WAY I LIKE IT

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FADE IN:

INT. BLACK CANARY - NIGHT

Typical dance club where the party never ends.

The repetitive electronic music combined with strobe lights beats like a rapid pulse.

Flashes of crowd, fashions.

Somewhere in the bowels of the club, a lone twenty-something GINA GOGAN eagle eyes random dancers, couples.

She closes her eyes, and lets herself become possessed by the beat.

Bedlam blends in to an echo of stylish percussion. Time has no significance.

Gina merges with the swarm of bodies.

As the song progresses, she draws a YOUNG HUNK (20s) with a flashy shirt. He says something garbled to her; inaudible between the wall of sound.

GINA

Louder!

YOUNG HUNK

Come here often!

One of eyes peers through her blonde hair.

With a light embrace, she pulls him close.

Young Hunk smiles.

He never notices her take out her cell phone. He is clueless when she scans over a text message.

INT. CHAUCHE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Part low rent living quarters and makeshift art studio.

With the exception of the artist tools, TV and computer, practically everything else is flea market bargain.

An unflattering carpet doesn't completely cover the concrete underneath.

In the far end of the room where the little art studio is set up, GILMORE CHAUCHE (early 30s) dips his fingers into a bowl of black tempra paint.

INTERCUT : SERIES OF SHOTS

- -- Gina at the club in her dance, with another guy. She has a different outfit on.
- -- The painting taking form.
- -- Gina downs a drink. Guys hit on her. She walks away from them,
- -- Chauche's fingers, now streak red paints on the canvas.
- -- At a booth in the club, Gina among two girlfriends BREE and VERONICA (both 20s); they share a laugh. Guys walk up to them.
- -- The painting forms: a DJ spins music, a crowd on the dance floor, neon red and white lights all around.
- -- The guys frown, walk away from Gina and her crew.
- -- The painting matches a printout of a photo of the club scene.
- -- Chauche signs the painting in the right corner.
- -- Gina, Bree and Veronica walk by that painting which has a display between the men and ladies bathrooms.
- -- A flash of strobe light.

INT. BLACK CANARY - NIGHT

Chauche roams the club, takes a random photo with his professional digital camera.

And another.

He chooses shots carefully. A frame of dancers here, a shot of the DJ there.

BOOTH

Chauche takes in the club music as he lightly toys with the straw, stirs the ice around in his drink.

GINA

Hey!

She taps her fingers on the table.

Chauche glances up. Gina, in a different outfit than previously seen, stands in front of Bree and Veronica.

GINA (CONT'D)

This is our favorite booth.

Chauche shrugs.

CHAUCHE

Free country.

GINA

What?

CHAUCHE

Join me.

GINA

Why?

Her posse giggles.

CHAUCHE

Why not.

Gina slides in next to him. Her friends take the other side.

GINA

Come here often?

CHAUCHE

Yes. Every night.

GINA

Don't look like the club type.

CHAUCHE

I'm just taking a break right now. How about yourself?

GINA

Once or twice a week, depending.

CHAUCHE

Depending on what?

She doesn't answer him. The beat distracts her. Bree snaps her fingers to get Chauche's attention.

BREE

So like you better go, before our boyfriends get here, beat you down.

Chauche gives her a blank look. Stops playing with his ice.

CHAUCHE

Really. Same boyfriends who are out there on the floor, sweating it with new girlfriends?

BREE

They'll be here soon.

CHAUCHE

Or you three can find another place to chill.

Gina lights a cigarette.

GINA

There is no other place. But with a guy like you there are several places you can go.

BREE

Like go home.

CHAUCHE

You all have boyfriends?

GINA

When we want them.

The music changes from a fast beat to a slow song.

CHAUCHE

Okay. What are you ladies having? Drinks are on me. What do you all want? Milk and cookies, or Kool-Aid and pop tarts?

They all stare at him now.

CHAUCHE (CONT'D)

I know what this is. Place is crowded, I'm alone by myself--

BREE

Why is that I wonder?

CHAUCHE

Because I don't want to be bothered. But you three come here, do that anyway, you have no clue as to who I am, what I do. Your goal is to make me want to leave so you can have this booth.

BREE

You think that's what we want?

CHAUCHE

It won't be the first time I seen this. I just didn't expect it to happen to me. But I'm not mad or anything. And I'll go soon, but not now.

GINA

Alright. Who are you?

Chauche locks with her eyes.

CHAUCHE

You didn't know?

GINA

I'm asking.

CHAUCHE

You three first. Starting with you.

GINA

I'm sorry?

CHAUCHE

You first.

GINA

Gina.

Chauche extends his hand. Gina gives him a look of contempt, but shakes his hand anyway.

GINA

That's Bree.

Bree nods.

GINA

Veronica.

Veronica flips Chauche the bird. Chauche laughs.

GINA

Your turn.

CHAUCHE

No, I don't think so.

GINA

What a jip.

CHAUCHE

Tell you what. There's a slow song playing right now, you come and dance with me.

GINA

Me?

CHAUCHE

That's what I said. Besides, you have to get out of the booth so I can get out, right?

GINA

That's right.

CHAUCHE

One, two dances I'll tell you my name.

BREE

Whoa. Before she says anything, can you answer one question?

CHAUCHE

No.

Back to Gina.

CHAUCHE

If you say no, I won't get out of the booth. Say yes and dance with me, you guys win the booth.

Gina slides out.

GINA

I'm waiting.

CHAUCHE

Hold on.

He downs the rest of his drink. Gets out. Stands before Gina. Gina smiles.

Gets in the booth.

Veronica and Bree laugh.

Chauche nods, laughs.

BREE

What are you laughing at? You just got played.

CHAUCHE

Sure about that?

(to Gina)

Least you can do is hand me my stuff.

GINA

Your stuff?

She looks around her, spots a black bag by her feet. Picks it up.

GINA (CONT'D)

What's in this?

CHAUCHE

My camera.

She hands him the bag. Chauche opens it, takes out the camera. Turns it on.

Takes a picture of Gina.

GINA

Crazy!

Chauche smiles, walks off.

GINA (CONT'D)

Hey!

She gets out of the booth, goes after him. Chauche mixes in with the crowd.

Gina looks over and around other people, sees her target. Chauche heads over to the neon lit bar.

One of the two women BARTENDERS (both mid-20s) come up to him. Brief discussion.

Gina heads up to the

BAR

And lightly slugs him on the shoulder.

GINA

What are you going to do with that?

BARTENDER

(to Chauche)

This girl giving you a problem?

CHAUCHE

No. She's alright.

Hands over the camera and bag.

GINA

What are you doing?

CHAUCHE

(to Bartender)

Bev, booth I was in. Couple girls there, Bree and Veronica, her friends. Round of rum and cokes on me.

BARTENDER

Are you sure?

Chauche glances over to Gina once, back to the Bartender.

CHAUCHE

Yeah, they're good.

The Bartender walks off. Chauche's attention goes back to a speechless Gina.

Long pause.

Then:

GINA

After that, you buy us drinks.

CHAUCHE

Yeah. After that.

GINA

You won't be getting any. Just so you know.

CHAUCHE

Is that what you think? You and your friends come up, saying what's what, being un-cool, you think that I want to hook up?

GINA

Alright. Just delete the picture.

CHAUCHE

DJ Hornet's got another slow one coming. What do you say? I'll tell you my name, I'll delete the picture.

GINA

Oh really?

(calls out)

Hey, Beverly!

BARTENDER (O.S.)

Yeah?

GINA

What's this guy's name?

Chauche waves the bartender off, mouths "no".

BARTENDER (O.S.)

Ask him.

GINA

(back to Chauche)

You know her.

CHAUCHE

Yep. I know Libby the other bartender too. The bouncers, the DJ, owners. They know me. The odd thing is, you and your friends don't.

GINA

Are we supposed to?

CHAUCHE

You guys been coming in here at least once a week? And you never seen me around?

GINA

Never really noticed.

CHAUCHE

Now that I believe. Offer still stands.

DANCE FLOOR - MINUTES LATER

The sounds of hypnotic trance electronica beats. A pulse of an atom heart. Strobe lights flash, fill the bodies on the floor.

Chauche and Gina close together.

Hands on her hips.

Her arms around his shoulders.

Narcotic.

Moments of dream-like quality.

They are surrounded by many people, they are in their own zone.

Chauche leans in close to her right ear. His voice drains out with the temple of the beat.

CHAUCHE

(subtitled) Gilmore Chauche.

INT. CHAUCHE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

DREAM SEQUENCE

Another blank canvas; a still photo of Chauche and Gina on the floor.

A disco ball overhead.

Amber, Blue strobe lights slowly flicker.

Gina's fingers in a palette of colored paint.

Chauche guides her hands with his. Together they paint as one.

Both are clothed in painter's outfits. Green, blue streaks over the white shirts.

The face of Chauche: bone white blank, erased. No eyes. No mouth.

She streaks her hand over the face. Streaks of paint start to reveal eyes, mouth. She finally smears color over his face.

BACK TO SCENE

INT. BLACK CANARY - NIGHT

The same strobe lights match the ones in the daydream.

Gina leans in to Chauche's left ear.

GINA

(subtitled)

Gina Gogan.

EXT. SANDY BEACH - NIGHT

DREAM SEQUENCE

TEN MEN, all of them of different creeds and backgrounds, smile at a brick wall, but one by one, they leave.

Neon pulses from the cracks between the bricks. Some small bricks are cell phones, text messages appearing.

Only one man remains. Chauche. He steps forward, and removes one of the phones.

Chauche peers through the hole: from a distance, he sees Gina, back to him.

He removes another phone.

Looks through.

Gina turns, glances at him.

Chauche pushes against the brick wall.

The barrier leans back and forth, rocks.

Bricks fall out of place, until the whole wall topples over like a house of cards.

Gina faces him, smiles.

Moonlight engulfs them.

INT. BLACK CANARY - NIGHT

BACK TO SCENE

White strobe light flashes over Chauche and the rest of the crowd.

Chauche leans in.

CHAUCHE

(subtitle)

It's time.

In the dance, he turns her, she faces forward towards the DJ and two screens of video effects.

Chauche looks towards the DJ, makes a hand signal. The DJ sees it, nods.

On the two screen monitors: a flurry of still digital photos including:

- Snapshots of Gina and her friends
- Random crowd shots
- The crowd shot which became a basis for the painting.

Then a flurry of abstract paintings which depict moments from a dance floor. Couples, hip-hop dancers, party people.

The crowd goes wild.

Amazed, Gina pulls Chauche tighter in joy.

INT. BLACK CANARY - LATER

Back at the booth. Gina's friends all text.

GINA

How could you guys miss it?

Bree looks up, surprised.

BREE

Miss what?

Gina's face goes blank.

She looks back as Chauche steps up with his camera bag and two drinks.

GINA

This guy, he takes pictures and they put them on a --

BREE

What guy?

GINA

The guy we just met. Here he comes.

Her friends all look behind her. Eyeball Chauche.

BREE

You have got to be kidding.

GINA

He's okay. He's cool.

BREE

Sure.

CHAUCHE

Hey, tell you what, Gina. I'll give you my card here. It's got my number, e-mail.

GINA

Got another?

Chauche gives her two cards. She takes one of them...

GINA

Got a pen, Bree?

BREE

For what?

VERONICA

Just give it to her.

Bree digs in her handbag, tosses Gina a pen.

BREE

Could have just called his cell, tell him to save it.

Gina scribbles digits on the back of one of the cards, hands it to Chauche.

CHAUCHE

No doubt.

INT. BREE'S CAR - NIGHT

Bree, Veronica and Gina, radio full blast. Windows down, wind whips around in the car.

Veronica texts.

BREE

You could do better. Freaking artist.

GINA

Graphic artist.

BREE

Whatever.

She stops at a red light.

BREE

Probably just dump you for some skank like Steve did last month. All guys just want one thing, you know that.

VERONICA

(not looking up from her phone)

Don't go for second best, Gina. He's not even a hunk.

GINA

I don't know. I think he'll call.

BREE

Of course he will. You caved in and danced with the jerk.

GINA

He's nice.

BREE

Outside of family, trust me. All men are pigs. Oink oink.

VERONICA

You just met him, he could be a date raper.

GINA

Shut up.

BREE

Got that card he gave you? Now's your chance. Throw it out of the window.

GINA

Throw it out of the window.

BREE

Before this light goes green.

VERONICA

Do it, Gina. Want another broken heart?

Gina takes out the card, her eyes go toward an open window.

BREE

Look at it this way. You don't need to call him. If he's a real man, he'll call you.

Gina laughs, is about to drop the card out of the window.

The light goes green.