

On The Nut

Written by:

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On The Nut - Pilot Episode

FADE IN:

INT. PEGASUS CASINO HOTEL SUITE. DAWN.

Piles of passed out NAKED WOMEN scatter the massive hotel room. GLITTER HEELS hang from the lamp shades, the ceiling fan, the television; SLINKING DRESSES shield the eyes of some of the ladies, blocking the on-coming sun and the reality of life seeping through ripped curtains.

Remnants of COCAINE trace every flat surface. Empty CHAMPAGNE BOTTLES litter the floor.

The steady sound of a single stream of URINE echoes nearby... Seemingly the only male in the room. The toilet FLUSHES.

CARY STEELE, 30's, ruggedly handsome and fit, enters the room. He quietly goes around the bed to the far night-stand, leans over, does a line of coke, then slides the nearby PILE OF CASH off the table.

The ESCORT closest to him lifts her dress-veil momentarily.

ESCORT

It's all there?

Cary thumbs the stack of hundreds. He nods, kissing her forehead before exiting the room.

INT. PEGASUS CASINO HOTEL FRONT LOBBY. CONTINUOUS.

The elevator door opens and Cary shoves the wad of bills into his pocket and steps into the lobby. Nearby at the front desk, two MEN intensely ARGUE, yet maintain their tone and decibel so Cary can't hear what is being said.

He slides behind a nearby pillar, trying to get a better listen.

The voluptuous FRONT DESK ATTENDANT notices Cary and smiles, tugging slightly at her shirt collar, revealing just a bit more collarbone and the soft round mound of top boob.

The two men standing in front of her don't let this glimpse of skin go unnoticed, her breasts straining the buttons. They turn to her, as she flashes Cary a quick wink.

Cary lifts his finger to his mouth in the universal signal for "shhh". She speaks directly to the men.

FRONT DESK ATTENDANT

Mr. Vale. Mr. Steele.

The man to the left, MR. VALE, slips the man to the right, MR. STEELE an envelope bursting at the seams. They shake hands and then both men disappear to a room behind the front desk.

CARY
(under his breath)
What's this about?

Cary returns a wink to the front desk attendant and quickly slips out the door unnoticed.

EXT. PEGASUS CASINO HOTEL PARKING LOT. CONTINUOUS.

Cary exits through the revolving doors and shakes hands with the VALET ATTENDANT, a very large yet sharply dressed black man.

VALET ATTENDANT
Mister Cary Steele! Man it's been
a long while! Where you been
hiding?

CARY
Hey Marcus. You know, laying low.
Keeping my head out of hot water.

VALET ATTENDANT/MARCUS
I hear that. Just not the same
without you here running things.
Your brother...

He pauses. Uncomfortable and unsure how to proceed.

VALET ATTENDANT/MARCUS (CONT'D)
I shouldn't speak about that. Good
seeing you again sir.

CARY
Appreciate that. How's the wife
and kids?

MARCUS
All good man! The youngest started
school this past September...

Marcus goes on telling Cary about his family but Cary's not really listening, the words drift in and out in pieces.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
... two seconds in the door and I'm
forgotten...

Cary pensively looks far off, smiling and nodding appropriately but his thoughts are obviously elsewhere.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
 ... couldn't stop talking that
 night...

Marcus is too kind and friendly to notice Cary's lack of attention. He chats away, holding the door open for various people coming and going.

A MAN carrying a large amount of SUITCASES with a rowdy family in tow exits the door and occupies Marcus' full attention. Cary takes this opportunity to exit, patting Marcus on the shoulder and slipping around the corner.

Walking toward one of few CARS in the desolate parking lot, Cary stops for a moment to take in the nearby VEGAS STRIP, her lights outshining the rising sun.

Approaching a RANGE ROVER, Cary takes out his KEYS and flicks the door locks open. No lights or movement from the Range Rover but behind it, hidden within the shadow of wealth, is a green SHOWDOWN TAXI CAB, with its interior light on.

Like he's done it a thousand times, Cary pulls the door open, slides in the driver's seat, puts the key in the ignition, buckles his safety belt and turns the engine.

Easing the cab onto the main drag, he takes out a roll of HUNDREDS from his pocket and places five bills on the seat next to him. The rest goes back in his pocket.

CARY
 Now let's see how quickly we can
 make up last night's fares.

INT. CARY'S CAB. / EXT. LAS VEGAS STREETS. CONTINUOUS.

Weaving through the Las Vegas streets, Cary's cab stops and goes without ever picking up a passenger.

The meter flips on and off, racking up what was supposed to be a night's worth of fares.

DRIVING MONTAGE/TIME LAPSE:

Cary's cab cruises the strip, passing by:

CASINO PATRONS and BAR FLIES stumbling out of the darkness into the morning light, eyes squinting, unaccustomed to the brightness.

DRUNKEN TOURISTS whooping it up down the street, oozing out of the bars.

FRAT BOYS holding up their mostly PASSED OUT GIRLFRIENDS, trying to flag down the passing cabs.

HOOKERS trying to squeeze one last quick blow job into their night, motioning simulated oral sex to the cars creeping by.

JUNKIES litter the alleys, with needles dangling from their arms.

This is the REAL LAS VEGAS. The gritty and the dirty; a war zone for the poor, the users, the broken dreamers; a playground for the pimps and whores.

INT. PALMS HOTEL ROOM. DAWN.

The modern hotel room looks lived in -- not by weekenders but rather by a young couple: not quite tourists, not quite locals. The place is scattered with CLOTHES and TOILETRIES. CHIP BAGS and EMPTY BOTTLES. This couple has been here for awhile.

AARON TIMMONS, 20's, handsome like a former college football star would be but the overgrown 5 o'clock shadow, prominently displayed on his baby face does little to hide life's dejection in his glassy, blank eyes.

He sits in darkness, wide awake, crammed into the far corner of the large bed with a mostly empty bottle of JACK DANIELS between his knees. Staring at the blank television, he sips from the bottle.

The door UNLOCKS. A FEMALE FIGURE squeezes through, unaware of the lack of stealth for which she enters.

BRITTANY VANCE, 20's, drop-dead gorgeous with a girl-next-door face on a stripper's body. She's half out of her clothes before the door shuts behind her.

Aaron just watches.

She quietly grabs a bottle of CHEAP VODKA from the cabinet.

He turns the television on.

She looks over, startled.

BRITTANY
What. The. Fuck.

AARON

Good morning to you too.

He flips the television sound off. She lifts the bottle to her lips.

AARON (CONT'D)

I thought you quit?

She downs a massive shot.

AARON (CONT'D)

Hey. Hey. Easy now.

She takes the last of it in one really long swig, making herself choke on the harshness of the liquor.

AARON (CONT'D)

You had to finish it?

BRITTANY

I paid for it.

Walking towards the window, she tosses the empty bottle on the bed. Aaron picks it up and drops the remaining bits into his mouth. A true alcoholic. Brittany looks at him with disgust and pity, then flips open the curtains.

AARON

Where have you been?

BRITTANY

Out.

AARON

It's 6 in the morning.

The sun works its way over the horizon. She removes what's left of her dress.

BRITTANY

So it is.

AARON

Where were you?

BRITTANY

Not here.

Pulling a JOINT from her purse, she lights up.

AARON

Now you're smoking weed too?

She stares him down blankly while taking a long slow drag into her lungs, then blows the smoke in his direction.

BRITTANY
Get a job yet?

AARON
I'm looking.

BRITTANY
You've been looking for over a month.

AARON
It takes time.

He goes over to her, trying to take the joint out of her hand. She refuses, taking another long puff.

BRITTANY
I didn't seem to have a problem.

He's obviously annoyed but trying to be patient.

She blows the smoke straight into his face and his patience fails.

AARON
Maybe if I sucked cock, I wouldn't have a problem getting paid either.

BRITTANY
Fuck you.

Sitting in her thong on the window sill, silent, she stares through him. She is breathtakingly beautiful in the warm dawn light streaming in from behind. Aaron crumbles.

AARON
I'm sorry.

She doesn't move. The sun illuminates her perfect breasts, nipples erect. The city flirts and twinkles in the distance.

BRITTANY
Have you even bothered to contact my uncle?

AARON
No.

He tries for the joint again -- an excuse to come closer.

BRITTANY

Why not?

AARON

I don't need his pity.

Aaron brushes a rouge hair out of her eyes, slowly stroking her face. Her shoulders soften and she lets him take the joint from her hands.

BRITTANY

He has a lot of influence here. He can help you.

Aaron just shrugs his shoulders; the dent in his pride visible in his expression.

AARON

I've been looking. It's really hard here. Not like back home.

He moves to the other side of the room, taking one small puff before putting the joint out in a nearby ashtray.

AARON (CONT'D)

No one knows me here. No one even looks at me.

Returning to her, he caresses her back tenderly.

She's obviously uncomfortable, her body tenses again.

BRITTANY

High school is only four years of your life Aaron. What are you going to do with yourself now that you're not a small town football star?

AARON

Just a little while longer.

He kisses the back of her neck.

AARON (CONT'D)

Promise.

He turns her towards him, cupping her face in his hands. His beautiful eyes bore into her and she kisses him deeply. His hands make their way down, sliding her thong to the side.

Her head goes back as he licks her swelling nipples, his hand working swiftly below.

EXT. JADE STEELE'S HOUSE. MORNING.

Cary's cab pulls in front of an enormous house. A curb stamp at the end of the driveway reads STEELE.

Cary's ex-wife JADE, 30's with fake boobs, fake hair, fake nails and fake everything, stands on the far side of a JAGUAR with her hand jammed through the crotch zipper of a MAN in a business suit.

Cary and Jade's daughter CARLY, 5, blonde with a beaming smile and shy eyes, appears in the doorway.

CARLY

Daddy!

She bounds out of the doorway, rushing past Jade, who is furiously trying to pull her hand free from the man's pants.

Cary kneels down to catch his daughter, giving her kisses all over her face.

In her hand is a STUFFED MONKEY. She holds it up to him.

CARLY (CONT'D)

Give Mookey kisses too!

Cary does what his daughter requests. Those big blue piercing eyes have him wrapped around her finger.

CARY

Good morning Mr. Mookey.

He kisses the monkey on the forehead and sets them both back down.

CARY (CONT'D)

Go grab your backpack sweetie, it's time for school.

Lila runs inside.

The man rushes awkwardly around his vehicle, zipping up his fly as Cary stares him down.

The Jaguar backs out quickly, just missing Cary's parked cab.

CARY (CONT'D)

You scrape my ride and I will wax your face with it.

JADE
Is that really necessary? He's
just leaving.

The front door closes behind Lila. Cary turns to Jade with
fire in his eyes.

CARY
Great fucking example you are
setting.

The Jag peels down the street.

JADE
Girl's gotta make a living.

CARY
This house and half my money isn't
enough for you?

JADE
Well half your money is just not
quite what it once was now is it?

Cary doesn't let the jab to his ego phase him.

CARY
Keep your tricks out of my house
and away from my daughter.

JADE
Your house?

CARY
I still own it.

JADE
Only until the divorce is final.

CARY
Keep it up Jade.

Lila appears in the doorway, struggling with the too big pink
BACKPACK slug over her shoulder.

CARY (CONT'D)
If I see that shit around my little
girl one more time...

JADE
Our little girl.

Lila runs to Cary, dragging the backpack behind her. He gives Jade a look that says he means it.

Taking his daughter's hand he turns his back to Jade and leads Lila to the cab. Jade waves to their backs.

JADE (CONT'D)

Bye baby!

Cary opens the cab door and straps his daughter in the back seat.

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. CONTINUOUS.

The buzzer RINGS and a massive amount of YOUNG CHILDREN run out from the line up of cars.

Cary pulls up just in time. Letting Lila out, he kisses her forehead before she runs off, joining the others.

CARY

Be good darling.

INT. PALMS HOTEL ROOM. LATE MORNING.

Aaron paces back and forth quickly while Brittany sleeps in the oversized bed. He's holding a PHONE in one hand and a BUSINESS CARD in the other.

Dialing, the phone rings over and over. He hangs up and dials again. No answer.

AARON

Shit. Maybe I should just go down there.

He looks closely at the card: JAMES VALE, CEO, SHOWDOWN TAXI CAB COMPANY. Family run since 1918.

EXT. CAB DEPOT. MID-AFTERNOON.

Cary pulls up, parking at the end of a line of green cabs leading from the garage. Surrounding the building, hundreds of cabs line the streets around the corner lot. The depot is bustling with the changing shifts.

INT. CAB DEPOT. CONTINUOUS.

Cary heads towards the line up of DRIVERS outside the office where RITA, the plump but cheerful dispatcher, perches high up in a CAGED WINDOW.

The drivers go one by one through the line, handing Rita their nights fares and meter reports.

MONDO, a young and charismatic Puerto Rican driver is enthusiastically retelling the tales of his night to FREDDIE, a skinny black driver with a pile of ice around his neck and a mile-a-minute mouth.

MONDO

... Through the window and slides into the passenger seat next to me.

FREDDIE

Damn! Tiny AND flexible.

MONDO

For sure.

FREDDIE

Come on already!

MONDO

Oh yeah, so there before I could even blink she unzips and her lips are on my cock.

FREDDIE

Hot damn!

MONDO

No, man! I'm trying to be good for the misses.

FREDDIE

Fuck that. Blow jobs don't count.

MONDO

She ain't gonna buy that.

FREDDIE

Well, then it's legal tender... payment.

CHERYL

Next.

MONDO

Hey, Cary.

He shakes Cary's hand and returns to his story as the line dwindles down.

FREDDIE

So that's it?

MONDO

Pretty much. Just pulled over and let her out. I can't take no BJ fare. The Misses would take the kids to her moms. No way.

FREDDIE

Suck free, ride free, I say.

CHERYL

Freddie, you're up.

Freddie goes up to hand in his slips to Rita.

MONDO

(To Cary)

Hey man, you seen Sal?

CARY

Naw, not since check out.

MONDO

He hasn't shown up.

CARY

He will. The old geezer moves at his own pace.

MONDO

Yeah yeah... but I got some weird pocket dial from him last night.

CARY

And?

MONDO

Lots of yelling.

CHERYL

Next.

MONDO

No word since.

Mondo goes up to the cage. Cary looks at his phone. One missed call from Sal. He dials. Nothing. Straight to voice-mail.

CHERYL

Next.

Cary shoves his phone away and gives his SLIPS to Rita.

CARY
How's your day, love.

Smiling his signature lady-melting grin, he gazes into her eyes. His way with women is legendary.

CHERYL
Oh, you just stop that. You're making me blush.

CARY
Looks good on you.

She grins from ear to ear and counts his cash - all one hundred dollar bills. She looks slightly confused and checks his metered report.

CARY (CONT'D)
Any plans for the weekend?

CHERYL
Just dinner with my daughters.

CARY
How's the girls? Crystal... and Monica, right?

She checks the metered report and the cash again. She looks severely confused and tries to maintain the pleasantries with Cary, who is obviously one of her favorites.

CHERYL
Yes! Both are good. Growing up too fast.
(beaming)
Made the Dean's list!

CARY
Really? Which one?

CHERYL
Both, actually!

Her expressions changes from one of pride to one of confusion.

CHERYL (CONT'D)
No credit cards tonight?

CARY
Nope.

CHERYL
Just this cash here?

CARY
Yes ma'am.

CHERYL
All hundreds?

Cary doesn't answer, smiling his coy smile. She looks at the metered report again.

CHERYL (CONT'D)
And all in the last few hours?

CARY
Rita, fares are fares. Doesn't
make much difference to James how
they come, right?

She looks slightly worried. A door next to Cary opens up and JAMES VALE, 30's, exits in an expensive suit and fedora not normally reserved for cab drivers. Aaron follows closely behind. The office door shuts and a plaque: JAMES VALE, CEO shines in the fluorescent lights.

CHERYL
Fine. Fine. Just go.

Cary goes to leave. James calls him back.

JAMES
Cary!

CARY
(under his breath)
Shit.

Cary turns around, almost smacking into them, they are so close.

JAMES
Cary, meet Aaron.

He looks Aaron up and down, then turns to walk away.

JAMES (CONT'D)
Aaron, meet Cary Steele.

AARON
Did you say *STEELE*?

JAMES

Yes.

AARON

As in the Pegasus' Steele's?

JAMES

That's right. Cary's family owns the infamous Pegasus Casino.

AARON

What's he doing here?

James gives Aaron a severe look of disappointment. Aaron turns to Cary.

AARON (CONT'D)

No offense, Sir. Nice to meet you.

CARY

What do you want?

JAMES

Aaron here will be training with you tonight.

CARY

Training?

JAMES

That's right.

CARY

We have too many drivers as it is.

JAMES

What's one more?

CARY

No.

JAMES

Wasn't asking.

Cary turns to Aaron.

CARY

You can drive, can't you?

AARON

Yes, Sir.

CARY

Well, then. There you go.
Consider yourself trained.

JAMES

He's new to town. Came out here
from Nebraska with my niece
Brittany. Lovely girl.

CARY

Great. Congrats. Good luck.

JAMES

Point being, he is *family*.

He looks at Aaron awkwardly standing next to them in dingy
jeans and an oversized faded sweatshirt.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Well, at least, he's *fucking* family
and that's close enough in my book.
We take care of our own here, Cary.
You know that. Or need I remind
you of how you came to be here?

CARY

No. Got it. Loud and clear.

JAMES

Go home and clean yourself up, kid.
We run a respectable business here
and you need to represent that. No
sweatshirts. Be back here at 2 AM
sharp and Cary will show you the
ropes.

AARON

2 AM?

CARY

You're late, I leave without you.

Cary leaves, joining Mondo outside.

EXT. CAB DEPOT. CONTINUOUS.

Mondo stands on the corner smoking a cigarette when Cary
approaches.

MONDO

Look at that fine glass of wine.

A RED-HAIRED BEAUTY wiggles by, waving at the boys.

MONDO (CONT'D)

Damn!

Mondo takes a long slow drag, watching her with intense eyes.

CARY

Still no word from Sal?

MONDO

Nothing.

CARY

I should check in on him.

Just then an old school CHEVELLE, beautifully restored with fat rims and huge tires pulls up. It slows down to a crawl in front of the two. The windows are tinted to the point of blackout. The license plate reads: PMP-KO.

MONDO

Subtle.

The window rolls down. A BALD MAN with gang tattoos all over his face and neck stretches out his hand, fingers shaped into a gun. He pulls the imaginary trigger, his hand recoiling from the imaginary shot kick-back. He blows out the imaginary smoking tip.

MONDO (CONT'D)

What the fuck was that about?

The car races off. The two get a glimpse of a HOOKER in the backseat -- face swollen with an enormous shiner. Tears streaked with make up pour down her face.

MONDO (CONT'D)

That Sal's girl?

CARY

Ah fuck. We'd better get over there.

INT. SAL'S APARTMENT. LATE AFTERNOON.

SALVADOR KACHKOVSKY, 60's, built strong like an ox but years of drinking have taken their toll, rummages through drawers, shelves, boxes, you name it. His tiny apartment is littered with stuff. The shades are drawn tight and we can barely see his face in the dim light.

Tucked in his waist band is a SIG Sauer P238 Pistol. He's looking for something and is a serious nervous mess.

The phone RINGS.

He looks at it. Thinks for a beat. Then kills it, sending the caller to voice-mail.

The doorbell RINGS, startling Sal.

CARY (O.S.)
Sal. I can hear you.

SAL
Not a good time, Cary.

CARY (O.S.)
Open up.

MONDO (O.S.)
Come on, Sal.

Sal pauses for a moment.

SAL
This doesn't concern you two.

He looks to the door. He then takes out and looks at the gun. Empty. No bullets.

He stuffs the gun back in his waistband.

SAL (CONT'D)
Okay, okay. One sec.

Sal unlocks the door but leaves the chain on.

SAL (CONT'D)
You alone?

CARY
Of course.

SAL
Were you followed?

CARY
Who would be following us, Sal?

Sal finally lets them in. It's too dark to see clearly but something is not right.

MONDO
Jesus, Sal. This place is a wreck.

SAL
What did I tell you about that?

MONDO
You fucking kidding me right now,
old man?

SAL
I don't give two shits about you
swearing, just leave the lord out
of it.

MONDO
Christ.

He pulls the gun out and points it at Mondo.

SAL
I mean it.

Cary comes from behind Sal, grabbing the gun from him.
Looking at the empty chamber, he hands it back.

MONDO
It's not even loaded.

Sal backs down and collapses on the couch.

SAL
Shit, sorry. Been a bit on edge.

Cary flips on the light and they see the bloody mess that is
Sal's face.

MONDO
What the fuck happened to you, man?

SAL
Nothing this gun can't fix...

He pauses, waving it in the air.

SAL (CONT'D)
... if only I had some bullets.

He looks at the two men, desperation in his eyes.

CARY
Don't look at me.

SAL
I wasn't.

Mondo fiddles with some trinkets on the side table.

MONDO

Huh? I don't have any bullets for that old pussy shit girl gun of yours.

SAL

You know people.

MONDO

I know people with real guns if you want to get some of those. Seriously. What is it with you old timers and those tiny things?

SAL

You don't know what it's like to look a man in the eye right before you kill him.

He holds the gun to the light.

SAL (CONT'D)

In that moment, you own their life. They know who you are and why you own it and they submit to it.

Standing up, Sal straightens his arm out, aiming it down, towards nothing but had there been someone on their knees before him, they would be directly in the line of fire.

SAL (CONT'D)

Respect it. Plain and simple.

He stands, still pointing the gun down towards the imaginary victim.

SAL (CONT'D)

You kids with your drive by semi-automatic weapons. There is nothing manly about shooting up a neighborhood from the security of a car. Disrespectful.

He lifts the imaginary gun to his right eye, closes the other.

SAL (CONT'D)

But to look someone in the eye. To know exactly who you are killing and to have them know exactly why they are being killed...

(MORE)

SAL (CONT'D)

That is respect. To breathe in his fear. To see him accept his fate, knowing his own decisions caused his life to be taken from him. That is respect. And only way to kill a man.

The room is silenced for a moment before Mondo goes back to the trinkets on the table.

MONDO

Regardless. It's still a girl's gun.

SAL

Big bangs lead to big messes. Small messes are easier to contain.

CARY

He does have a point there.

MONDO

Well, if it's pussy bullets you want then pussy bullets you get. I know a guy. How many?

SAL

Just need the one.

CARY

We saw your girl Frankie in Knock's car outside the depot at changeover.

MONDO

Had a matching shiner... just like yours.

Sal starts pacing the room, in a panic.

SAL

She's okay though, right? That shit pimp of hers didn't rough her up too much, did he?

CARY

Not yet.

MONDO

Didn't want to pay for it, huh Sal?

Sal rushes over to Mondo and back hands him without flinching.

MONDO (CONT'D)

Motherfucker! You do that again and I will take that girl's gun out of your hands and beat your ass with it. Big mess. Little mess. Whatever.

SAL

I would never.

MONDO

You gonna take a beating like that for a broad you're not even banging?

He shakes his head and goes to the window.

SAL

She's like a daughter to me.

MONDO

Fucktard.

CARY

Enough. Go on, Sal.

Sal peeks out the closed curtain.

SAL

Frankie has been staying with me. Wanted to get away from that fucking pimp of hers.

CARY

You know Knock's not about to let money go without a fight.

SAL

Didn't used to be that way. Was a girl's choice what man she wanted to protect her.

MONDO

Thinking about getting into the pimp business, are you?

Sal heads towards Mondo.

SAL

I will fuck you up, son.

Mondo jumps around Sal in a boxer weave. He's a natural.

MONDO

Come on, old timer!

Sal can't get a grip on him and eventually collapses in a chair. Mondo does a victory lap around Sal's chair.

CARY

Knock figured out she was staying here with you and came for his property.

SAL

That's right. Caught up with us right outside. Beat the shit out me, then her. Threw her in his car and took off.

CARY

Nothing more to do, Sal. She chose that life. She's his bitch.

SAL

I know. But I can't let him hurt her.

MONDO

You think he will?

SAL

I know it. To my core.

CARY

She's one of his top girls. Why would he do that?

SAL

She was one of his top. He's got a new crop of fillies and after the beat-down he gave her, I doubt she'll be making any money now.

CARY

He'll test her out on the street first. Take her off the call ins and back to the corner.

SAL

Sure. That's what I'd do.

CARY

That's what any business man would do. Bargain bin her.

MONDO

So what's your plan, Sal?

SAL

Get the girl. Take down any thugs that get in my way.

MONDO

Can you buy him out?

SAL

Don't have that kind of money. Spent what little I had left on Marlene's funereal.

Mondo looks at a framed photograph on the wall near him of Sal's dead daughter and a beautifully intricate urn on the shelf below it. Seemingly, the only item not destroyed in the room.

MONDO

Did they ever catch the guy?

SAL

Not officially.

MONDO

What does that mean?

SAL

They can't prove it, but I know who killed my baby.

MONDO

How?

SAL

Hired a PI. Was close to catching the bastard but then he gets locked up for something else. Been in prison for years.

Cary and Mondo get up to leave. Cary puts a reassuring hand on Sal's shoulder.

SAL (CONT'D)

I have to get her, Cary. Failed my own flesh and blood. Can't let it happen to Frankie too.

CARY

You have a plan?

SAL

Not yet.

CARY

We'll figure something. Mondo get the bullets from your boys then we'll all meet up tonight in the pit.

MONDO

Hope you have a plan figured out by then.

INT. KNOCK'S PLACE. AFTERNOON.

FRANKIE, 20's, beautiful underneath the current swelling and bruises, is passed out on a dingy mattress in the corner.

The place is more drug house than residence.

KNOCK (the same bald gangster/pimp from the car) watches over his HENCHMEN counting STACKS of CASH and BAGGIES of COKE.

He has a beautiful YOUNG GIRL, barely legal, sitting in his lap, one long leg draped over his knee.

Stroking her face, he whispers in her ear.

KNOCK

See honey, you do good and you get good.

He looks over to Frankie.

KNOCK (CONT'D)

You do bad and you get bad. Understand?

YOUNG GIRL

Yes, baby.

He runs his hands up in the girl's hair. She's melting at the attention. He looks over her shoulder to one of his henchmen, bagging the coke.

KNOCK

Over here.

The henchman sets up a couple lines in front of Knock and the girl. The girl smiles, practically salivating for the drugs. She leans down. He stops her.

KNOCK (CONT'D)
 You know the rules. Work first.
 Play later.

She slides off his lap, down to his crotch, unzips his pants and sucks him off. While her head bobs up and down in his lap, MOANS come from the corner behind them. Knock looks back at Frankie.

Frankie rocks back and forth, gripping her sides.

KNOCK (CONT'D)
 Shut that bitch up.

One of the henchmen walks over and punches her head, knocking her out cold.

Knock pulls the girl up from his lap.

KNOCK (CONT'D)
 That's enough.

He motions to the coke. She does a line.

KNOCK (CONT'D)
 Both of them.

She does the other.

KNOCK (CONT'D)
 Now go on get yourself pretty.
 You're stepping up tonight and
 taking that bitch's clients.

YOUNG GIRL
 What are you gonna do with her?

KNOCK
 Ain't none of your business. Your
 business is making me money and
 that's it. Got it?

He smacks her on the ass as she goes. She watches Frankie from the corner of her eye as she passes, concerned but unable to help her. Leaning towards his closest henchmen, Knock motions towards Frankie.

KNOCK (CONT'D)
 Clean that bitch up and drop her on
 the corner tonight. Three hours.
 That's all that bitch gets and if
 she doesn't get me my money, then
 get rid of her.

INT. PALMS HOTEL ROOM. EVENING.

Aaron cleans up the place shirtless, throwing away all the empty bottles of liquor tossed about the room.

INT. PALMS HOTELS ROOM - BATHROOM. CONTINUOUS.

Brittany gets ready for work; sequined Showgirl outfit hanging off the towel rack. Aaron comes up behind her, wrapping his arms around her. She looks less than amused.

AARON

I went to see your uncle today.

BRITTANY

Mmmhummm.

AARON

He gave me a job.

BRITTANY

Seriously?

Her eyes light up. She turns towards him.

AARON

Yep.

BRITTANY

I thought you didn't want a hand out?

AARON

No more excuses. I start tonight.

BRITTANY

At the Casino?

AARON

No, Showdown. The cab company.

BRITTANY

Oh.

She turns back towards the mirror.

AARON

He owns a casino?

BRITTANY

He runs the valet business at Pegasus so I just figured he'd get you in there.

She looks at him in the mirror, unimpressed and then shrugs.

BRITTANY (CONT'D)
 Parking, driving. Whichever.
 That's great though. Something's
 better than nothing.

She pauses, catching his eye.

BRITTANY (CONT'D)
 I have to get ready so if you don't
 mind.

He stands there confused and dejected for a moment, just watching her in the mirror.

AARON
 I thought you would be pleased that
 I got a job.

BRITTANY
 I am but it's low pay so I'll still
 be paying the bills.

AARON
 What bills? James lets you stay
 here for free.

BRITTANY
 There are other costs and you don't
 think he's going to let us stay
 here forever, especially now that
 you'll be working for him.

AARON
 Hadn't thought of that.

BRITTANY
 I have.

INT. CAB DEPOT. LATE NIGHT.

The changing of the shifts is taking place. DRIVERS mill about with coffee cups in their hands. The time clock on the wall gets punched, one after another.

Hundreds of keys line the wall inside the doorway. Each key has a driver's name handwritten next to it.

Aaron sits on a bench just outside the office, watching the line of cabs go through the neighboring garage one by one.

Each car is gassed up by MICHAEL, the beef of a man in mechanic's overalls; lit cigarette in one hand, fuel pump in the other.

Aaron sees Cary pull up, next in line.

AARON

Hey!

CARY

Fuck.

The line starts to move.

Cary goes to turn the wheel but Michael's waving him forward.

He pulls in the garage as Aaron jumps in the passenger seat.

INT. CARY'S CAB. / EXT. LAS VEGAS STREETS. CONTINUOUS.

After pulling out of the cab depot, Cary immediately goes in the opposite direction of the other drivers departing.

The radio BUZZES with chatter.

CABBIE 1 (RADIO)

What's moving tonight?

CABBIE 2 (RADIO)

Side door of the Wynn.

CABBIE 3 (RADIO)

Looking good over here at Bally's.

Through the back streets of DOWNTOWN, Cary's driving in silence.

AARON

What are they saying?

CARY

Where the people are. The movement.

AARON

Where do we need to go?

CARY

Wherever we want.

AARON

You don't have to go to any certain area?

CARY

Jesus. Are you seriously going to make me teach you how to drive a fucking cab? The more rides, the more fares. The more fares, the more money in your pocket. Sixty them, forty us. Pretty straight forward.

Aaron looks out the window for a minute at the lower side of town where the HOOKERS walk the streets.

AARON

If the people are on the Strip, what are we doing over here?

CARY

Fuck the Strip.

AARON

I don't understand.

He pulls into the back area of SPEARMINT RHINO.

CARY

Tourists bore me and the strippers are better tippers.

EXT. SPEARMINT RHINO. CONTINUOUS.

Cary goes around the long line of cabs in the front and pulls into the short line of cabs at the back of the building.

AARON

And better looking.

A pack of STRIPPERS with long legs, big knockers (and dressed in a way that leaves little to the imagination) exit the club.

The short line starts moving quickly.

The DOORMAN escorts a HOT BLONDE into Cary's cab and puts her bag in the trunk.

HOT BLONDE/HEATHER

Hey, Cary. Been awhile.

CARY

Looking good, Heather. As usual.

He pulls the cab out.

Aaron can barely look at the girl in the back seat, her overtly exposed tits bouncing with every bump in the road. He keeps his head down.

HOT BLONDE/HEATHER
 Thanks, babe. Gotta catch a flight to Boston.
 (off Cary's questioning look)
 Some of the girls been escorting out there once a month. Good money.

CARY
 You be safe out there, without me to protect you.

HOT BLONDE/HEATHER
 Always know how to turn on the charm.

She reapplies her lipstick. Aaron tries to sneak a peek in the mirror but she catches his eye.

HOT BLONDE/HEATHER (CONT'D)
 Who's your friend?

Aaron slowly turns to look at her.

HOT BLONDE/HEATHER (CONT'D)
 What's your name, honey?

AARON
 A-a-a-aron.

HOT BLONDE/HEATHER
 Awww. He's adorable.

Instantly, he is blushing and turns around to hide his face.

CARY
 Fuck kid, this town is going to eat you alive.

The stripper and Cary laugh as Aaron sinks lower in his seat.

EXT. AIRPORT. CONTINUOUS.

Cary pulls in and drops Heather off at the DEPARTURE AREA of the airport. Cary and Heather exit the cab and walk to the back where he lifts her BAG out of the trunk. She slips his payment deep into his front jeans pocket, where the outline of her hand on his cock is easily seen.

She struts past Aaron's window, blowing him a kiss.

Cary gets back in and pulls around to check out the line at the pit.

EXT. AIRPORT CAB STAND - THE PIT. CONTINUOUS.

The pit is the airport waiting area for cabs. There are 10 rows of 10 cabs each waiting their turn to head up the hill to pick up the arriving passengers.

MONTAGE / TIME LAPSE SEQUENCE:

Cars moving though the lines.

Drivers walking around, stretching.

Mondo and Sal pull in, park and meet up with Cary.

EXT. PIT. CONTINUOUS.

Cary, Mondo and Sal are outside Sal's cab, which is positioned near the front of the pack. Mondo's cab is just a few cars behind them, unattended.

SAL

What took you two so long?

CARY

Never go in a straight line,
gentlemen.

MONDO

Fuck. Especially now that those
cunts are charging us gas fees.
That's some *bullshit*. Gotta get
every dollar I can.

SAL

The fucks aren't paying fees on the
charge cards either so I stopped
taking 'em.

MONDO

Cash only?

SAL

Yep.

He leans in his cab, pulling out a CASH ONLY sign.

SAL (CONT'D)

This little baby hides my ID too so
when some fuck catches me long
hauling, they aren't able to turn
me in to the T.A.

MONDO

Rita lets you get away with cash
only?

SAL

Money is money.

CARY

Mondo, did you get the bullets?

MONDO

Headed there next.

CARY

Fuck, Mondo.

MONDO

My boy needed a minute to wrangle
that old school shit.

CARY

Sal, what's your plan?

SAL

Go grab the girl.

CARY

Alright, pretty straight forward.
Mondo get it together and meet me
at TI in, what, 30?

MONDO

Cool.

CARY

I've got Mica tracking her down.
(To Sal)
We'll take your ride and let the
kid take mine.

SAL

What kid?

INT. CARY'S CAB. / EXT. AIRPORT CAB STAND - THE PIT.
CONTINUOUS.

Aaron sits in the passenger seat looking through a MAP of taxi zones. He puts it down and opens the glove box. A stack of PAMPHLETS slide out, all with incredibly beautiful, young, naked women on them and a menu of options.

AARON

What the...?

Cary steps up to the cab.

CARY

Get in the drivers seat.

AARON

What are these?

CARY

Menus.

AARON

Menus for what?

CARY

Sexual services.

AARON

Seriously?

CARY

Have you been to Vegas before?

AARON

Yeah, once but with Brittany.

CARY

Who's Brittany... Wait, no, I don't give a fuck.

He opens the passenger door and Aaron shoves the menus back in the glove box.

CARY (CONT'D)

Take the wheel. Go through the line. When you're on the nut, pick up the next passenger and take them wherever they want to go. Then wait there and repeat the process. You'll figure it out.

AARON
Where are you going?

CARY
Don't worry about it.

AARON
How do I find you?

CARY
You don't. Shift ends at 2P. You
don't hear from me then turn the
cab in and go home.

Aaron gets out of the cab as the line starts to move. He hurries to the drivers side.

AARON
What about James?

CARY
What about James?

Cary takes off to catch up with Sal who's now parked on the hill leading into the airport pick up zone.

Aaron pulls the cab forward.

AARON
(to himself)
He said you're supposed to be
training me.

As soon as they start moving again, Sal and Cary turn sharply out of line and exit airport without a passenger.

INT. SAL'S CAB. CONTINUOUS.

Cary and Sal drive back DOWNTOWN.

Cary's phone BEEPS. A text.

CARY
They got her on the corner. Turn
here.

EXT. AIRPORT - THE PIT. / INT. AARON'S CAB. NIGHT.

Working his way up through the line, Aaron and the rest of the cabbies get directed into position by BROWN SHIRTS -- the folks in fluorescent vests and short sleeve brown shirts that direct the cab traffic at the airport. It's a well-oiled machine.

Aaron's cab is momentarily stopped at a cross walk near the front exit.

A group of TOURISTS work their way clumsily across the white lined path, one in particular, a famous ACTOR, bulldozes his way through and jumps in the back of Aaron's cab.

A Brown Shirt blows his whistle in protest.

ACTOR
Who the fuck are you?

Quickly, the Brown Shirt approaches.

AARON
Hey! You're...

ACTOR
Fuck. Just drive!

Aaron takes off right before the Brown Shirt reaches them.

INT. AARON'S CAB. / EXT. AIRPORT. CONTINUOUS.

The Actor is laughing and flipping the Brown Shirt off.

ACTOR
I can't stand those fucks.

AARON
Why don't you have a driver or something?

ACTOR
My driver's can't get me coke.

Aaron looks around for a second like he might have been talking to someone else.

AARON
Um... can I?

ACTOR
Aw fuck. Who are you? Where's Cary?

AARON
He had to go do something. Wait, how do you know him?

ACTOR

Of course. The one fucking cabbie
in Vegas that doesn't know where to
get coke.

AARON

I mean, maybe I can find some.

ACTOR

What about Cary's brother? He's
connected.

AARON

Who?

ACTOR

Ah, fuck it. Just take me to a
massage parlor.

AARON

Which one?

ACTOR

I don't fucking care. Whichever
one has the shortest line and the
softest hands. Got three hours
left on this Viagra boner.

Aaron turns back to ask him something but quickly stops
himself as the Actor adjusts the obvious hard on in his
skinny jeans. He leans over to the glove box and pulls out
the brochures from earlier. Flipping through, he finds a
massage parlor nearby and starts to drive.

AARON

Ok. Got one!

ACTOR

Greeeeeat.
(under his breath)
Idiot.

EXT. STREET CORNER. CONTINUOUS.

FRANKIE, with her smashed face, works the corner with a few
other girls, trying to get the attention of the passing cars.

Frankie nervously looks down the street. MICA, another
hooker - thin and beautiful but with a bit of wear and
soulful eyes - keeps close to Frankie.

Frankie's frustration is visible through her swollen face.

She leans into a car window, it takes off. She leans in another one. Same thing each time.

FRANKIE
 (touching her face)
 Ain't no one paying for this.

Knock's alone in his car on the opposite corner, watching. He pulls up along side Frankie, who's pacing the street, gently touching her bruises.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
 (under her breath)
 Fuck.

KNOCK
 Yo, you better get my money, bitch.

FRANKIE
 I'm trying. Look what you did to my face.

KNOCK
 Bitch, you wanna get knocked around again?

He presses the gas, throwing the vehicle towards Frankie but stops short of hitting her.

FRANKIE
 Okay, Okay. Shit.

KNOCK
 Damn straight, bitch.

He passes her and SKIDS off around the corner.

Mica comes up and puts an arm around Frankie.

MICA
 Why do you take that shit from him?

FRANKIE
 Don't have much choice.

MICA
 You don't need a fucking pimp.

Frankie slips from her grip.

FRANKIE
 Get off me.

Approaching a car, she mumbles at the potential TRICK through swollen cheeks.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
\$30 for half, \$50 for everything.

TRICK
Can you even *do* half with your face messed up like that?

FRANKIE
Depends, how little is your prick?

TRICK
Fuck that... \$30 for everything.

Mica watches from nearby. She makes a call on her cell.

MICA
(into phone)
Yeah. Both of them.

INT. CARY'S CAB. / EXT. TREASURE ISLAND. (T.I.) CONTINUOUS.

Cary parks his cab in front of the exterior bathrooms. Sal sits quietly in the passenger seat.

Mondo's not there yet but in front of them is a CABBIE from a rival cab company.

The rival cabbie flips them both off as he drives away.

Sal and Cary return the gesture.

Mondo pulls up beside them, throwing a duffle bag through the open window.

MONDO
Got Sal's stupid chick piece and few more manly options.

Cary tosses the bag to Sal.

SAL
I said only needed one.

EXT. MASSAGE PARLOR. NIGHT.

Aaron and the Actor pull up in front of an Asian Massage Parlor. The BOUNCER lets the Actor out and leans in the cab.

BOUNCER
Where's Cary?

AARON

What?

BOUNCER

Cary. You're in his cab.

AARON

How do you know that?

BOUNCER

The fucking number on the side,
asshole.

AARON

Oh, right. I'm new.

The doorman looks at Aaron like he is a fucking idiot and hands him a PIECE of PAPER. Written on it is the number one circled and the cab number.

BOUNCER

Take this around the corner to get
your payout.

He points to the side of the building where a line up of CABBIES mingle around smoking and chatting by the side door. The SIDE DOORMAN YELLS out numbers to the group. One by one the Cabbies go up to collect their money.

Aaron pulls right up in front of the door and exits the cab with it still running. He walks up to the Side Doorman.

AARON

That other guy told me to give this
to you.

He hands him the slip.

SIDE DOORMAN

Great. Get your fucking cab out of
the way.

Aaron looks back and sees that the group of Cabbies are shaking their heads at him.

SIDE DOORMAN (CONT'D)

Over there.

He points to where the rest of the cabs are lined up.

AARON

Oh, sorry.

Aaron starts to walk back to the driver's side when one very ANGRY DUDE comes charging out of the side door, pissed off.

ANGRY DUDE
FUCK! FUCK! FUCK! FUCKING PIECES
OF FUCKING SHIT!

He shoves the Side Doorman out of the way, grabbing Aaron from behind.

There's a KNIFE in his hand and it's pressed tightly up against Aaron's throat.

ANGRY DUDE (CONT'D)
Fucking little shit bringing me
here to get scammed? You will
fucking pay!

AARON
Wait, no. What? Seriously, it
wasn't me. I don't know what you
are talking about.

ANGRY DUDE
\$1500 is what I am talking about,
you little fucking prick. Get in
the car.

He tosses Aaron through the open driver's side door of his cab to the passenger side and slides in the drivers seat. They peel out before anyone can stop them.

SIDE DOORMAN
Fuck. Call Cary.

The Bouncer takes out his PHONE and dials.

BOUNCER
Cary? Yeah... we got a problem.
You'd better get down here.

The Actor saw it all and comes up all amped.

ACTOR
Oh fuck! That was off the hook!

EXT. CARY'S CAB. / EXT. LAS VEGAS STREETS. CONTINUOUS.

Angry Dude is speeding through the downtown streets, hitting his hands on the steering wheel and YELLING his frustrations.

ANGRY DUDE
Fuck!

AARON

What are you planning on doing,
man?

He waves the knife at Aaron's face.

ANGRY DUDE

Shut it.

EXT. MASSAGE PARLOR. / INT. CARY'S CAB. MOMENTS LATER.

Cary and Sal arrive in Sal's cab. The Bouncer leans in the driver's window.

CARY

Which way did they go?

BOUNCER

They peeled out right there.

There are tire tracks on the street leading in the right direction.

The Actor jumps in the back seat.

SAL

Off duty. Out.

ACTOR

Hey! Cary! I'll show you where they went.

CARY

Ah, shit.

SAL

Man, you really don't want to get involved.

ACTOR

No, no! This is awesome! Great research! And besides, I can help. I know what that guy looks like.

BOUNCER

Want me to grab him?

CARY

Naw, it's cool.

Cary turns to the Actor leaning between him and Sal from the backseat.

CARY (CONT'D)
Just stay out of the way.

ACTOR
Yeah, yeah!

Cary, Sal and the Actor take off.

INT. SAL'S CAB. / EXT. LAS VEGAS STREETS. CONTINUOUS.

Cary has the RADIO in his hand.

CARY
Anyone have eyes on cab #118?

CABBIE 1 (RADIO)
No, sorry.

CHERYL (RADIO)
Isn't that your cab number Cary?

CARY
Long story, can you track them?

CHERYL (RADIO)
Well, I mean...
(pauses)
Sure. Of course, hon.

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET CORNER. NIGHT.

Frankie's shaking her breasts to passing cars.

FRANKIE
Hey... Wanna titty fuck?

The Trick pulls over, rolling down the passenger window.

Frankie leans in, pops a breast from her top and pinches her nipple for the man.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
Come on baby, twenty dollars and
I'll wrap these around your cock.

She grabs and squeezes them, jiggling and bouncing.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
You like that?

Knock's car passes by.

INT. STOLEN VEHICLE. CONTINUOUS.

The vehicle suddenly stops.

ON STAR

We're sorry. This vehicle has been reported stolen and all systems have been terminated. The police are on their way. Please wait for further assistance. Thank you.

The car locks flip shut and both Frankie and the Angry Dude are locked inside.

Mica turns the corner, running towards the stolen car.

Frankie and the Angry Dude furiously POUND on the window.

SIRENS approach in the distance.

Mica pounds on the window a couple times then motions to Frankie and the dude to get out of the way.

MICA

Get back!

She picks up a broken piece of CONCRETE from the road at her feet.

Angry Dude and Frankie duck down. The concrete SHATTERS the window.

The sirens are almost to them as Frankie starts to crawl out.

Angry Dude grabs her ankle, knife still in his hand.

She kicks him off, breaking his nose.

He releases his hold and drops the knife. BLOOD gushes from his nose.

Police sirens get louder and louder.

MICA (CONT'D)

Let's go!

She helps Frankie hobble back towards the crashed cab. Cary and Sal pull up with the Actor hanging out the back window.

Mica and Frankie hop in the back.

Angry Dude is in the cab, bleeding, trying to get out of the broken window moments before the COPS arrive.

INT. DOWNTOWN STREET. CONTINUOUS.

Aaron is up and rubbing his head. He's talking with Rita on the radio.

AARON
Yeah... I'm okay.

CHERYL
You should take the ambulance.

AARON
No. I'm fine. And besides, I can't afford it.

CHERYL
Okay, kid. The tow truck is already on route. Where's Cary?

INT. SAL'S CAB. CONTINUOUS.

Cary pulls up next to Aaron, who is now up and outside the smashed cab.

CARY
You alright, kid?

AARON
Yeah, that was crazy.

MICA
Can you get us out of here before the cops pick up Frankie and me?

CARY
(into the radio)
Rita, send the tow truck.

CHERYL (RADIO)
Cary! Yeah, on it's way. What is going on?

CARY
(into the radio)
We'll explain later.

He puts the radio down and turns to Aaron.

CARY (CONT'D)
Ride back to the depot with the truck. Have them swap out the medallion to another car.

(MORE)

CARY (CONT'D)
 (to Mica)
 I'll drop you wherever.

MICA
 Appreciate it. What about her?

She motions to Frankie in the back, resting on Sal's shoulder.

SAL
 Fucking mess.

CARY
 Kid, when you're done, I'm going to need you to come grab us.

AARON
 Where?

CARY
 Call me.

Cary drives off with the crew in Sal's cab and turns the corner just as Knock's car appears.

He eases past Aaron, paying him little attention, and loops around the block.

Waiting around the corner, hidden from view, Knock watches as a police car and the tow truck pull up. When the tow truck departs with the busted cab, Knock follows behind from a distance.

EXT. / INT. CAB DEPORT GARAGE. LATER.

The tow-truck pulls into the garage, dropping the busted cab in the far bay.

Knock eases up to the corner a block away, watching.

The new cab is being gassed up by Michael, the mechanic, in the next bay over. Aaron jumps out of the tow-truck and heads towards the new cab.

Rita yells out to him from the window.

CHERYL
 Whatever you all are up to, be careful.

Aaron waves to her as Michael takes off the MEDALLION from the busted cab, stopping to grab something from inside the cab.

He attaches the medallion to the new cab, all while dangling that ever-present cigarette from his mouth.

MICHAEL

Try to not wreck this one, kay?

He tosses Aaron a set of keys and a wallet.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Found this on the driver's side floor.

Aaron looks inside and finds Angry Dude's ID, credit cards and an obscene amount of cash.

AARON

It's not mine.

MICHAEL

Do I look like a lost and found?

Aaron pulls out his phone and makes a call.

AARON

(into phone)

Yeah, where to?

INT. SAL'S APARTMENT. CONTINUOUS.

Frankie holds an ICE PACK against her cheek in one hand and a bottle of Jack to her lips in another.

Mica stands guard at the window.

Cary and Sal pace in the kitchen while the Actor takes swigs from Frankie's bottle.

ACTOR

Shit, that looks painful.

Frankie just takes the bottle from him.

SAL

No. No way.

CARY

What? You're going to go up against a pimp and his gang alone?

SAL

He might not even know where we are.

CARY

It won't take long for him to find out.

SAL

I can take care of it.

Sal's trying to load the bullets into his little gun but his hands are shaking. Cary keeps picking up the ones that fall on the floor.

CARY

Look at you.

SAL

It's old age. My nerves are fine.

CARY

That supposed to make me feel better? Give me that.

He takes the gun and finishes loading it. Sal rubs his hands.

SAL

Look, Cary. I appreciate your offer. But I am going to need you to back off and let me handle my business.

CARY

You need my help, Sal.

SAL

No, I don't. It's my problem. I will handle it. I've known you a long time. You wouldn't let anyone handle your shit for you and I respect that. Give me the same courtesy.

Cary looks at the gun. Then around the room at Frankie, the Actor, Mica.

CARY

Alright.

SAL

And besides, what about your kid?

CARY

I said alright.

SAL

Okay.

CARY

You two, let's go.

EXT. SAL'S APARTMENT. LATER.

Aaron pulls up in front of Sal's apartment. Cary and the Actor are already out on the curb.

Frankie watches from the window above.

Cary opens the driver's side door.

Knock creeps up in his ride, far enough way to be undetected.

Aaron gets out and starts to walk around the front of the cab to the passenger side but the Actor slips in before him.

AARON

You kidding me?

ACTOR

In the back, kid.

AARON

Dude. Seriously?

CARY

In or out?

Aaron starts to protest for a second but surrenders to the back seat.

Mica comes out of Sal's building. Cary motions to Mica to come to his window. Knock notices.

CARY (CONT'D)

Nice going out there.

MICA

Thanks. Anytime, Cary.

CARY

You want me to drop you somewhere?

MICA

You're just going to let it happen?

CARY

His choice, Mica. I have to respect that.

He takes her hand in his.

CARY (CONT'D)
It's not safe here.

MICA
Knock doesn't know me and there are plenty of girls mingling here. I can handle myself.

CARY
You always do.

He kisses her hand. There is a lot of love between them and their interaction makes it easily seen.

Mica disappears in the shadows with the other STREETWALKERS and the JUNKIES.

INT. SAL'S APARTMENT. CONTINUOUS.

Sal has moved to the well-worn easy chair in the living room, loaded gun resting on the arm. The DUFFLE BAG of GUNS on the floor besides him.

Frankie watches Cary's cab turn the corner and disappear.

FRANKIE
Why'd you let them go?

SAL
This doesn't concern them.

FRANKIE
There's a good chance Knock's not coming alone.

SAL
Then here.

He tosses her the duffle bag of weapons. She barely catches it.

FRANKIE
I've never used one of these before.

SAL
Well, no better time then now.

He drinks from a bottle of Jack as Frankie picks her piece and returns to the window.

INT. CARY'S CAB. / EXT. LAS VEGAS STREETS. CONTINUOUS.

As they drive off, Aaron shows them the Angry Dude's WALLET.

AARON
Found this in the cab.

CARY
Ditch it.

AARON
What, like out the window?

CARY
Sure.

Aaron rolls down the window ready to toss it when the Actor grabs it from him.

ACTOR
Wait, let's look inside first.

He pulls out a fist full of cash.

ACTOR (CONT'D)
So... about that coke...

Cary gives Aaron a smirk while the Actor waves the cash around.

INT. SAL'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

The apartment is extremely quiet. Sal paces back and forth through the room rubbing his gun nervously.

Flipping through his pile of records, he pulls one out and removes it from the dust jacket. Checking the surface of the record in the dim light, he blows off the dust and places it on the turntable.

As he sets the needle down, Frankie turns from the window.

FRANKIE
He's here.

INT. STRIP CLUB - VIP SUITE. CONTINUOUS.

The Actor, Cary and a few STRIPPERS do lines of coke in the VIP room. Aaron chats up the FEMALE BARTENDER.

FEMALE BARTENDER
How long you been running with those cats?

AARON
Just met them tonight.

FEMALE BARTENDER
Lucky you. You're in for a ride.

AARON
Tell me about it.

FEMALE BARTENDER
Ah kid, you don't even know who
that is, do you?

AARON
Of course! He's a famous actor.

FEMALE BARTENDER
Not that guy.

She points to Cary.

FEMALE BARTENDER (CONT'D)
That man right there once ran this
town. Despite what happened over
there at Pegasus, he's still
respected.

The Actor comes stumbling over.

ACTOR
Whiskey. Straight.

The Bartender turns. The Actor grabs her arm, smiling.

ACTOR (CONT'D)
And your number.

She smiles and he lets her go.

AARON
Wait. What happened at Pegasus?

ACTOR
Oh, don't get into that kid.

AARON
Why not?

ACTOR
Cary doesn't like talking about it.
He was once a very powerful and
respected man in this town and now
he is not.

A Stripper comes up and starts pulling the Actor towards a nearby chair.

ACTOR (CONT'D)
Lap dance time.

The Bartender sets down the drink.

ACTOR (CONT'D)
Just know this kid, you can learn a thing or two from that man. Casino Prince or Cab Driver, that there is the greatest hustler that ever lived. Believe it.

The Actor SLAMS it in one smooth motion, releasing his grip on the bar and succumbing to the strippers will.

EXT. SAL'S APARTMENT BUILDING. NIGHT.

A few HOOKERS mingle outside Sal's building when Knock comes barreling through, parking half on the street, half on the sidewalk in front of Sal's building.

Mica's leaning in the window of a nearby car. She notices Knock's arrival and sneaks a glance up towards Frankie.

They exchange a look. Frankie backs up and closes the curtains tightly.

Knock walks around to the back of his ride and pulls out one AK-47 from a duffle bag of automatic weapons in the trunk.

He's alone. Mica watches closely but knows this is Sal's game and keeps her distance.

Knock SLAMS the truck.

He catches Mica's eye and licks his lips as he looks her up and down.

KNOCK
I'll get to you later.

He enters the building, armed and ready.

INT. SAL'S APARTMENT BUILDING. NIGHT.

Knock comes through the front entrance, gun first.

As he enters the elevator, an exiting HOOKER SCREAMS.

He backhands her to shut her up. She falls to the elevator floor, kicking and scratching the whole way down.

EXT. SAL'S APARTMENT/INT. HALLWAY. NIGHT.

The elevator door opens and Knock exits with the Hooker on his back, trying to claw out his eyes.

He slams her against the wall a few times until she releases him.

She slides to the floor as the elevator door close behind Knock.

He smooths his clothes and continues down the hall.

A few RANDOMS scatter.

Knock's determination and focus is piercing.

He approaches Sal's door and without hesitation, kicks it in.

Entering the dark apartment with his weapon at the ready, there's no movement to be seen.

The place looks empty. His eyes adjust to the darkness and he steps forward...

... And onto something which makes a strange CRINKLING sound.

Knock looks to his feet, lowering the gun slightly. PLASTIC.

The door eases closed behind him, revealing Sal, his hand tightly pressed against the face of Frankie, her eyes practically bulging from her skull; face red and shaking, her knuckles white from gripping the weapon in her hands.

The record plays an old NANCY SINATRA tune.

Sal pushes Frankie to the floor, takes one step forward onto the plastic as Knock spins at the sound, raising the gun barrel but it's too late, Sal already has his little girl's gun at point blank range to Knock's face.

Knock locks eyes with Sal, his expression drops right before...

BAM!

... One GUNSHOT lands between the eyes of Knock and his body CRASHES down on to the PLASTIC SHEET covering the floor.

Sal sweeps her behind him. She presses herself tightly against him like a scared daughter to her protective father. Slowly she sinks down in shock, gripping tightly to Sal's leg.

Sal reaches behind and cups her head in his free hand while she continues to clutch him.

The smoking gun is near her face and her eyes widen.

She looks up at Sal with big innocent eyes.

He lifts his other hand, pulling a phone from his pocket and dials.

It RINGS.

Mica appears in the doorway.

MICA

Oh shit.

The phone RINGS.

Someone picks up.

CARY (OS)

Yeah?

SAL

It's done.

EXT. VEGAS STRIP CLUB - BACK-DOOR. NIGHT.

Cary has his phone to his ear.

He smiles a coy smile.

TIME-LAPSE / MONTAGE: .

Cary, the Actor and Aaron living it up at the strip club.

Sal and the girls clean up Knock's dead body.

Cabs zigzag through the Vegas streets.

The sun starts to break the horizon line once again.

FADE OUT.

WELCOME TO THE REAL LAS VEGAS.