

Who's this guy? Who's this guy?

MARINO

Oh, he ain't nobody.

NICKY

You know what I want you to do? Get a couple of guys to dig a hole in the desert, then let 'em show you where it's at.

MARINO

Angelo and Buster.

NICKY

Yeah, but I'm not sure yet.

MARINO

They'll do it.

NICKY

And when I'm ready, I'll say the words, 'Go see the Jew.'

MARINO

Yeah.

NICKY

And you make it disappear, you know what I mean?

MARINO

Yeah, just let me know. But you gotta be ready. You know what I'm talkin' about?

NICKY

Did I say to do anything yet? I said I'm not sure... I'll let you know. I want to think about it. Where're these pricks at?

Looks for the FBI AGENTS.

MARINO

Don't know.

NICKY

Dominick said they're in the motel?

MARINO

Yeah, either that or in the fuckin' bank. I don't know. They're all over the joint.

INT. JUBILATION NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

ACE is seated at a table with SHERBERT, TRUDY, OSCAR and two showgirls. ACE is on the phone. It rings and rings, but there's no answer.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE - DAY

The camera pans from the bedroom hallway to the living-room as the phone rings.

INT. JUBILATION NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

ACE hangs up.

ACE

(Getting up from the table)

Be right back. I'll be right back.

He walks over to RUDY, the maitre d'.

ACE

Rudy, any calls for me, just give 'em to Mr Sherbert. I'll be right back.

RUDY

Sure, Mr Rothstein. You'll be back...?

ACE

I'm going home for a few seconds. I'll be right back.

ACE hurries out. RUDY picks up the phone and dials a number.

RUDY

(Into telephone)

He's on his way home.

INT. LEANING TOWER - NIGHT

NICKY is on the phone. The place is jumping in the background.

RUDY

(Over telephone)

Yeah, he just left.

NICKY

Yeah? All right.

He hangs up the phone and looks across the room at GINGER, who is seated in a booth smiling at him and picking the olive out of a Martini.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

ACE gets home and can't find GINGER.

ACE

(Looking around the
house)
Hello? Hello! Ginger.

AMY

(Faintly, from her
bedroom)
Help, Daddy!

Fear strikes him and he runs to his daughter's room.

ACE

(Knocking, turning
the doorknob)
Amy! Amy, open the door!

AMY (O.S.)

(From her room)
I can't! I'm tied!

ACE

Wh-wh -

ACE slams his shoulder against the door, trying to knock it
down.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, AMY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

ACE forces it open and sees that AMY's arms have been tied
to her bed with stockings. AMY screams.

AMY

Dad!

ACE

What happened? What happened? Who
did this to you?

AMY

Mommy.

ACE

I'm gonna get a knife and cut you
loose, honey, I'll -

AMY

(Panting)
Oh, no, please, please.

She tries to keep him from leaving her.

ACE

(Bending down, kisses
her)
Okay, I'll be right back.

ACE cuts AMY loose with a knife.

ACE

When did this happen, honey?

AMY

I don't know.

She gets up and hugs her father.

ACE

You don't know? What time did your mother do this? When did she leave?

AMY

I don't know.

ACE

(Comforting AMY as she moans)

Ohhh...

He kisses her. They get up from the bed when the phone rings.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, LIVING-ROOM - NIGHT

ACE walks to the phone.

ACE

(Into telephone)

Hello.

NICKY

(Over telephone)

Sammy.

ACE

(Into telephone)

Yeah, uh, who's this?

NICKY

It's me.

ACE

(Into telephone)

Nick?

INT. LEANING TOWER - NIGHT

DOMINICK looks on as NICKY talks on the phone.

NICKY

(Into telephone)

Yeah, what are you doin'? You okay?

ACE

(Over telephone)

No, I'm not okay.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, LIVING-ROOM - NIGHT

ACE

(Into telephone)
How'd you know I was here?

NICKY

(Over telephone)
Well...

INT. LEANING TOWER - NIGHT

DOMINICK and MARINO look on.

NICKY

(Into telephone)
...uh, you know, I just wanted to
talk to you a minute.

ACE

(Over telephone)
Well...

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, LIVING-ROOM - NIGHT

ACE

(Into telephone)
...Ginger's missing and she tied Amy
up and she locked her in her room. I
gotta find her. I don't know where
the hell she is.

INT. LEANING TOWER - NIGHT

NICKY

(Into telephone)
Yeah? Well, listen, Ginger's over
here at the Leaning Tower with me.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, LIVING-ROOM - NIGHT

ACE

(Into telephone)
She's there with you?
(Getting angry.)
She's there with you?

NICKY

(Over telephone)
Yeah, she's here.

ACE

(Into telephone)
I'll be right there.

He hangs up and starts to leave.

INT. LEANING TOWER - NIGHT

NICKY

(Into telephone)

Uh, all right.

He hangs up and steps over to DOMINICK and MARINO.

NICKY

He's comin' over.

DOMINICK

Great!

INT. LEANING TOWER - NIGHT

High angle past the restaurant's neon sign to ACE's car screeching to a halt by the main entrance. He storms in.

INT. LEANING TOWER - NIGHT

ACE is stopped by NICKY in the foyer.

NICKY

(Trying to calm him)

Ace don't... listen, don't... don't make a scene, all right?

ACE

I want to just talk. I want to talk to that Irish bitch.

NICKY

She didn't know who to turn to.

(Raising his hand almost in a plea.)

She... she didn't know where to turn. She was tryin' to save your marriage.

ACE

Yeah? Nicky, I want to talk to that fuckin' bitch.

NICKY

(Menacing)

Hey, be fuckin' nice. Calm. Be nice. Don't fuck up in here.

ACE pauses for a beat, realizing that NICKY is standing in his way and could be dangerous. ACE gives him a wide berth.

We follow ACE through the crowd to GINGER, seated in a booth. He sits down angrily across from her.)

GINGER

(Stoned, smoking a
cigarette)
Hi, Sam.

ACE

(Quietly)
I mean, you tie up our kid and you
lock the fuckin' door? Are...

GINGER

Oh...

ACE

...you out of your mind? That's our
child. Are you out of your fuckin'
mind?

GINGER

It's just for a little while, Sam.
The baby-sitter wasn't there.

ACE

I ought to fuckin' have you committed.
You fuckin' do that again,
(pointing his finger
at her)
I'll f-, I'll f-

GINGER

She wasn't gonna get up. I was just
gonna be out for a little while.

ACE

I should have -

GINGER

I mean, she was asleep. I was going
to be right back before she even
woke up.

ACE

Listen to me, listen to me, listen
to me.

(Pounding his fist on
the table.)
Listen, you fuckin' cunt.

GINGER

Oh, sh-

ACE

Listen to me.

GINGER

Fuck you.

ACE

(Knocking her drink
over)
Let me tell you something.
(Pointing.)
Listen to me.

GINGER

I w- I was gonna be back before she
woke up.

ACE

You listen carefully! You ever fuckin'
touch her again, you ever do anything
like that again, I'll fuckin' kill
you. Pure and simple. Do you hear
me? Pure and fuckin' simple, I'll
fuckin' kill you, you bitch.

GINGER

(Leaning in to him)
Why don't you just let me go, Sam?

ACE

You fuckin' whore!

GINGER

I'll sign anything you want me to
sign, okay?

ACE

You understand? What? Let you go?

GINGER

I just want the key to my jewelry,
and I want you to let me go.

ACE

You want your jewelry?

GINGER

I want you to let me go.

ACE

And what? And let you disgrace me,
you fuckin' pig? And let you disgrace
me? Get up. Get up and be a mother.
Get in the car and go to the house...

GINGER darts a look to NICKY who is at the bar, watching
anxiously. He gestures with his head for her to leave.

ACE

Right now. Get up and -

ACE notices her look at NICKY but when he turns to see what
she's looking at, he just misses NICKY's gesture. ACE grabs
GINGER by her collar.

ACE

Get - Get up! Get up!

GINGER

I wou- I wouldn't do that if I were you.

ACE

Get - get up!

GINGER

I wouldn't do that...

ACE

Get up! Get going!
(Pushing the table.)
Get up!

NICKY gestures to her again.

GINGER

I wouldn't -

ACE

Get the fu-
(Shaking the table.)
You threatening me?
(Making a fist.)
I'll fuckin' kill you in this place!
(Pointing to her.)
Get up and go home right now.

GINGER gets up and leans in to shout at ACE.

GINGER

(Barking)
I'm going. I'm going, you -!

She grabs her purse and leaves. Patrons stare as ACE follows her out.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, FOYER - NIGHT

GINGER follows ACE through the door. As soon as she closes the door behind her, ACE turns to face her.

ACE

Now you need approval from him to go home?

GINGER

So what? So who fuckin' blew you in the parking lot before you came in... huh?

ACE

(Disgusted)
You make me sick, you fuck. Once a fuckin' hooker, always a hooker.

GINGER

Oh, fuck you! Fuck you, Sam Rothstein!
(Opening the door.)
Fuck you!

A furious GINGER turns around and storms out, slamming the door.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Through the kitchen sliding glass door: GINGER's engine roars and tires screech as she tears away in her her sportscar. ACE dials the phone.

ACE

(Into telephone)
Yeah, Billy Sherbert, please. Put him on.

SHERBERT

(Over telephone)
Who's this?

ACE

(Into telephone)
Yeah, Bill, listen, I'll explain to you later. Just - You - You got a gun at home? Yeah. Bring it over here right away.

INT. JUBILATION NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

SHERBERT is still at the discotheque.

SHERBERT

(Into telephone)
Okay. Just take it easy.

ACE

(Over telephone)
Right away. Okay?

SHERBERT

(Into telephone)
I-I'll do it.

INT. ACE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

ACE

(Into telephone)
Okay.
(He hangs up.)

EXT. LEANING TOWER - NIGHT

GINGER's car screeches into the parking lot and she jumps out, leaving her car door open and engine running. A valet parks and approaches.

GINGER

(To VALET PARKER)

Leave it where it is.

INT. LEANING TOWER, FOYER - NIGHT

GINGER bursts in. MARINO tries to calm her down.

GINGER

Where is he? Goddamn it! I want that Jew bastard killed! I have fuckin' had it!

NICKY walks in from the restaurant.

MARINO

Calm down, calm down. Shh!

NICKY

Shh.

(To MARINO.)

Hide her car in the back!

He pulls her by her arm to a storage room upstairs.

GINGER

There's no reason to hide my car. He already knows!

(Walking up the stairs.)

He threw it in my face! The second I get out of here, I -

INT. LEANING TOWER, UPSTAIRS STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT

GINGER is enraged and panting.

NICKY

What did I tell you? Supposing he goes back home and makes a fuckin' beef? I gotta know exactly what you said. Tell me what you said to him.

GINGER

Me? I said... nothin'. I said, I said, 'No, no, no.' Everything he said, I just kept sayin' no.

NICKY

I told you this was fuckin' dangerous. Remember I said, 'Ginger, this is a dangerous situation. Be very careful.'

You fuckin' yessed me to death.

GINGER

If it's so fuckin' dangerous, then why don't you kill him?

NICKY

I'm not gonna kill him. Shut the fuck up. What, do you know what you're talkin' about? I'm not killing anyb-

GINGER

(Interrupting)

Oh, well, then, have him killed and get it over with.

NICKY

(Loud and angry)

Hey, don't be such a fuckin' smartass, will you? I mean, I know the fuckin' guy thirty-five years, I'm gonna fuckin' whack him for you? Fuck... motherfucker! I knew this, I knew it.

GINGER

What about my money?

NICKY

(Raising his voice even more)

How the fuck am I gonna get your fuckin' money now? You think he's gonna give you fuckin' money? Are you out of your mind?! Look what you just did to this fuckin' guy! If you would have just kept your fuckin' mouth shut!

(Walking away.)

Ah, what the fuck is the use? I should've never got invol-

GINGER screams and attacks NICKY.

NICKY

(Grappling with her)

What? Hey! Hey! What the fuck are you... ?

NICKY slaps her roughly across the face, grabs the back her jacket and forcefully leads her to a stairway.

GINGER

Ah, you fuck! You're such a fuckin' asshole!

NICKY

Get the fuck out of here. Get out!
Get the fuck out!

Shoves her down the stairs. GINGER yells and gasps on her way down.

MARINO (O.S.)

(From bottom of stairway)
Whoa. Calm down.

NICKY

(Behind GINGER)
Get out. Get out! Get out!

MARINO (O.S.)

Take it easy!

NICKY

Why'd I get involved with this fuckin' nut in the first place? Get out!

MARINO

You're gonna fuckin' kill her. Take it easy.

NICKY

(Pushing a sobbing
GINGER out the back
door)
Get her the fuck out of here. Get her out of here.

EXT. LEANING TOWER, BACK DOOR/REAR PARKING LOT - NIGHT

MARINO throws GINGER out the back door. She falls on her side, crying.

NICKY

Get the fuck out of here.

GINGER

(Sobbing, getting up)
I don't need you! I have my own fuckin' money!

NICKY

All right, all right.

She stumbles to her car.

GINGER

I'm going' to the FBI! I'm not scared anymore!

NICKY

All right. Be careful.

GINGER

You fucked with me for the last time!

NICKY

Okay, yeah.

INT. LEANING TOWER, BACK DOOR - NIGHT

NICKY and MARINO are seated at the back door watching GINGER screech out of the parking lot.

NICKY

Be careful.

(To MARINO.)

Hey, come on. Get inside.

They turn and walk back inside. MARINO leans on a wall next to the kitchen.

NICKY has scratches on his hand and face.

NICKY

Can you fuckin' believe that?

(Showing MARINO his
scratches.)

Look at this motherfucker.

NICKY sits on the bottom step across from MARINO, who sighs. Cooks mill around in the background.

NICKY

I fucked up, Frankie. I fucked up
good this time. Should have never
started with this fuckin' broad.

MARINO

Take it easy. What could you do? I
mean, she threw herself at you, right?

NICKY

I'm in a bad fuckin' spot here. You
know that? Bad fuckin' spot.

He puts his head in his hands.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

We see SHERBERT approach the sliding glass door holding a shotgun. ACE lets him in, locks the door and grabs the gun from him.

EXT. ACE'S HOUSE, LIVING-ROOM - NIGHT

Through the sliding patio doors, we see ACE and SHERBERT making sure all the doors are locked and the lights are turned off.

ACE (V.O.)

I already left the kid with neighbors
and I had about a million in cash
and jewels that I gave to Sherbert
to lock up in the hotel.

ACE (O.S.)

(From following scene)
Put this in the...

INT. ACE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

ACE leads SHERBERT to the front door as he stuffs a shoebox filled with cash and jewels in a bag and hands it over to him.

ACE

...hotel safe, then I want you to
come right back.

ACE shuts the door behind him and switches off a light. The room goes black.

EXT. ACE'S HOUSE - MORNING

A crisp, sunny morning. SHERBERT's car is parked on the street in front of the house.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS DEN - MORNING

An exhausted ACE, in his robe, and SHERBERT are seated across from each other at the bar with the shotgun displayed prominently on the counter between them.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET, ACE'S HOUSE - MORNING

Camera pans with GINGER's car as it approaches the driveway and crashes into the back of ACE's parked car.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS DEN - MORNING

ACE and SHERBERT react to the noise. SHERBERT grabs the shotgun. ACE looks out the window at GINGER ramming her car into his.

ACE

She, she's alone. Just go. Take the
gun and go into Amy's.

GINGER (O.S.)

(Screaming)
You get down here!

ACE

(To SHERBERT as he
walks around the bar
with the gun)

Just wait there for me!

GINGER

(From driveway)

Get down here and talk to me, goddamn it! Don't fuckin' ignore me! You motherfucker!

SHERBERT exits. ACE runs over to the stairs and starts down them.

EXT. ACE'S HOUSE - MORNING

GINGER repeatedly smashes into ACE's car.

GINGER

(From her car)

I mean it!

ACE emerges from the front door, taking cover behind a brick column.

GINGER

You come down here right now! Come down here and talk to me, goddamn it! Fuck you! Goddamn you, come out here! I'm gonna drive this fucking car through the living-room!

She starts to drive it across the lawn. ACE darts back towards the front door. GINGER's car stops in front of the porch.

GINGER

(Getting out of the car to confront ACE)

You fucking coward! You motherfucker!

She slips and falls on the lawn.

GINGER

You come out here and talk to me, you fucker!

ACE

(From the porch)

Will you stop it? You're drunk, you're on drugs. You're gonna -

GINGER

I am not!

ACE

(Pointing to her)

You're gonna be sorry if you don't stop that.

GINGER

Don't you threaten me!

ACE

You'll wake the whole neighborhood!

GINGER

(Kicking the hedges)

Don't you threaten me!

EXT. NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE ACROSS THE STREET - MORNING

A female neighbor walks out of her house. A man from the house next door does the same. We see AMY watching from the neighbor's window.

GINGER (O.S.)

You are not threatening me anymore!

ACE (O.S.)

I'm not -

EXT. ACE'S HOUSE - MORNING

GINGER is bending down, breaking off branches from some plants and throwing them at ACE.

GINGER

You fuck! You fuck! I'm sick of you!

ACE flinches as a handful of leaves hits his face.

GINGER

I am fuckin' Nicky Santoro! I am!
He's my new sponsor!

ACE gestures towards the neighbors who are watching. A squad car pulls into the driveway.

GINGER

(To ACE)

What about that, you fuckhead?!

(To neighbors.)

What are you looking at? Fuck off!

Two COPS walk up the driveway towards GINGER.

COP #1

Hey!

COP #2

Hey!

GINGER

(To neighbors)

Go back inside! This is none of your business!

(To ACE.)

I don't have to take your shit all the time anymore.

COP #1

Hey.

GINGER

I'll go to the FBI!

COP #2

Mrs. Rothstein, hey.

GINGER

I will go to the police! I am not
(kicking hedge)
Protecting you anymore, you fuck!

COP #1

Mrs Ro- Mrs Rothstein! Okay, shh!

GINGER

He won't...

EXT. FBI SURVEILLANCE CAMPER - MORNING

An FBI AGENT is parked down the block, photographing the scene through a long-lens camera.

GINGER (O.S.)

...let me inside!

INT. FBI SURVEILLANCE CAMPER - MORNING

On the FBI AGENT and his camera as he photographs the scene.

GINGER (O.S.)

He won't let me in my own house!

EXT. ACE'S HOUSE - MORNING

FREEZE FRAME: COP #1 TUGGING AT GINGER'S JACKET.

UNFREEZE: LIVE ACTION CONTINUES AS SHE PULLS AWAY FROM HIM.

COP #1

Mr Rothstein. Mr Rothstein, I'm sorry.
We've got some complaints about -
about the noise.

GINGER

I'm just trying to get in my house!

COP #1

I understand.

GINGER

He won't let me go in my house!

ACE

I won't let her in. I'm sorry, Randy,
I'm not gonna let her in. She - Well,
I'm not gonna let her in, the way
she's behaving. I'm - I'm -

GINGER

Not gonna let me in?

ACE

Who knows what you're gonna do in
there? I don't want you -

GINGER

What do you mean, what am I gonna
do? I'm in the same clothes for two
days! I want to get a few of my
things! Big deal!

COP #1

All right. Okay, okay.

COP #2

Mr Rothstein, why don't we just let
her in the house and get a few of
her things? That way she'll get out
of here. This is half her house
anyway.

ACE

I'm afraid to let her in the house.

GINGER

Oh, you are...

ACE

I'm afraid she's gonna destroy stuff.

GINGER

(Kicking, pulling up
plants and throwing
them at ACE)

Let me in the house! Fuck!

COP #1 holds her back.

GINGER

Fucker!

COP #1

Please.

ACE

Should I let her in like - ?

GINGER

You ought to be afraid, the way you fuckin' treat me!

COP #1

Hey, Mr Rothstein, it'll make it a lot easier on everybody here if we just let her in the house.

COP #2

If we let her get a few of her things we'll be out of your hair.

ACE

If she calms down, I will let her in the house.

GINGER

(Pants, yelling)
I am calm!

ACE

If she calms down...

COP #1

(To GINGER)
No, you're not calm.

ACE

...I will let her in the house for five minutes if you gentlemen will escort her out if she happens not to want to leave. Because I don't - I -

GINGER

(To COP #1)
Can I go in?

COP #1

That's not a problem, that's not a p-

GINGER

Can I go in?

COP #1

Jeff, would you go in with her?

GINGER walks towards the front door.

COP #2

We can do that. Absolutely. Yes. Absolutely.

GINGER

Yes, fine! Fine!
(In ACE's face as she brushes past him.)
Fuck you!

EXT. FBI SURVEILLANCE CAMPER - MORNING

The FBI AGENT taking photographs.

We see a series of surveillance photos of GINGER, ACE and the COPS on the front lawn.

EXT. NEIGHBOR'S WINDOWS - MORNING

AMY is watching her parents and the COPS across the street, until the housekeeper pulls her away into the house.

GINGER (O.S.)

(From following scene)

You wouldn't believe how mean he's been to me. He's locked up...

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS DEN - MORNING

GINGER races up the stairs, trailed by COP #2.

GINGER

...most of my important stuff, all my papers and things. And I have to get 'em.

She walks across the room to ACE's desk.

GINGER

So don't let him come in here 'cause I know they're in here in the desk and he's -

She tries to open the middle drawer but it's locked.

GINGER

Fuck!
(Going through a couple of drawers.)
Just pay attention. He could come up here at any time.
(Pants.)

She spots a pair of scissors on the desk. She tries to open the drawer with them.

GINGER

(Then, to COP #2)
Are you watching for him?

She finally pries the drawer open, breaking the tip of the scissors. GINGER's hands open the drawer and she picks up the safe deposit keys.

GINGER

Got 'em.

FREEZE FRAME ON THE GLIMMERING KEYS.

EXT. ACE'S HOUSE - MORNING

ACE and COP #1 are on the front porch talking.

ACE

(Smoking, checking
his watch)

Yeah, I don't want her in there more
than a few more minutes.

COP #1

No, it's - it'll just be a couple of
minutes. We got other things to do
too, you know. He'll hurry her up.
How's everything else besides this?

ACE

Fine, fine. How's your family?

COP #1

Not bad, not bad. In fact, uh, my
wife's pregnant again.

ACE

Oh, good.

COP #1

Yeah.

ACE

Congratulations.

ACE shakes his hand.

COP #1

Thanks, yeah... I'm kind of happy
about this, you know.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, BEDROOM CLOSET - MORNING

GINGER runs into the closet, bending down to search through
the shoe boxes that usually contain money but are now empty.

GINGER

(Kneeling, to COP #2)

I just have to get this one more
thing and then we'll be - We can go.

(She picks up an empty
shoe box.)

Shit!

(Gets up, picking up
a pair of ACE's shoes
and tossing them on
the floor.)

God, fuck! Shit! God!
(She runs out, taking
a fur coat off a
hangar. Then, grunting)
Really pisses me off...
(To COP #2.)
Don't worry about it.

COP #2 follows her out of the closet.

EXT. ACE'S HOUSE - MORNING

ACE, COP #1 and several neighbors wait as GINGER storms out
with COP #2 carrying a small overnight bag.

GINGER

(To the COPS but
looking at ACE)
And it would be great if you guys
could follow me out of here, because
he's been threatening me.

GINGER walks to her car.

COP #2

(To COP #1)
Come on. I'm sorry.

COP #1

Okay.

ACE

(to COP #1, shaking
hands)
Okay, Randy. Thank you.

COP #1

All right, take care.

GINGER backs her car out, smashing into ACE's car once again.

EXT. ACE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN WINDOWS - MORNING

SHERBERT watches from a small, curtained window.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - MORNING

GINGER drives down the street followed by the police car.
The FBI camper pulls out and follows the squad car following
GINGER.

EXT. GINGER'S CAR - MORNING

GINGER is driving and crying.

GINGER

(To herself, panting)

I can't believe this.
(Sighs.)

EXT. VEGAS BANK - MORNING

GINGER swerves into the bank, parks in front of the main entrance and gets out of her car. The COPS park behind her.

GINGER
(To COPS, rushing
inside)
I just need to pick up a little cash
inside. Could you come with me?

EXT. FBI SURVEILLANCE CAR, ACROSS THE STREET - MORNING

Two more FBI AGENTS, with binoculars and a camera, photograph GINGER as she walks into the bank.

INT. VEGAS BANK VAULT - MORNING

A bank employee is helping GINGER unlock a safe deposit box. She pulls it out hurriedly.

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS DEN - MORNING

ACE is on the phone talking to CHARLIE CLARK. He's looking at the jimmyed drawer, broken scissors and the missing keys.

ACE
(Into telephone,
throwing the scissors
into the open drawer)
Charlie, you've gotta - you've gotta
stop her!

CHARLIE CLARK
(Over telephone)
I-I'm sorry, Sam.

ACE
(Into telephone)
You've got to stop her.

CHARLIE CLARK
(Over telephone)
What can I do?

ACE
(Into telephone)
She's a fuckin' junkie. She's out of
her fucking mind. Do you unders-

SHERBERT is behind ACE, listening.

CHARLIE CLARK
(Over telephone)

She has...

INT. VEGAS BANK - MORNING

CHARLIE CLARK is on the phone. GINGER, in the background, comes out of the vault and carries one of her boxes to a cubicle.

CHARLIE CLARK

(Into telephone)

...the keys, and it's still in both your names.

GINGER

(Carrying the box, slipping but catching herself)

Whoa.

CHARLIE CLARK

(Into telephone)

I'm sorry, there's nothing I can do. I'd like to help...

INT. ACE'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS DEN - MORNING

CHARLIE CLARK

(Over telephone)

...but I can't.

ACE

(Into telephone)

Legally, she can't take that stuff. Legally, she can't take the stuff.

CHARLIE CLARK

(Over telephone)

No, Ace.

ACE

(Into telephone)

Half of everything is mine.

CHARLIE CLARK

(Over telephone)

Ace, listen to me.

ACE

(Into telephone)

Half - I'm comin' down.
(He hangs up.)

EXT. ACE'S HOUSE, DRIVEWAY - MORNING

ACE and SHERBERT get into ACE's damaged car. A metal strip dangling from SHERBERT's door scrapes the pavement as they pull out.

INT. VEGAS BANK - DAY

GINGER opens the safe deposit box, which is filled with bound stacks of cash.

She grabs handfuls in a frenzy, some fall off the counter to the floor.

GINGER

Shit! Oh, goddamn it!

GINGER gets down on the floor to pick them up.

GINGER

(Then, to COPS who
are watching)

Um, I'm gonna need a bag. If you
could just ask the guy for a big
bag, okay?

COP #1

(To COP #2)

Go get a bag, man.

GINGER

(Looking up, offering
COP #1 some cash)

And here. Here.

COP #1

Lady, I can't. I can't. I ca-

COP #2 exits.

GINGER

No, you can, you can.

(Sobbing.)

You've been so nice to me.

COP #1

(Taking the money)

I can't.

INT. VEGAS BANK - MORNING, A LITTLE LATER

COP #2 holds open a large canvas bag for GINGER.

COP #2

(To GINGER)

Like this?

GINGER

(Struggling with two
handfuls of cash)

Yeah, just hold the top open, all
right, and I can -

She starts to stuff the money in the bag.

EXT. FBI SURVEILLANCE CAR, ACROSS THE STREET - MORNING

The FBI AGENTS photograph GINGER leaving the bank.

EXT. VEGAS BANK - DAY

GINGER throws the canvas bag into the trunk of her car when, suddenly, she sees ACE's beat-up Cadillac approaching. She gasps.

GINGER

Oh, God. It's him.

(To COPS.)

You have to stop him. You have to -
'Cause he said he was going to kill
me.

ACE jumps out of his car and runs toward GINGER, SHERBERT follows him out.

ACE is intercepted by the COPS who hold him back.

GINGER

You just - Just stop him.

COP #1

Mr Ro- Mr Roth- Mr Rothstein, where
you goin' -

ACE

Stop -

COP #1

Wait, hold on a second.

ACE

Hey!

COP #1

Hold on a second.

The COPS huddle around ACE and SHERBERT until GINGER's car pulls out of the bank.

COP #1

Nothin' we can do about it. Nothin'
we can do. There's nothin' we can
do.

ACE, unable to pursue, watches GINGER speed away.

ACE

Look, look. You can't stop her for
speeding? I mean, look what the hell

she's doing.

COP #1

Speeding?

COP #2

We're talkin' to you right now.

GINGER's car disappears into traffic. The FBI car across the street follows right behind her.

COP #2

There's nothing we can do. She had the key.

COP #1

She's on the account. There's nothing we can do.

EXT. FBI SURVEILLANCE CAR - MORNING

The AGENTS are following GINGER.

FBI AGENT #1

Let's pull her over at that Citgo Station.

FBI AGENT #2

(Driving)

Okay, let's do it.

FBI AGENT #1 puts a siren on top of the car's roof.

EXT. VEGAS STREET, CITGO STATION - MORNING

GINGER pulls over at a gas station, the FBI car with siren blaring right behind her.

EXT. VEGAS BANK - MORNING

A powerless ACE and SHERBERT are still standing in front of the bank with the COPS. COP #2 gives ACE a 'sorry' gesture.

EXT. CITGO STATION - MORNING

GINGER and the FBI AGENTS are standing by her car. She is distraught.

FBI AGENT #2

We're - we're placing you under arrest for -

GINGER

(Sobbing)

For what?

FBI AGENT #2

We're placing you under arrest for
aiding and abetting -

GINGER

(Through tears)
What?

FBI AGENT #2

We're placing you under arrest for
aiding and abetting a -

GINGER

(Crying)
But I'm just trying to leave.

ACE (V.O.)

After all the threats and all the
bullshit, it turned out Ginger didn't
tell 'em anything. But by then, the
Feds didn't need her, anyway.

GINGER

(Sobbing)
But it was just mine.

ACE (V.O.)

They had all the pieces they needed.

FBI AGENT #1

Come on.

GINGER

But I didn't do anything.

The AGENTS escort GINGER to their car.

ACE (V.O.)

And everybody...

EXT. GOLD RUSH - NIGHT

Twelve FBI AGENTS with rifles, wearing 'FBI' armbands, charge
into the parking lot and rush through the front door.

ACE (V.O.)

...began to tumble.

FBI AGENT #3

FBI! We have a warrant!

ACE (V.O.)

...one after the other... just like
dominoes. Between Piscano complaining
on a wire.

EXT. GOLD RUSH - NIGHT, A LITTLE LATER

The FBI AGENTS escort DOMINICK, HARDY, FUSCO and MARINO out of the front of the shop.

ACE (V.O.)

Between Nicky, Ginger, me and my license... paradise... we managed to really fuck it all up.

INT. NICKY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

We hear a doorbell ring. LITTLE NICKY, now ten years old, see FBI AGENTS approaching the house.

LITTLE NICKY

(Getting up from the couch)

Mom!

JENNIFER (O.S.)

(Into telephone)

Yeah, well, someone's at the fuckin' door now.

Jennifer's cousin opens the door; seven AGENTS storm in.

FBI AGENT #4

FBI. We have a federal search warrant.

NICKY (V.O.)

Right away, I got wind of the pinches comin' down, so I took off. Who needs to hang around for that bullshit?

FBI AGENT #4

(To JENNIFER, showing his badge)

My name is Marc Caspar, Special Agent, **FBI.**

JENNIFER

(Defensive)

Yeah, well,

(grabbing the phone and walking away)

Can I make a fuckin' phone call?

FBI AGENT #4

(Blocking her way as she tries to get by him)

Hey, ho-hold it for a minute. You can make a phone call, but you don't have to talk to us like that.

JENNIFER

(Slamming the phone down on a table)

Hey -

INT. TANGIERS CASHIER'S CAGE - DAY

NANCE is talking to a cashier behind the cage when FBI AGENTS with Gaming Board investigators DUPREY and AUSTIN enter the casino.

FBI AGENT #5

FBI! Don't be alarmed.

NANCE rushes out a back door.

NICKY (V.O.)

But they got almost everybody else.

FBI AGENT #5

This area is seized.

DUPREY

Grab everything in sight.

FBI AGENT #6

Right.

DUPREY

(Walking through a
door into the cage)
Get the master account list!

AUSTIN

I want all those papers seized,
regardless of what they are.

As AUSTIN and the others make their way into the soft count room, an AGENT puts up a yellow crime banner across the front of the cashier's window.

AUSTIN

I want this area off-limits to
everybody.

INT. TANGIERS SOFT COUNT ROOM - DAY

The counters look on as several AGENTS seize the money boxes and stacks of cash from the glass table. DUPREY sifts through the Count Room Executive's notebook.

AUSTIN is at a cabinet looking through a ledger.

AUSTIN

(Holding the book)
Ah, yes, here we are. A little craps
figures. [Actual amount taken from
craps tables before the skim.] Hey -
Hey.

ACE (V.O.)

Green?

INT. GREEN'S MALIBU HOUSE - NIGHT

GREEN, wearing a tennis outfit and holding a racquet, is being questioned by FBI AGENT #8 who's showing him confiscated papers. Several AGENTS are searching the house.

ACE (V.O.)

Don't even ask.

FBI AGENT #8

Thirty thousand dollars...

GREEN

No, he didn't. And that's why it wasn't valid. I was being extorted, all right? I'm willing to tell you whatever you want to know. I've got nothin' to hide here.

NICKY (V.O.)

Now, for the best...

INT. PISCANO'S HOUSE, LIVING-ROOM, KANSAS CITY - DAY

FBI AGENT #9 removes some ledgers from a a filing cabinet.

NICKY (V.O.)

...and I couldn't believe this shit. Piscano's expense reports took the cake.

AGENTS are wandering around the house, looking for evidence.

FBI AGENT #9

Oh, this is good. Bingo!

NICKY (V.O.)

He might as well have given them a fuckin' blueprint. Everybody's names, address, dates, everything.

FBI AGENT #9

(Crossing the room to

PISCANO)

Look at this! That you so much, Mr Piscano. How considerate of you. Appreciate it.

PISCANO

Those are my m- those are my mother's books.

FBI AGENT #10

You're under arrest.

NICKY (V.O.)

What a fuckin' balloon head.

PISCANO gets more and more agitated as FBI AGENT #10 gets one cuff on him.

PISCANO

What are you guys doin'?!

PISCANO gasps and clutches his chest, having a heart attack. The AGENT drops the cuffs and tries to help PISCANO as he collapses onto the floor.

FBI AGENT #10

Take it easy, Artie. We just want to talk to you.

PISCANO'S WIFE and the FBI AGENTS kneel down beside him.

PISCANO'S WIFE

(Screaming)

Artie, are you okay? Sweetheart?
Honey? Wait a minute! He's sick!
Artie! Oh, God!

She continues to scream as the AGENTS try to revive him.

FBI AGENT #10

(To PISCANO's wife)

Move back! Come on!

FBI AGENT #9

Dave!

PISCANO'S WIFE

He's sick! It's his heart!

FBI AGENT #9

CPR! Now!

PISCANO'S WIFE

Oh, God, is he breathing? He's not breathing!

An FBI AGENT gives him mouth-to-mouth.

ACE (V.O.)

Poor Artie. He got so upset he had a heart attack and dropped dead right there in front of his wife.

FBI AGENTS #9 and #10 restrain PISCANO'S hysterical WIFE.

PISCANO'S WIFE

Artie!

FBI AGENT #10

Calm down! Calm down!

PISCANO'S WIFE

No, I won't calm down! He's my husband!

FBI AGENT #10

Stay out of the way!

PISCANO'S WIFE

Artie! Artie!

FBI AGENT #10

We can't help him if -

EXT. ACE'S HOUSE - DAY

ACE opens his front door and is confronted by two FBI AGENTS. He is shown pictures of NICKY and GINGER at the construction site.

ACE (V.O.)

(Quietly)

And at the end of the day, they finally came to see me with the pictures.

FBI AGENT #1

(Pointing to the pictures)

Why protect a friend who betrayed you like that?

ACE (V.O.)

But I didn't want to look at 'em. I didn't want to look at the guys who brought 'em either.

ACE refuses to look at the photos and quietly closes the door on the AGENTS.

INT. FEDERAL COURT-HOUSE - DAY

GAGGI, FORLANO, BORELLI and CAPELLI are all in court. FORLANO and CAPELLI are breathing through masks and oxygen tanks with nearby doctors and nurses. GAGGI

has a cane in front of him. Several court spectators look on. We hear the bosses' lawyer speak.

LAWYER

Your Honor, as you can see, my clients are elderly and infirm. Any incarceration could pose a serious health risk. They are no danger to the community and they pose no flight

risk.

NICKY (V.O.)

When the bosses were arrested, some of 'em were so old they needed doctors at their arraignment.

LAWYER

And Pre-trial Services recommends that bail remain as presently set.

JUDGE

(Calling a recess)
We're going to take a ten-minute recess.

The JUDGE pounds his gavel.

NICKY (V.O.)

And when it looked like they could get twenty-five years...

The BOSSES, their nurses and lawyer file through a side court door.

NICKY (V.O.)

...to life in prison, just for skimmin' a casino... sick or no fuckin' sick, you knew people were gonna get clipped. So, the day of the arraignment, they had this meeting right in the back of the court-house.

INT. COURT-HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The BOSSES are gathered around a conference table as the lawyers and nurses silently walk out the door as if on cue.

NICKY (V.O.)

See, when something like this happens, you know how things are gonna work out. It's always better with no witnesses. So, what about Andy?

THE CAMERA PANS FROM ONE BOSS TO THE OTHER.

FORLANO

(Putting down his oxygen mask once the door behind him is shut)
He won't talk. Stone is a good kid. Stand-up guy, just like his old man. That's the way I see it.

BORELLI

I agree. He's solid. A fuckin' Marine.

CAPELLI

(Holding his oxygen
mask)

He's okay. He always was. Remo, what
do you think?

GAGGI

(Pause)

Look... why take a chance? At least,
that's the way I feel about it.

EXT. BACK HOME RESTAURANT, STRIP MALL PARKING LOT - DAY

ANDY STONE and his LAWYER are walking toward their car.

STONE

You call Artie... and you tell him I
don't care what, he's gotta be in my
office Thursday morning before eleven
o'clock.

LAWYER

It's done.

His LAWYER veers to the left, walking away from STONE who
keeps talking.

LAWYER (O.S.)

It's done.

STONE

(To himself)

It's terribly important. I gotta
have a conversation with this guy.
That's all.

GAGGI's men, CURLY and BEEPER, appear from behind STONE and
shoot him dead.

They empty their silent half-load rounds into STONE even
after he's down on the snowy ground. They walk away
discreetly, leaving him partially hidden between cars.

NICKY (V.O.)

As much as they liked him, I mean,
he wasn't one of us. He wasn't
Italian. As far as they knew, he
could have talked. Otherwise, Stony
might still be alive.

MONTAGE OF MURDERS:

EXT. NANCE'S COSTA RICAN HOUSE - DAY

TITLE IN: COSTA RICA

The camera moves down a waterfall to reveal NANCE's Spanish-style house.

NICKY (V.O.)

The first one to skip was John Nance.
He found a nice, warm secluded place
in Costa Rica. He thought nobody
would find him there.

Several gunshots are heard. NANCE emerges from the house through a door and runs along a verandah to another door. He breaks a pane of glass, unlocks another door and runs in. BEEPER emerges from the first door and follows him back into the house. Several more shots are heard. NANCE emerges from yet another door, only this time he's been shot in the stomach. He painfully staggers away from the hitmen.

NICKY (V.O.)

But, then, his kid got nabbed by the
Feds for drugs, and so naturally the
bosses were afraid he'd come out of
hidin' just to save his kid and give
'em all up. So...

CURLY and BEEPER come out of the house and approach NANCE from behind.

CURLY

Hey, where you goin', jag-off?

NANCE kneels down. CURLY points his gun expertly at the top of NANCE's head and fires. Blood splatters from NANCE's mouth and he falls to the ground. The gunmen walk away.

NICKY (V.O.)

But anyway, they, you know, they all
had to follow.

EXT. HOLE IN THE DESERT - DUSK

A bound COUNT ROOM EXEC and a CLERK are kneeling next to a large pit in the esert ground in front of BEEPER and CURLY.

NICKY (V.O.)

Everybody went down.

The CLERK groans as he's shot in the head by BEEPER. Blood splatters and he falls right into the pre-dug hole.

COUNT ROOM EXEC

Go ahead, fuck...

CURLY

Fuck you.

CURLY shoots the EXEC in the head, he too falls backward into the pit. The gunmen fire more rounds into the bodies,

then toss their guns into the hole.

NICKY (V.O.)

Before you knew it...

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

RICHIE, a sharply dressed Tangiers EXEC, is getting into his new Lincoln.

NICKY (V.O.)

...anybody who knew anything wound up gettin' whacked.

CURLY sneaks up from behind and hits the EXEC with a lead pipe. He puts a plastic bag over his head and begins to choke him to death. The EXEC struggles a bit but the bag soon fills with blood. CURLY strikes him with the pipe one last time.

INT. BEVERLY SUNSET MOTEL - NIGHT

The camera pans away from an empty registration desk to a motel corridor.

GINGER (O.S.)

(Gasping)

Oh! Oh, no! No...

The camera moves past several rooms along a cinder block wall.

ACE (V.O.)

After Ginger took off, she wasn't much help to anybody. She found some pimps, low-lives, druggies and bikers in LA. And in a few months, they went through all the money and all the jewels.

Suddenly, a door opens and GINGER overdosing, staggers into the hall looking for help. She gasps, goes halfway down the seedy corridor towards the desk, but collapses and dies.

FREEZE FRAME ON GINGER SPRAWLED OUT ON THE MOTEL CARPET.

ACE (V.O.)

After they found her body... I had a private doctor do another autopsy. He said they gave her... a hot dose. In the end... all she had left was thirty-six hundred in mint-condition coins.

END OF MONTAGE

EXT. TONY ROMA'S RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - DAY

ACE emerges from the restaurant, smoking a cigarette as in the first scene in the film. He gets into his car to start the ignition.

ACE (V.O.)

No matter what the Feds or the papers
might have said about my car
bombing...

Flames surge from the windshield, concealing ACE behind the wheel.

FLASHBACK: EXT. TONY ROMA'S RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - DAY

The sign above him reads: 'Tony Roma's a Place for Ribs'.
ACE is leaving the restaurant and walking to his car.

ACE (V.O.)

...it was amateur night, and you
could tell. Whoever it was, they put
the dynamite under the passenger
side. But what they didn't know,
what nobody outside the factory knew,
was that that model car was made
with a metal plate under the driver's
seat. It's the only thing that saved
my life.

ACE opens his car door and gets in.

INT. ACE'S CAR, TONY ROMA'S RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - DAY

ACE turns on the ignition and we see two- and three-inch flames come out of the defroster vents. Everything goes silent as he is suddenly engulfed in flames.

The car explodes in flames two storeys high. The screen fills with the rising explosion of smoke and fire.

ACE (V.O.)

The bombing was never authorized,
but I suspect I know who lit the
fuse.

EXT. MIDWEST CORNFIELD - DAY

NICKY, DOMINICK and MARINO get out of a car on a farm road for a meeting. FAT SALLY, a heavy-set wiseguy, is already there.

FAT SALLY (O.S.)

Hey, Nicky.

ACE (V.O.)

And so did the power that be.

NICKY

Hey, Mikey, how's your hernia?

They shake hands.

FAT SALLY

How you doin'?

MARINO approaches NICKY from behind.

NICKY (V.O.)

It took months for...

FLASHBACK: EXT. MIDWEST CORNFIELD - DAY

NICKY's car drives up the farm road to meet his crew.

NICKY: (V.O.)

...everything to calm down, but finally my guys got out on bail and the bosses wanted me to send my brother Dominick out to Vegas. Always the dollars, always the fuckin'...

NICKY, DOMINICK and MARINO get out of the car to greet FAT SALLY. HARDY, FUSCO and BEEPER are also waiting there, smiling.

NICKY (V.O.)

...dollars. I mean, it was still way too hot for me to even go near Vegas, so I set up a meeting with the guys way out in the sticks. I didn't want my brother to get fucked around.

NICKY shakes hands with SALLY. FUSCO walks up to say hello.

NICKY (V.O.)

I mean, what's right is right. They don't give a fuck about - urghh!

MARINO hits NICKY in the back with a bat. FAT SALLY grabs him by the throat.

HARDY and BEEPER hold DOMINICK by the arms.

MARINO hits NICKY's legs with the bat.

FAT SALLY

Huh? Come on, you fuckin' rat.

DOMINICK

Fuck! You...

FUSCO and FAT SALLY pin NICKY down and hold his face straight ahead, forcing him to watch his brother being beaten.

DOMINICK

(To MARINO)
...rat motherfucker! You rat mother-

MARINO hits DOMINICK in the shoulder with the bat.

MARINO
Tough guy! You and your f-
(he strikes DOMINICK's
chest)
Fuckin' brother!

DOMINICK
Oh, you - !

NICKY tries to look away.

MARINO
No more!

FAT SALLY
Get him, Marino!

MARINO
(Hitting DOMINICK
across the neck)
You fuckin' scumbag!

The wiseguys hold NICKY's face so he has to see his brother.

MARINO
(Lunging the bat into
DOMINICK's stomach)
No more.

He swings the bat across his head, knocking DOMINICK on the ground.

NICKY
(Still pinned,
screaming)
Frankie!

MARINO
(Looking at NICKY as
he strikes DOMINICK)
No more! You see? Watch!

HARDY and BEEPER join MARINO. All three are beating DOMINICK with baseball bats.

NICKY
(Held down by his
neck)
Frankie! Frankie, you piece of shit!

MARINO
Fuck you, you motherfuck!

The camera tilts down to DOMINICK's bloody face as the three continue to beat him to death.

NICKY

Fuckin' punk, motherfucker! Piece of shit!

NICKY tries to stand up but FAT SALLY and FUSCO keep him down.

MARINO

No more fuckin' dirty work!

NICKY

(Rolling over on his
back in pain)
No, no, no, no!

MARINO

(To HARDY and BEEPER)
Take him out! Take this motherfucker out!

They drag DOMINICK by his feet. MARINO swings at him with two bats as he's taken away into the cornfield.

EXT. MIDWEST CORNFIELD, GRAVE SITE - DAY, A LITTLE LATER

DOMINICK is battered and bloody. MARINO, HARDY and BEEPER stand over him, still swinging their bats.

NICKY is on his side, still held down by SALLY and FUSCO. His face is a little bloody.

NICKY

(Whimpering, as they
beat DOMINICK)
Dominick! Oh, Dominick. Oh, Dom.
Frankie.
(Pleading for his
brother's life.)
Frankie, leave the kid alone. He's
still breathin'. He's still breathin'.
Leave him alone. Frankie.

MARINO swings two final blows to DOMINICK's head. NICKY looks away, sobbing.

MARINO

All right. Strip him.

MARINO and his hoods remove DOMINICK's pants and shirt.

NICKY

(Sobbing as they
undress his brother)

No balls, you got no fuckin' balls.
Oh, Dominick. Oh, Dom.

NICKY sobs. They drag DOMINICK toward a freshly dug grave and toss his limp, barely conscious body into it.

NICKY

(Crying quietly)
Dominick. Dominick.
(Sobs.)
Dominick.

NICKY looks up to MARINO. They share a look before MARINO swings his bat, striking NICKY's head.

FREEZE FRAME ON MARINO.

UNFREEZE - LIVE ACTION CONTINUES.

MARINO and his men start beating NICKY, who groans and spits blood as he is struck.

EXT. MIDWEST CORNFIELD, GRAVE SITE - DAY, A LITTLE LATER

NICKY is stripped down to his underwear. HARDY and FUSCO drag him to the grave and dump him over DOMINICK.

MARINO

Come on, come on. Bury 'em.

MARINO and BEEPER look on as the other hoods begin the tedious work of tossing dirt on to the bodies, shovel by shovel, until they are covered up to their necks.

We see NICKY's face, bloodied and battered. He's still breathing and groaning.

ACE (V.O.)

The word was out. The bosses had had enough of Nicky. They had enough. How much were they gonna take? So, they made an example of him and his brother. They buried them while they were still breathing.

A full shovel of dirt lands upon NICKY's face and chest with a thud.

INT. ACE'S CAR, TONY ROMA'S RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - DUSK

ACE is engulfed in flames. His jacket catches fire. He opens the door and rolls out onto the pavement, barely escaping a smaller explosion. He lies on the floor as a ball of fire rises behind him. Two men pull him away from the car.

MAN #1

Mister, you all right?

MAN #2

Watch out, the -!

ACE watches as his car explodes in flames. Ashes and debris fall on ACE and the two men.

MAN #2

Mister, you all right?

ACE

(Dazed)

Yeah.

ACE (V.O.)

They had other ideas for me.

EXT. TONY ROMA'S RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - NIGHT

ACE is being wheeled to an ambulance on a stretcher. There are firemen and policemen in the background.

AMBULANCE DRIVER

(As ACE is wheeled
into the rear of the
ambulance)

You sure are lucky, mister.

ACE's face disappears into the ambulance.

FLASHBACK: EXT. TONY ROMA'S RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - DAY

ACE's car explodes.

Music in: J. S. Bach - 'St Matthew Passion'.

EXT. THE DUNES HOTEL AND CASINO - NIGHT

The casino is being leveled - actuality footage.

EXT. THE MGM GRAND HOTEL AND CASINO - NIGHT

The brand-new 5,000-room hotel with its entrance shaped like the MGM lion's head.

ACE (V.O.)

The town will never be the same.
After the...

EXT. THE DUNES HOTEL AND CASINO - NIGHT

The hotel and casino implodes, filling the screen with fire and smoke.

ACE (V.O.)

...Tangiers, the big corporations
took it all over. Today it looks

like...

INT. CASINO - DAY

Slow motion of tourists walking into a casino looking like the living dead.

ACE (V.O.)

...Disneyland.

INT. TREASURE ISLAND HOTEL AND CASINO - NIGHT

A crowd gathers to watch a mock pirate ship sink in a tank.

ACE (V.O.)

And while the kids play cardboard pirates, Mommy and Daddy drop the house payments and Junior's college money...

EXT. THE DUNES HOTEL AND CASINO - NIGHT

The casino is destroyed floor by floor by explosions.

ACE (V.O.)

...on the poker slots.

EXT. THE EXCALIBUR HOTEL AND CASINO - NIGHT

Another 5,000 room hotel built like an Arthurian castle.

ACE (V.O.)

In the old days, dealers knew your name, what you drank, what you played. Today, it's like checkin' into an airport. And if you order room service, you're lucky if you get it by Thursday.

EXT. THE DUNES HOTEL AND CASINO - NIGHT

The casino marquee topples to the ground in flames.

ACE (V.O.)

Today, it's all gone. You get a whale show up with four million in a...

INT. CASINO - DAY

The living dead walk down a few steps, marveling at the huge casino.

ACE (V.O.)

...suitcase, and some twenty-five-year-old hotel school kid is gonna want his Social Security Number.

EXT. THE DUNES HOTEL AND CASINO - NIGHT

The casino collapses into smoke and dust.

ACE (V.O.)

After the Teamsters got...

EXT. THE MIRAGE HOTEL AND CASINO - NIGHT

A 4,000 room hotel with a 60-foot volcano out front. Tourists watch it belch smoke and flames.

ACE (V.O.)

...knocked out of the box, the corporations tore down practically every one of the old casinos. And where did the money come from...

EXT. THE LUXOR HOTEL AND CASINO - NIGHT

A giant glass pyramid 30 stories high with a huge sphinx outside.

ACE (V.O.)

...to rebuild the pyramids?... Junk bonds.

EXT. ACE'S SAN DIEGO LUXURY HOME - DAY

TITLE IN: SAN DIEGO

A house very much like ACE's house in Vegas, including the fact that it backs up on a golf course. We see ACE inside talking on the phone with a bookie.

ACE

(Into telephone)

Still not sure?

INT. ACE'S SAN DIEGO LUXURY HOME - DAY

An older, grayer ACE is alone in his living-room with TV sets, fax machines and multiple phone lines. He is surrounded by newspapers and files. He is very much the way we saw him during his earlier handicapping days.

RACE ANNOUNCER

(From a television

set)

They're off and running...

ACE

(Into telephone)

Probable, but may be questionable.
All right. Well, let me know as soon as you can find out.

ACE sets his cordless phone down and jots a few notes on a racing form. A television set shows a football game in the background.

ACE (V.O.)

But in the end, I wound up right back where I started. I could still pick winners, and I could still make money for all kinds of people back home. And why mess up a good thing? And that's that.

He takes off his glasses, and gazes ahead.

FADE TO BLACK