

Choices

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FADE IN:

SUPER: SAN QUENTIN PRISON - CALIFORNIA.

EXT. EXERCISE YARD - DAY

XAVIER BROWNE (40's) unshaven, gaunt, shuffles around alone, head bowed.

In one corner a group of black inmates huddle. LEROY HILL (20's) tall, muscular, squats in their midst, pants around his ankles. He strains and sweats profusely.

HILL

Ugh...ugh...

He reaches behind.

HILL (CONT'D)

Got the fucker!

He draws his hand away from his ass and waves a sharpened toothbrush.

He stands and pulls up his pants.

HILL (CONT'D)

O.K. Let's do it.

Xavier ambles past. The group allows Hill through.

HILL (CONT'D)

Browne!

Xavier stops, turns and smiles.

XAVIER

So, it's gonna be you...Who? Him or her?

Hill steps forward. Xavier backs off a little.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

At least tell me.

HILL

Both.

XAVIER

O.K. As I thought.

Xavier looks skyward exposing his scarred neck. Hill lunges forward stabbing the toothbrush upward into Xavier's throat.

He grabs Xavier and palms the weapon until it disappears completely.

Xavier falls, instantly dead. Sirens scream as blood streams from his wound.

The black inmates surround Hill. They all casually walk away.

INT. POLICE STATION - OFFICE - SAME DAY

DETECTIVE HARRY STERN (50's) skinny, lined, seasoned, slams down his phone. He looks across his desk to his partner, DETECTIVE TOM REYNOLDS (40's) balding, fat, breathless.

STERN

Fuck! Browne's just been done.
C'mon, I wanna see this.

Reynolds grabs his jacket. They rush out.

EXT. STERN'S SQUAD CAR - SAME DAY

The two detectives sit at a stop light. A limo pulls up alongside. The rear window lowers. Stern and Reynolds die in a hail of bullets.

EXT. LIMO - CONTINUOUS

NICK COTTON (20's) slick, smart, ruggedly handsome, punches a number into his cell phone.

SUPER: FIFTEEN MONTHS EARLIER.

INT. XAVIER'S BEDROOM - DAY

Two bodies writhe under a sheet. Xavier's head appears, his weather-beaten, handsome face covered with sweat.

XAVIER

Shit! I just about kept up with
you.

A hand complete with diamond ring, pulls the sheet down. A second head appears, equally sweaty. STEVE STERN (20's) pale, slim, feminine, looks mockingly at Xavier.

STEVE

Y'know you can get Viagra Super on
the net now.

Steve laughs as Xavier throws a pillow in his face and
leaves the bed.

XAVIER

Careful pal. There's plenty like
you out there.

Steve stretches and rests his head in his hands.

STEVE

Yeah, guess so. That's why you're
still with me, huh?

LATER:

Xavier and Steve are dressing. Steve watches as Xavier tapes
a knife to his leg and stuffs a gun in his pants.

XAVIER

Right, I'm starving. Then I want to
go gamble.

STEVE

Why d'you have to do that?

He indicates the weapons.

XAVIER

These? Comfort factor I guess. More
like accessories than anything
else.

He grabs his jacket and heads for the door.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Let's go eat.

Xavier leaves. Steve sits on the bed, concerned.

XAVIER (CONT'D, O.S.)

Steve!

Steve snaps out of his stupor. He grabs his jacket and runs
from the room.

INT. ANDAZ HOTEL - WEST HOLLYWOOD - SAME DAY

ANITA JENSEN (30'S) a stunning 'A' list actress, raven hair, ruby lips, attends an afternoon cocktail function with her daughter COLLETTE (17) slim, pretty, bored. Anita pulls her to one side.

ANITA

I know these things aren't 'your scene' darling, but for my sake can you put a little smile on your face?

Collette pulls away shrugs and closes her eyes. She opens them and sees RICKY THOMAS (20's) athletic, handsome, charismatic. She beckons to a WAITER (30's).

COLLETTE

Sorry to trouble you but who is that guy?

WAITER

That's Ricky Thomas. Up-and-coming actor I'm told.

COLLETTE

(to herself)

Ricky Thomas, mmmm.

(to the waiter)

Thank you Sir.

Collette makes her way towards Ricky. Anita blocks Her path.

ANITA

O.K. darling. Time to leave. I'm seeing grandma later and I don't want to be late.

Anita guides Collette from the room. Collette protests.

COLLETTE

But...I...

ANITA

No "buts" darling. Philip has already brought the car around.

The two disappear through the door.

INT. ILLEGAL GAMBLING CLUB - NIGHT

Xavier and Steve are very drunk. Xavier plays poker. The pot is huge and a large crowd gathers around the table.

Xavier goes 'blind'. He pushes a pile of cash to the centre of the table and addresses PAULIE GARCIA (40's) a fat greaseball of a gang boss.

XAVIER

There. That's seen you and raised you a hundred.

Paulie checks his hand. He whispers to one of his henchmen JONNY BANJO (30's) sharp features, expensive suit, who whispers back shaking his head. Paulie looks pissed. He takes a check book from his jacket.

PAULIE.

O.K. my cocky friend. I'll see you.

As Paulie starts to write, Xavier raises a hand.

XAVIER

Er, excuse me Sir. I assume by your actions, you have a very good hand. However I don't accept checks, credit cards or I.O.U's...strictly cash. Right Steve?

Xavier nudges Steve who giggles. They clink glasses and down their drinks in one. Steve signals to a waiter "two more".

Paulie's face grows redder by the second as Jonny again whispers in his ear, passing him some papers.

PAULIE

O.K. wiseguy. These are the papers to my joint on Fort Apache.

Paulie throws them on to the pot.

XAVIER

See Steve. I was right. He's got a real good hand.

(to Paulie)

Sir, you've got yourself a deal... but on one condition.

Paulie raises his eyebrows questioningly.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
I see your hand first. After all, I
am going blind.

Paulie clenches his teeth, looks at his hand and with a sneer theatrically places the cards face up on the table. The crowd murmurs their approval, some applaud.

A full house, kings and queens.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
My word! Congratulations. Steve,
raise your glass with me. To a
classy hand.

STEVE
(swaying)
A classy hand.

Xavier downs his drink, pulls his seat up to the table and rubs his hands.

XAVIER
Now, let's see what I've got.

He deftly turns over an ace.

STEVE
Way to go!

Xavier turns up another ace. Paulie fidgets while the crowd grows restless. Xavier smiles at Paulie. He slowly turns the third card. Another ace.

XAVIER
Would you believe it? Three of the
sons-of-bitches!

Xavier turns to Steve who unsteadily passes him another drink.

STEVE
Betchya can't do that again pal.

XAVIER
Let's see, huh?

The atmosphere is tense as Xavier throws his fourth card contemptuously across the table. It's a five.

Onlookers pat Paulie on the back and cheer. Xavier sinks back into his chair.

He looks at Steve, raises his glass and downs his drink, throwing the last card into the air.

The whole room follows its flight. It lands. An ace.

STEVE

Shit man! Shit! Four aces!

The room gasps as Xavier slowly places his glass on the table.

XAVIER

Well now. I think that means I win.

Paulie eyes Xavier aggressively.

PAULIE

You are mistaken my friend....*my*
place, *my* rules. I win!

Paulie reaches for the pot. Immediately Xavier stabs his hand to the table and has a gun to his head. Paulie's men draw their guns.

XAVIER

No you fuckin' shithead. You are
mistaken.

Xavier looks at Paulie's men.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Tell 'em to back off...now!

Paulie nods.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

O.K. Steve. Get the pot.
(to Paulie as he removes the
knife)
You, my fat little fuck are coming
with us, so shift your sweaty ass!

Xavier ushers Paulie from the room following Steve who staggers with the winnings. Paulie's men look on helpless.

INT. ROSE CLARKE'S HOUSE - SAME NIGHT

ROSE CLARKE (50's) Anita's mother, an aging beauty, sits across the table from her daughter. They run through Anita's lines.

ROSE
(reading)
You know this has to stop?

Anita doesn't respond to the feed. Rose caringly reaches over and takes Anita's hand.

ROSE (CONT'D)
What's wrong dear?

ANITA
On, nothing. I just love spending time with you Mummy, even if we're working.

Rose strokes Anita's hand.

ROSE
I know sweetheart. We just don't spend enough time together. But then, we're both so busy.

Rose looks away, becomes distant and sad. Instantly, she snaps out of it.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Anyway my darling. Would you like some hot chocolate? It's almost eleven and we're both shooting tomorrow.

Rose rises without waiting for an answer, makes her way to the sink and takes two mugs from the draining board. Anita follows and hugs her from behind.

ANITA
That's what I love about you Mummy.

ROSE
My chocolate?

ANITA
That too, but no. It's the way you always have time for me and everyone else, even when you're busy. I am so blessed.

Anita pulls away and goes to get the chocolate powder from a cupboard. She talks as she grabs the tin.

ANITA (CONT'D)
So, where did you say Daddy is tonite?

Rose looks out of the window, fighting back a tear.

ROSE
He, er...had to stay away. Some
sort of business.

Anita spins around.

ANITA
Daddy's in business? You're
kidding. What kind?

Rose closes her eyes and shrugs her shoulders.

ROSE
Oh, you know what your father's
like. The more I ask the less he
tells...why don't you take a nice
warm shower while I fix the drinks.

Rose turns briefly and takes the powder from Anita, who oblivious to her mother's anguish, kisses her on the head and leaves.

EXT. MAIN STREET - SAME NIGHT

Xavier has Paulie by the arm, gun poked into his ribs. Steve flags down a cab and climbs in. Xavier shoves Paulie in first, then joins them both.

The CAB DRIVER (50's) glasses, crooked teeth, looks in his rear view mirror.

CAB DRIVER
Where to?

He sees Xavier's gun pressed into Paulie's neck.

CAB DRIVER (CONT'D)
What the...?

Xavier cuts him off.

XAVIER
Shut the fuck up and drive. Fort
Apache. My fat friend here will
tell you where.

The cab driver throws the car into drive and speeds off into the night.

INT. ROSE CLARKE'S HOUSE - SAME NIGHT

Anita in bed, reads her script. There's a gentle tap on the door.

ANITA
Come in Mummy.

Rose enters with two mugs of chocolate on a tray. She places it on the bedside table and takes the script from Anita's hand.

ROSE
O.K. enough now. We'll drink our
chocolate and both get a good
night's rest.

Rose passes a mug to Anita and takes the other herself.

ANITA
This reminds me of when I was a
little girl.

ROSE
You'll always be my little girl.
Always.

Anita takes Rose's hand and kisses it gently.

EXT. FORT APACHE - SAME NIGHT

The cab has pulled over. Xavier drags Paulie onto the pavement.

XAVIER
On your knees.

Xavier roughly shoves him down and places his gun against his head. Both Steve and the cab driver scream.

STEVE
Xavier, don't. Don't do this.

CAB DRIVER
You are crazy man. You are fucking
crazy.

Xavier squeezes the trigger, then looks inside the cab at the two petrified men. He calms down. Then smashes the gun into Paulie's head.

XAVIER
Lumpa shit!

He climbs back into the cab. As it pulls away, Paulie sits up holding his bleeding head. He looks at the disappearing cab.

PAULIE
You should've killed me pal. You should've fuckin' killed me.

Paulie reaches into his jacket pocket and pulls out a cell phone. He dials a number.

PAULIE (CONT'D)
Yeah, it's me.

INT. FORT APACHE JOINT - SAME NIGHT

Xavier and Steve sit and drink with Nick.

XAVIER
So, it's Nick right?

NICK
Yessir.

XAVIER
Sir? Just boss'll be O.K. Now what exactly do you do here?

NICK
Well, I kinda run the place. I worked the door before with my bro, Ryan. He does that on his own now.

XAVIER
Good. You got Cristal?

NICK
Sure do. Not much call for it with the shitheads we get in here. It's out back. You wanna a bottle?

XAVIER
Yeah of course, but right now I need to take a piss.

Nick nods.

NICK

Restroom's out back too. Follow me.

Xavier pats Steve on the shoulder as he leaves the table. He staggers slightly from the effects of the alcohol.

EXT. PAULIE'S CAR/STREET - CONTINUOUS

Paulie sits in his limo, hand and head wrapped in make-do bandages. Jonny enters.

JONNY

They're in there. Just eyeballed
one of 'em.

PAULIE

O.K. I want the place cleaned. You
understand? No witnesses!

Jonny pulls a gun from his belt. He exits the car with another HEAVY (30's) thick set, menacing, who carries an M16. They walk towards the club.

RYAN COTTON (20's) baby faced, penguin suited, stands in the doorway.

RYAN

Hey Jonny. Not had enough?

Jonny shoots Ryan in the head. The two enter the club.

INT. FORT APACHE JOINT - CONTINUOUS

The gangster with the M16 sprays the crowd with bullets. People dive for cover, women scream. The onslaught is relentless.

Jonny calmly walks around, finishing off anyone that has the slightest sign of life. He steps across Steve who groans.

STEVE

Help me....

Jonny looks down, places his gun on Steve's left eye and pulls the trigger.

INT. FORT APACHE JOINT - STOCK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nick has witnessed the whole scene through a slight crack in the door. He hyperventilates as he sees Paulie enter.

NICK

Paulie? What the fuck? Why?

INT. FORT APACHE JOINT - CONTINUOUS

Jonny and his shooter turn bodies over for Paulie to view. They reach Steve.

PAULIE

That's one of them. Where's the other piece of shit.

Xavier saunters back from the restroom. The two killers stare at each other in disbelief.

Jonny clubs Xavier to the floor and the two men begin to kick him mercilessly. Paulie walks over.

PAULIE (CONT'D)

Ah, nice. Get him on his knees.

The two men drag Xavier to his knees. Paulie reaches into Xavier's pocket and snatches out his papers. He hands them to Jonny and leaves his hand hanging.

PAULIE (CONT'D)

Blade.

Jonny produces a knife. Paulie pulls Xavier's head back and draws the knife across his throat. Blood spills immediately.

Police sirens scream in the distance.

PAULIE (CONT'D)

O.K. Let's get the fuck otta here.

The three walk from the club, stepping over bodies as they go.

INT. FORT APACHE JOINT - STOCK ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Nick watches as Harry Stern and his men arrive. Reynolds speaks first.

REYNOLDS
Shit Harry. What a fucking mess.

STERN
Y'know what? I'm kinda happy when I
see this crap. It gets the
low-lifes off the street.

REYNOLDS
I guess.

STERN
Get your boys do a body count.

Reynolds signals to his men. Stern walks around the room,
glancing at the bodies.

He stops abruptly as he recognises a ring. He grabs the
body, turns it over sees his Steve's face and falls to the
ground clutching him.

STERN (CONT'D)
Stephen. My son. No! My God, no!

Officers rush to assist him. An OFFICER (40's) kneels next
to Xavier, who lies in a pool of blood.

OFFICER
(shouting)
Get the paramedics. We've got a
live one here!

INT. FORT APACHE JOINT - STOCK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nick panics. He looks around the stock room, sees
the boarded-up windows and frantically rips at the boards.

EXT. ALLEY - MINUTES LATER

Nick is alongside the club in a dark alley. He peers around
the corner and sees a police officer standing guard over
Ryan's body.

NICK
(crying)
Ryan!

EXT. ROSE'S DRIVEWAY - NEXT MORNING

Anita and Rose hug.

ANITA

Goodbye Mummy. I love you.

Rose kisses her daughter.

ROSE

I love you too darling. Best of luck today.

Rose climbs into her limo. Anita calls out.

ANITA

Give my love to Daddy.

Rose looks back sadly and waves. Anita waves back.

She enters her car and nods to PHILIP (50's) her immaculately dressed driver and MAE (40's) her personal assistant, dyed blond hair, navy suit, who sits in the front passenger seat.

ANITA (CONT'D)

How are you today Philip?

PHILIP

I'm very well, thank you ma'am.

ANITA

That's good. Studio please. Now Mae, what do we have today?

INT. COLLETTE'S BEDROOM - SAME MORNING

Collette sits at her computer. She raises both hands in the air in a victory salute.

COLLETTE

Twitter, I love you! Mr. Ricky Thomas. I'm on your case!

She smiles mischievously.

EXT. ANITA'S CAR - MAIN STREET - SAME MORNING

Anita reads her lines. Philip slows down.

PHILIP

Sorry to ease up ma'am. Got an accident ahead. Looks nasty. We'll get past shortly.

Lowering her script she strains her neck to catch a glimpse. As her car glides by, she clutches herself and screams.

ANITA

Stop! Stop the car!

She jumps from the vehicle and rushes over to a mangled wreck. A man and a woman lie crushed in the twisted metal.

ANITA (CONT'D)

Oh my God, Daddy!

Mae hugs her tight as she cries hard.

MAE

Jesus Christ!

A PARAMEDIC (30's) approaches as others busy themselves around him.

PARAMEDIC

Excuses me ladies. I need you to move away. We're just bringing in the cutters.

MAE

(nodding toward the wreck)
That's her Father.

The paramedic is embarrassed.

PARAMEDIC

Oh my...so sorry to tell you Miss.
Both your parents died on impact.

Anita looks at the paramedic and points to the female passenger. She hisses.

ANITA

That...that is not my mother!

Mae gently eases her away, hysterical, as the cutting starts.

INT. FILM SET - SAME MORNING

Rose chats with the crew. A runner passes her a note. She quickly reads it and collapses.

INT. ROSE'S TRAILER - SAME DAY

Rose lies on her bed. COOKIE (30's) her effeminate dresser, skinny, bobbed haircut, ushers the last of the crew out the door.

COOKIE

Thanks guys. I'll take it from here.

Cookie turns to Rose. He removes a tin box from his pocket, opens it and produces a length of rubber. He pulls up Rose's sleeve and ties the rubber around her arm.

COOKIE

Don't worry Rose honey. Cookie's gonna make all the pain go away.

He grabs a syringe.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY - DAY

Nick hovers. He spots a POLICE OFFICER (40's) overweight, sweaty, who makes his way to the elevator where a DOCTOR (30's) tired, pale, waits.

Nick follows closely behind. The elevator arrives. They all enter.

NICK

Floors?

POLICE OFFICER

Four please.

DOCTOR

I'm three.

Nick presses the numbers and the doors close.

INT. HOSPITAL THIRD FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

The elevator doors open. Nick and the doctor exit.

NICK

You look pretty beat doc.

DOCTOR

Yeah. It's been a tough shift.
Gonna get my head down for a bit.

NICK

Good for you. I don't know how you
guys do it.

Nick turns left the doctor turns right. Nick walks a few steps, looks back and sees the doctor enter a room.

He waits momentarily, then slowly walks up to the room and listens at the door. He hears snoring.

Nick opens the door and slips into the room.

INT. HOSPITAL FOURTH FLOOR - SAME DAY

Nick walks from the elevator dressed in a medical white coat, glasses and with a stethoscope around his neck.

He looks both ways and sees the police officer sitting outside a room. He takes a deep breath and approaches.

NICK

Morning officer...please, don't get
up. I'm just gonna check on our
patient.

POLICE OFFICER

Be my guest doc. From what I heard
he's in a pretty bad way.

Nick tips his head to one side and nods in agreement. He enters the room.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nick takes a little time to adjust to the dim light, then sees Xavier lying in a bed, asleep.

His throat is bandaged, he has tubes in each arm and his heart is being monitored. Nick leans over Xavier.

NICK
Boss, boss it's me. Nick.

Xavier's eyes slowly open.

NICK (CONT'D)
Nick from the club? I know who did
this to you. I saw it all...they
killed my brother.

He places a folded sheet of paper on the bedside table.

NICK (CONT'D)
When you're fit, we'll come and get
you.

He taps the paper.

NICK (CONT'D)
That's my cell.

Xavier grabs Nick's hand.

NICK (CONT'D)
Don't worry boss...we'll get the
bastards!

INT. RICKY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

FRANKIE THOMAS (19) slim, handsome, looks at a computer.

FRANKIE
Oh baby! Look at you....Collette
Jensen. Sweet seventeen huh? I'll
be seeing you baby.

Frankie scribbles down Collette's cell phone number. The
apartment door slams.

RICKY (O.S.)
Hey Frankie! You home?

Frankie scrambles to hit the delete button and closes the
computer. He exits the bedroom as Ricky ambles down the
corridor. Ricky sees Frankie closing the bathroom door.

FRANKIE
Sorry bro. Just downloading some
software.

Ricky screws up his face and slaps his brother lightly
across the head.

RICKY

You are so gross man.

Ricky continues into his room. Frankie pulls out the scrap of paper with Collette's number and kisses it.

INT. FRANKIE'S BEDROOM - SAME NIGHT

Frankie lies on his bed scrap of paper in one hand, cell phone in the other.

FRANKIE

Hello. Is this Collette Jensen?

INTERCUT BETWEEN FRANKIE AND COLLETTE:

Collette soaks herself in her bath tub.

COLLETTE

Who is this?

FRANKIE

You don't know me...yet. My name is Frank.

Collette stares at her handset.

COLLETTE

O.K. Frank. How did you get my number?

FRANKIE

A friend of mine. Well, he's more like a brother to me. Ricky, Ricky Thomas.

Collette sits up, shocked.

COLLETTE

Ricky Thomas gave you my number?

FRANKIE

Yeah. As I said, he's like a brother to me.

COLLETTE

You guys suck!

Collette hangs up.

FRANKIE
Hello? Hello?

Frankie smiles to himself.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
One day little lady...one day!

SUPER: THREE MONTHS LATER.

EXT. HOSPITAL ENTRANCE - DAY

Xavier is escorted out by two YOUNG MEN (20's). They appear nervous as a beaten-up car skids to a halt. Nick winds down his window. Xavier looks in disbelief.

XAVIER
Are you serious?

Nick laughs.

NICK
Sorry boss. I even had to borrow
this. Still, we got wheels right?

Xavier and the two young men climb into the wreck.

XAVIER
Yeah, right.

He wipes grime from the door handle as they pull away.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
O.K. guys. Holy Cross Cemetery.

EXT. SAME DAY - HOLY CROSS CEMETERY.

Xavier kneels at Steve's grave. Nick leans on the car.

XAVIER
Steve, my friend. If only I'd been
there....

He drops his head in grief. A voice from behind.

STERN
What do you want here?

Xavier's head snaps up as Harry Stern pushes past him. Stern starts tending his son's grave. Xavier regains his composure and stands.

STERN (CONT'D)
You as good as killed him. You
killed my son. Now go and never
come back here!

Xavier turns to leave. Pauses, grabs Stern and pulls him to his feet, their faces barely apart.

XAVIER
Go on, blame me. But you know in
your heart what the truth is.

Stern tries to wrestle free but Xavier's hold is strong.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Steve was never good enough for you
was he? You even told him he wasn't
a real man!

Stern now weeps uncontrollably as Xavier lets him drop to the ground.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Look at you. You're pathetic...
Steve may have been killed in that
club but he died years ago, and
yeah, you're the one. You killed
him!

He spins away, heading for his car. Stern is now on all fours.

STERN
(screaming)
I swear on my son's grave you will
pay for this...you will pay.

Xavier and Nick jump into the car and speed away.

EXT. NICK'S CAR - SAME DAY

Xavier holds his head in his hands. He doesn't look up.

XAVIER
Right Nick. I want new wheels, and
I want the boys dressed. They'll
all get proper wages and have a
good life, as long as they're
loyal. You're in charge of the
team. No fuck-ups, right?

NICK
Yes boss. Whatever you want.

George fingers his scar.

GEORGE
Now, tell me about the bastard that
did this...we're gonna have some
fun with him, before we do him!

INT. PAULIE'S CLUB - NIGHT

A dimly lit bar packed with people. Loud music pumps. Two of PAULIE'S MEN (30's) sit at a table drinking. One is the M16 shooter in the club. His cell phone rings.

SHOOTER
We're on our way.

He nudges his colleague. They down their drinks and rise to leave. As they do so, they pass Nick leaning on the bar. He in turn looks deep into the shadows.

Xavier leans forward and nods. Nick follows the two thugs and three of his men fall in behind.

Paulie's men stop to talk to Cookie as he rushes in.

MAN #2
You're late you fuckin' faggot.

Cookie nods nervously and passes over a roll of bills. Man #2 hands Cookie a package.

The two heavies continue their exit with Nick and his boys close on their heels.

Xavier rises and makes his way to the exit. As he reaches Cookie he stops and stares menacingly at him.

Cookie is scared. Xavier smiles briefly then leaves.

EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Nick and his team beat Paulie's thugs mercilessly. Nick kicks man the shooter in the face. He falls unconscious.

Nick talks to his subordinate.

NICK
Keep your eyes on this asshole.
I've got something to do.

Nick makes his way over to man #2. He raises his hand to stop the beating.

NICK (CONT'D)
O.K. Enough.

Nick bends down to the cowering man and whispers.

NICK (CONT'D)
You are a very lucky man. My boss
has told me not to kill you.

He starts to cry. Nick grabs him roughly.

NICK (CONT'D)
Be a man you prick!

He quiets down.

NICK (CONT'D)
That's better. Now listen and
listen to me good...tell Garcia
that we've taken over this shit
hole and we're gonna take all his
business...then, we're gonna come
for him. You got it?

The man nods. Nick produces a knife.

NICK (CONT'D)
That's good, very good. But just to
make sure.....

Nick grabs the man's head and slices off his ear. The man screams with pain. Nick pulls him to his feet.

NICK (CONT'D)
Now run you fucking woman, and tell
Garcia there'll be a package
waiting for him here to pick up.

The man runs away, as Xavier steps into view. He looks at the unconscious shooter, then at Nick.

XAVIER
He was there?

NICK

Oh yeah. He was the trigger man.
The finisher was Jonny Banjo,
Garcia's sidekick.

Xavier motions to Nick.

XAVIER

Wake him up.

Nick slaps the man until he regains consciousness and drags him to his knees. Xavier circles behind him, drops down and grabs the man roughly by his hair.

He pulls a knife from his pocket and looks in the man's eyes.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Remember me? Oh, I can see in your
eyes that you do...that's good,
'cos now this has so much more
meaning.

Xavier pulls his head back and drags the knife slowly across his throat, struggling with him in the process. Eventually the man goes limp. Xavier let's him drop.

XAVIER

Dump him where he belongs...in the
fucking gutter and Nick, get a team
over here to run this place. Make
sure they've got enough
artillery...Garcia's gonna hit
back.

Xavier watches as his men drag the lifeless body from the alley.

SUPER: NINE MONTHS LATER.

INT. LION STUDIOS - DAY

DICK CLAYDON (50's) the imposing studio head, pinstripe suit, gray hair, strides towards his office. He passes his secretary CATHY (30's).

CLAYDON

(barks)
They all here?

CATHY

Yes Sir. Been here about fifteen minutes.

Claydon bursts into his office, growling over his shoulder.

CLAYDON

No calls! And coffee. I don't want anyone falling asleep.

He slams the door, stops and surveys his team of nervous executives.

They sit around a large oval mahogany table. He walks over to his seat but remains standing.

CLAYDON (CONT'D)

No need for introductions. I'll get straight to it.

Claydon leans forward on his knuckles.

CLAYDON (CONT'D)

Right. I'm pissed. Fuckin' pissed!

He waves a file.

CLAYDON (CONT'D)

I went through our latest project's shooting schedule yesterday and of course as you all know, we are three weeks behind. Firstly, why? Secondly, why was I not informed?

Claydon paces like a caged lion waiting for a response. When none is forthcoming, he stops pacing and glares at director JIM STYLES (40's).

CLAYDON (CONT'D)

Styles. You're the fucking director. Nothing to say?

Styles shifts uneasily in his seat. His mouth is dry.

STYLES

It's Rose.

CLAYDON

Speak up! We can't hear you.

Styles clears his throat.

STYLES

Er, Rose Clarke has had a few challenges.

The other executives murmur their agreement which angers Claydon more.

CLAYDON

Challenges? What fucking challenges? She just needs to learn her lines and show up for Christ's sake.

Another distinguished looking man, WILLIAM MARTIN (50's) rises from his chair.

MARTIN

Dick, may I say something?

CLAYDON

Ah. William. I wondered when you would chip in.

Martin ignores the comment and continues.

MARTIN

As executive producer of this project I have a significant investment riding on its' success.. or otherwise.

CLAYDON

Get on with it.

Martin sighs.

MARTIN

O.K. My people have informed me that since she lost her husband, Rose has been seriously troubled. Unfortunately, her problems are not confined to emotions or grief.

Martin pauses and slowly looks around the table.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Can anyone tell me where Rose has been for the last three days?

The executives drop their heads. Martin addresses Claydon directly.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

O.K. Let me inform you Dick, as I believe that most if not all of our colleagues here know...she's been locked in her trailer. Yup! Right here, drugged out of her fucking mind.

Claydon is horrified.

CLAYDON

What are you saying...?

MARTIN

What I'm saying is 'our' Rose is a junkie who can't string two words together without a fix.

Claydon is in a state of shock. He looks at his execs.

CLAYDON

What the fuck?

He grabs the phone as Cathy brings in coffee. He waves her away.

CLAYDON (CONT'D)

No need. They don't fucking deserve it!

INT. STUDIO LOT - SAME DAY

Anita sits on a stool, sips a coffee and studies her lines. A RUNNER (20's) approaches with a cell phone.

RUNNER

Excuse me Miss Jensen, Mr. Claydon.

The runner hands over the cell phone.

ANITA

Thank you.

(beat)

Hello, Mr. Claydon? Yes this is she...no, I'm in between scenes right now?...Yes of course.

Anita hangs up, hands the cell phone and her coffee to the runner and rushes out.

INT. ROSE'S TRAILER - SAME DAY

Rose lies on her bed in a pool of vomit. Trash is everywhere. Cookie tightens a length of rubber around her arm.

COOKIE

Now Miss thing. We need to get you back into line. The word is that the management are getting a little tired of your no-shows.

Cookie picks up a syringe, checks for air and punches it into Rose's arm.

COOKIE (CONT'D)

So, when we get you back on your feet, I'll clean you up and you'll get your fanny out there to show them you are still the star they think you are.

INT. DICK CLAYDON'S OFFICE - SAME DAY

Anita is shown in by Cathy.

CLAYDON

Thanks Cathy. Come in Anita. Please take a seat.

ANITA

Thank you.

They both sit. She looks around the table.

ANITA (CONT'D)

Judging by the looks on your faces gentlemen, this must be serious.

CLAYDON

May I ask you a question?

ANITA

Of course, go ahead.

CLAYDON

When was the last time you saw your mother?

Anita shakes her head, confused

ANITA

Mummy? Um, a few weeks ago, why?
What's this all about? Has
something happened?

CLAYDON

This is very difficult Anita.

ANITA

Difficult? Now you're scaring me.

CLAYDON

We know that since your father
died, your mother, has been
suffering er, emotionally...

INT. FILM SET - CONTINUOUS

In the shadows Cookie supports Rose. He pushes her onto the
set. Rose staggers forward.

CLAYDON (V.O)

...which of course is quite
understandable. Some people cope
well, others need a crutch.
Something like comfort eating,
alcohol....

Rose straightens herself and shakily makes her way to the
center of the set. The crew and cast step back, initially
shocked.

CLAYDON (V.O)

...or drugs. You see Anita, I'm led
to believe that your mother has
been a user for some time...

The crew and cast applaud Rose. She smiles and attempts a
curtsey but falls writhing in spasms, frothing at the mouth.
The set erupts into mayhem as Cookie steps back into the
shadows

INT. DICK CLAYDON'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Anita is in tears. The execs look embarrassed. The telephone
on the table rings. Claydon angrily stands and snatches up
the receiver.

CLAYDON

I said no calls!

He pauses.

CLAYDON (CONT'D)
What?

He slowly sinks into his seat.

CLAYDON (CONT'D)
God have mercy. Where have they
taken...? Right, thank you. I'll
deal with this here.

All eyes are on Claydon. He replaces the receiver, looks at Anita then drops his head in his hands.

CLAYDON (CONT'D)
This is unreal.

ANITA
Oh my God. It's mummy isn't it?

EXT. ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL - ENTRANCE - SAME DAY

Anita runs from her car and leaves the passenger door open. She talks on her cell phone as she runs. Mae follows.

ANITA
Doctor Caan? Thank God you picked
up. It's Mummy...St. Joseph's...
thank you doctor. Please hurry.

INT. ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL - RECEPTION AREA - CONTINUOUS

Anita rushes in and approaches a STAFF NURSE (30's)

ANITA (CONT'D)
Rose Clarke. Which room?

STAFF NURSE
Please come with me

INT. ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL - ROSE'S ROOM - SAME DAY

Anita sits holding Rose's hand. Rose is unconscious, hooked up to wires and monitors.

ANITA
Oh Mummy, I love you so much. I
hope you can hear me.

Anita touches Rose's cheek and kisses her Mother.

ANITA (CONT'D)

You've always been my inspiration,
and you were always there for me.
Now Mummy, I'm here for you.

Anita starts to cry.

ANITA (CONT'D)

Don't leave me Mummy. You can't!

As Anita cries, the door opens and DOCTOR CAAN (50's) short,
kind face, well dressed, enters. He speaks quietly.

DR. CAAN

Anita...Anita dear.

Anita turns.

ANITA

Oh, Doctor Caan. Thank God you've
come. They're saying that I'm going
to lose mummy. Tell me they're
wrong, please tell me they're
wrong.

Doctor Caan removes his coat and sits down.

DR. CAAN

I'm afraid I can't do that...I've
spoken to the consultant, and I'm
very sorry to say, you may well
have to prepare yourself for the
worst.

He leans forward.

DR. CAAN (CONT'D)

Look, even if your Mother were to
survive this crisis, her quality of
life could well be destroyed, with
possible brain damage and maybe
other irreparable organic issues.

Anita, devastated by this news falls on Rose, sobbing.
Doctor Caan rises and speaks calmly.

DR. CAAN (CONT'D)

Look dear. Let me carry out my own
tests. I can't promise you
anything...I'll have the results to
you by tomorrow morning. So, now
Philip can drive you home.

ANITA

No! I want to stay here tonite. I'm
not leaving! Mae'll stay with me.

Doctor Caan is sympathetic.

DR. CAAN

I understand. Let me see what I can
do.

INT. HOSPITAL - ROSE'S ROOM - NEXT MORNING

Anita with a resolute look on her face enters. Doctor Cann
is already there.

ANITA

Ah Doctor. I'm glad you're here.
I've been doing a lot of thinking.

She closes the door.

INT. ANITA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Anita sits on her couch holding a newspaper. The headline
blazes, 'Anita Jensen Retires After Second Tragedy'. She
places it on the coffee table and leaves.

INT. ANITA'S HOUSE - SHRINE ROOM - SAME DAY

Anita walks around in the dim light and cries as she touches
photographs of her parents.

EXT. XAVIER'S POOL - DAY

Xavier sits relaxing in his pool, eyes closed. Nick
approaches carrying a cell phone, a small tray and a towel
slung over his arm.

NICK

Boss, there's a lady on the line.
Says she wants to give you some
business.

He hands Xavier the towel and squats next to him.

XAVIER

Who is it?

Xavier dries his ear and snorts a line of coke off the tray.

NICK
 Won't say.

XAVIER
 (laughing)
 What?

NICK
 Says she'll only talk to you.

Xavier bites his lip for a second. He wipes his nose and snatches the handset from Nick.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
 Who is this?

INTERCUT BETWEEN XAVIER AND ANITA:

Anita sits on the couch in her living room.

ANITA
 Mr. Browne...I have a proposition
 for you.

XAVIER
 How did you get this number?

ANITA
 There's a piece of wasteland out
 past Mulholland...like a lovers
 lane?...meet me there tomorrow at
 two.

The line goes dead. Xavier looks at the handset, then at Nick

XAVIER
 What the fuck?

Anita sits, smiling, in control.

ANITA
 (whispering)
 You'll be there.

EXT. LOVERS LANE - DAY

Anita sits in her car and impatiently looks at her watch. A limo screeches alongside. Anita lowers her window expecting to speak.

The limo roars away and stops twenty feet ahead. Another limo glides alongside. A window lowers.

XAVIER (O.S.)

Get in.

Anita does so. Xavier recognizes her.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Well, well, well. Now I know what all the secrecy's about.

ANITA

Let's just get to the point, shall we?

Xavier doesn't respond.

ANITA (CONT'D)

I have a certain task to be performed, and I am reliably informed that you are a professional in these matters...this is the man.

Shehands Xavier a photograph.

LATER:

Xavier sucks on his teeth.

XAVIER

O.K. When?

ANITA

As soon as possible. I want this off my mind. My assistant will call you regarding payment.

Anita attempts to leave. The doors are locked. She looks at Xavier questioningly. Xavier stares straight ahead.

XAVIER

Wanna know something? From our very first conversation I have had an issue about the way you conduct yourself. Now, I would suggest you adjust your attitude...y'see, while I may agree to assist you with your request, you must remember, *I do not work for you...and with regard to payment, I will decide the terms and when you will pay. Are we clear?*

Scared, Anita nods.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Sorry. I didn't hear you.

ANITA
Yes.

XAVIER
Nick, doors.

The doors click open.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Now, you may leave.

Anita exits quickly. Xavier looks at the photograph in his hand. He recognizes Cookie

XAVIER (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Ah...there you are my little
friend. What goes around, comes
around and I'm coming around for
you.

A wicked smile crosses Xavier's face as his limo pulls away.

INT. BOXING ARENA - NIGHT

Paulie sits ringside watching a fight. He leans to his right and talks to Jonny.

PAULIE
When's our boy on?

JONNY
This is the last of the undercard.
He's on next. Ain't gonna be long.

The bell sounds for the end of the round. One of the fighters is badly cut. The referee inspects the cut and declares the fight over.

EXT. STUDIO PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Cookie walks to his car through the dim light. He stops to light a cigarette. Nick and another thug (20's) strike, taking him off his feet with the ferocity of the attack.

INT. BOXING ARENA - CONTINUOUS

The main event is about to start. Paulie's boxer nods and smiles at the gangster who stands and receives a round of applause from the crowd. As he sits down he talks to Jonny.

PAULIE.

How long?

JONNY

It's over in four...gotta give the suckers their money's worth.

PAULIE

Talkin' about money, you got all the bets spread?

JONNY

Oh yeah. We're gonna pull big time.

Paulie laughs, pulls out two cigars and passes one to Jonny.

PAULIE.

That's good. I'm gonna enjoy this.

EXT. STUDIO PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Cookie is held by Nick and his thug. Cookie screams.

COOKIE

What do you guys want? I've done nothing wrong...you've got the wrong guy.

He spits blood. Xavier appears from the shadows, his hands behind his back.

XAVIER

Oh, I don't think so.

Xavier gets very close to Cookie.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Do you remember me?

Cookie looks at Xavier, squints then recognizes him, terrified.

COOKIE

What are you going to do with me?

XAVIER
(WHISPERING)

I'm going to teach you a lesson. A lesson you'll remember every day for the rest of your life. But first, we're gonna play a game. I like playing games. Having fun, don't you?

INT. BOXING ARENA - CONTINUOUS

The fight has started, and the boxers feel each other out. Paulie supremely confident, puffs on his cigar and nudges Jonny, laughing every time his man lands a blow.

EXT. STUDIO PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Cookie cries. Snot drips from his nose.

XAVIER
If I said the name 'Rose Clarke' to you, what would that mean?

Cookie shakes his head, perplexed.

COOKIE
She's dead! She's dead! What have I got to do with her?

XAVIER
Well, my little scared friend, certain people feel that you were instrumental in her death.

Cookie struggles, hyperventilating

COOKIE
But...

XAVIER
No buts. Sorry pal, game over. I'm bored with you. It's pay back time.
(to Nick)
Get him down.

Nick and his colleague force Cookie onto his knees, and spread his arms out wide.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
The family say "hi".

Xavier's hands come from behind his back to reveal a baseball bat. He lines the bat up on one of Cookie's elbows.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Now I want you out of this town,
and if I ever see you again, then
it'll be personal!

He swings the bat twice and twice Cookie lets out a blood curdling scream.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Right. Now we've got a fight to get
to.

He throws the bat to one of his men. On the way to their car he puts his arm around Nick.

XAVIER

Our guy any good?

NICK

Sure he is and I took real good
care of him. He knows what to do.

They all jump in the car and speed off.

INT. BOXING ARENA - SAME NIGHT

Xavier and Nick make their way to their seats causing a commotion in the crowd around them. Round three is about to begin. Xavier motions towards his boxer.

XAVIER

Give our guy the nod Nick. I want
to see that fat fuck's face.

Nick Stands to catch their fighter's eye. Paulie tries to make out who the latecomers are through a dense haze of smoke.

Xavier looks around.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Get this over quick. We're exposed
here.

Nick nods to his fighter, who signals back. Paulie sees the communication.

Nick sits.

NICK

Don't worry boss. This boy's a
killer.

As Nick talks, Paulie's man hits the canvas. Paulie screams at his heavies.

He stands and points to Xavier and Nick.

As Paulie's fighter is counted out, the smoke clears and he sees two of his men reach Xavier's and Nick's empty seats.

The two heavies look back at Paulie, confused. He throws his cigar on the floor and stamps on it in a fit of rage.

INT. XAVIER'S OFFICE - DAY

Xavier sits in a leather chair, feet on the desk and sips a drink. He talks on the telephone.

XAVIER
Hi, it's me.

Silence from the other end.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Oh, come now. Don't tell me you've forgotten me already. That's a little disappointing.

INTERCUT BETWEEN XAVIER AND ANITA:

Anita is standing in her living room. Her eyebrows furrow as she tries to recognize the voice. Realization hits like a thunderbolt.

ANITA
Oh, hi. What can I do for you?

XAVIER
Actually, it's what I've done for you.

Anita clutches herself and shifts uncomfortably.

ANITA
You've...er, have you..?

Xavier chuckles.

XAVIER
Sure have. Just as you asked. He's still walking. I don't think we'll see him again but I guarantee he'll think of you every day.

Anita looks sick.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Now, I hate talking about payment terms over the 'phone so, I'm inviting you to a party I'm throwing on Saturday.

Anita struggles to speak.

ANITA
That's very sweet of you, but I have prior arrangements.

XAVIER
Cancel them!

Once again silence at the other end. Xavier takes this as a confirmation of attendance.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Good! I'm gonna pass the 'phone to Nick, who'll take down your address. My car will pick you up at seven thirty. Oh and please, wear something nice. There'll be a lot of very influential people here.

George hands the phone to Nick and continues to sip his drink.

INT. NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Ricky and Frankie sit at a table, drinking and watching the crowd. Ricky is pissed. He grabs Frankie's arm.

RICKY
You listening to me?

Frankie wrenches his arm free.

FRANKIE
What's your problem man?

RICKY
Look! I just don't like what I see bro. Bad people, drugs and stuff.

Frankie doesn't look at his brother.

FRANKIE
I can look after myself.

RICKY

Yeah, I guess. No job, no money...
way to go pal, fuckin' way to go.

FRANKIE

Why don't you back off. I run my
life the way I want.

RICKY

Sure you do! Reckon you'd sell yer
ass if you got enough for it.

Frankie laughs.

FRANKIE

Get real, Rick.

A woman screams. The club fills with police.

RICKY

Shit! I'll do the talking.

Ricky picks up his brother's drink and downs it. As he does
so, Frankie produces a small plastic bag and drops it into
Ricky's shirt pocket. Harry Stern approaches.

STERN

Now what have we here?
(to Frankie)
You over twenty one, son?

Frankie looks at Stern disdainfully.

RICKY

He wasn't....

Stern interrupts.

STERN

Shut it! I'm not talking to you.
I'm talking to this ass wipe.
(to Frankie)
Now, get up and empty your pockets.

Frankie smiles, stands up and theatrically empties his
pockets on the table. Stern looks disappointed, turns away,
then comes back to Ricky.

STERN (CONT'D)

O.K. Now you.

Ricky stands up and empties his pockets quickly. Frankie
looks into space. Ricky is about to sit down when Stern
prods his shirt pocket.

STERN (CONT'D)
What's that?

Ricky, surprised removes the bag.

STERN (CONT'D)
I suppose you don't know what this
is, right?

Ricky is speechless. He looks at Frankie who still stares
into space.

RICKY
I...I...

Stern examines the bag. He calls to an officer.

STERN
Cuff him. Possession. Read him his
rights.
(to Frankie)
And you can have a nice ride home
in a black and white.

FRANKIE
What've I done?

INSPECTOR STERN
Oh, I think I have a shrewd idea
you little shit!

As they leave, Ricky throws a look at Frankie who shrugs his
shoulders and smiles.

INT. XAVIER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Xavier's party is in full swing. Nick brings a stunning
Anita to him.

XAVIER
Ah, Anita...you don't mind me
calling you Anita, do you?

No response.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Anyway. You look great. Allow me
introduce you my friends.

He takes her arm and they greet people. The guests openly
take an assortment of drugs. Anita is shocked, but hides it
well. They reach a room. Xavier invites Anita in. Nick takes
up his post outside.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Please, take a seat...drink?

ANITA
Water, thank you.

Xavier raises his eyebrows in surprise, then prepares the drinks. Anita walks around the room admiring the paintings and ornaments.

ANITA (CONT'D)
Business must be good.

Xavier hands Anita her drink.

XAVIER
Not bad. Could be better.
(bowing)
Thank you for coming.

ANITA
Did I have a choice?

XAVIER
(smiling)
Of course you did, of course.

He offers Anita a seat and sits down next to her.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
You know, in life we all have
choices. The secret is making the
right one.

ANITA
(tilting her head)
And in this case?

XAVIER
In this case, you've *obviously*
made the right one.

ANITA
Oh, good.

The sarcasm is not lost on Xavier, who looks over his glass at Anita. An uncomfortable silence follows. Anita shifts in her seat trying to avoid Xavier's stare. He breaks the silence.

XAVIER
I throw these soirees every
weekend. People come here to let

XAVIER
 their hair down. I let them do
 virtually whatever they want, when
 they want.

ANITA
 That's very noble of you.

Once again, Xavier recognizes the sarcasm. He rises to get a
 refill, motions to Anita, who shakes her head and protects
 her glass.

XAVIER
 I'm not certain about 'noble'. They
 all pay for the privilege.

ANITA
 I'm sure they do. But where do I
 fit in?

Xavier smiles at her.

XAVIER
 Ah, yes...you. Y'know these people
 don't care how much money they
 spend to have a good time.

He sips his drink.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
 I have bars, clubs, and business on
 the streets, but these parties are
 the future. This is where the real
 money is.

Xavier takes Anita's hand and leads her to a small window
 looking out onto the party.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
 I want this to be so big. All the
 'who's who' will wanna be part of
 this...and eventually we'll be
 running our things every
 nite...three sixty five.

ANITA
 We? Our?

XAVIER (CONT'D)
 Yes Anita. "We", "Our". See, you're
 gonna be my hostess.

Anita tries to protest but Xavier raises a hand and stops
 her.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

I saw the effect you had on those people just now...and with you, this thing'll happen.

ANITA

Look, I know you did me a favor, and I'm very grateful, but I really don't think I want to become involved in this sort of thing. Now, if we can come to some agreement on payment.

Xavier's mood changes.

XAVIER

This is not an invitation. When you asked me to help you, did I stall? Did I refuse? No! And now it's your turn to step up to the plate!

Anita is in a state of panic. Xavier walks slowly around the room.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Be Careful now, be very careful. See, I know all about you. I know you have a daughter. Pretty little thing.

Anita's head snaps around. She looks at Xavier with hate in her eyes.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

What would she think of Mommy, if she found out about that poor little Chinese man? Or even your habit?

Anita gasps.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Mmmmm. I know you've been buying on the street. I get to know everything sooner or later.

Anita drops her head.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Now, all that nonsense stops! I'll give you everything you need free and you'll host my parties. That way, we both win!

Xavier opens the door, Nick enters.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
 Nick will take you home now, and
 he'll inform you when you are to be
 here next week. Until then.

Xavier leaves the room. Anita hugs herself, crying and
 choking with fear. Nick smirks.

INT. ANITA'S HOUSE - DAY

Anita sits in her living room reading a magazine. Collette
 enters.

COLLETTE
 Hi Mummy. I saw your ex-agent
 today. Jimmy whatshisname?

ANITA
 London. Jimmy London.

COLLETTE
 Yeah him. He said he wants to talk
 to you about going back to acting.

Anita looks up from her magazine. Before she can reply,
 Collette continues.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)
 That would be so cool! He also told
 me he'd like to rep me too!

Collette spins like a ballerina.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)
 Oooh. Now I can be an actress...

ANITA
 Stop! Stop it! Have you forgotten
 what's happened to this family?

Collette looks to the floor. Anita walks over to her.

ANITA (CONT'D)
 You know my feelings about that!

Collette's head snaps up angrily.

COLLETTE
 So, because of your disappointments
 you stop me from doing the one
 thing that I want to do?

Anita takes Collette's hand.

ANITA

Can't you see, I'm trying to protect you. I love you, and don't want to see you get hurt. It's a heartless business.

Collette pulls away.

ANITA (CONT'D)

Now look young lady. I've compromised a whole lot on this issue.

COLLETTE

Oh yeah? I want to act and you send me to college to learn about camera angles and that shit!

Anita visibly flinches as Collette swears.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)

The only time I'm remotely happy is when I'm at the studios and that's just two days a week. Even then, it's theory, bloody theory!

Anita tries to hold her daughter.

ANITA

I know it seems harsh, but one day you'll thank me. Just right now, you can't see....

Collette wrenches free from Anita's hold.

COLLETTE

See? See? I'll tell you what I see. I see an aging actress, living in the past and scared.

Anita is stung by this attack.

ANITA

Scared? Scared of what?

Collette stands defiantly in front of Anita.

COLLETTE

Scared of being outshone by your daughter.

Collette pauses. Anita murmurs.

ANITA

Why do you hurt me so?

Collette is on a roll.

COLLETTE

Look, we all loved Nanny and
Grandpop, but they're gone, O.K?
Gone! Life goes on, and I for
one...

Collette doesn't see the stinging blow coming as Anita slaps
her face very hard.

ANITA

How dare you! Never, ever
disrespect your family!

Collette is now in tears but is determined to drive her
point home.

COLLETTE

You're living in the past! I am not
going to grieve for the rest of my
life like you in your pathetic
fucking shrine room or whatever you
want to call it! Why do you have to
keep it locked all the time? I'm
telling you, that's weird...you're
weird....

Collette runs from the room

COLLETTE (CONT'D, O.S)

I **will** be an actress, and I'll be
better than you ever were!

Anita sinks to her knees distraught, clutching a cushion for
comfort.

INT. ANITA'S HOUSE - SHRINE ROOM - SAME DAY

Anita walks around, lovingly touching the photographs and
posters of her Mother and Father.

She reaches a cine projector and switches it on. A movie
flickers onto a screen. It shows a young couple.

Anita now turns her attention to a surgical tray on a small
table. She lifts the white towel covering the tray and
slowly picks up a syringe.

INT. ANITA'S HOUSE - BREAKFAST ROOM - NEXT DAY

Anita sits at the breakfast table casually dressed, eating toast and drinking coffee. Mae brings a newspaper to her. The headline blasts 'Actor found guilty of possession'.

The story carries a photograph of Ricky. Mae lays the paper on the table.

MAE

I really don't know what the world is coming to. Drugs seem to be everywhere nowadays, and these people...

(nods at paper)
don't even get prison.

Anita picks up the paper.

ANITA

Mmmm. I agree. People like that'll only do it again. They should lock them up and throw away the key.

The front door slams.

ANITA (CONT'D)

Is she still sulking?

MAE

'Fraid so. Do you want me to have a word?

ANITA

That would be sweet of you.

MAE

No problem. She's at the studio today. I'll pick her up when she's done. She'll be fine.

SOPHIA

Thanks Mae. You're a gem.

INT. RICKY'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - SAME DAY

Ricky and Frankie eat breakfast. Frankie scans the morning newspaper.

FRANKIE

Hey man. You made the front page.

Ricky rips the paper from his brother.

RICKY
Not funny, O.K?

Frankie is still amused.

FRANKIE
Oh, c'mon Rick. You're in show
business, remember? Any publicity
is good publicity...it's only a
misdemeanor.

Ricky studies the article and doesn't look up.

RICKY
Fuckin' misdemeanor? I got a two
grand fine and probation you prick!
No more, O.K?

Ricky raises his head and stares into his brother's eyes.

RICKY (CONT'D)
O.K?

Frankie shrugs.

FRANKIE
No problem. I don't *need* gear, I
just use it for fun...and I
definitely don't want to cause you
any more trouble.

RICKY
(under his breath)
Yeah, right.

FRANKIE
You still takin' me to the studio?

RICKY
Yeah, course. It's intern day. Look
just because you're an asshole,
you're still my kid brother and I
aim to get you a job if it kills
me...or you.

Ricky looks at his watch.

RICKY (CONT'D)
Shit man, we gotta go.

The boys grab their jackets and keys and rush out.

INT. STUDIO CANTEEN - SAME DAY

The boys eat lunch. Frankie is impressed with the attractive women.

FRANKIE

No wonder you like working here.
Got some great looking chicks.

RICKY

(laughing)
Just one of the perks bro.

Collette walks past, drinking a smoothie. Ricky catches her eye. She smiles slightly then stops and walks back.

COLLETTE

Hi. You're Ricky Thomas, right?

RICKY

Sure am...and you are?

COLLETTE

Some time ago I twittered you.

RICKY

You did?

COLLETTE

Uh huh...and you gave my number to
your friend...Frank or something.

Ricky looks straight at Frankie who looks away.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)

That was nice...anyhow, gotta go.

Collette pours her smoothie into Ricky's lap and leaves the restaurant. Ricky jumps out of his seat.

RICKY

(to Frankie)
You are fuckin' unreal...

He runs after Collette.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Hey!...Hey! Wait up

EXT. ANITA'S CAR - SAME DAY

Mae sits next to Philip. She watches as Ricky talks animatedly with Collette outside the studio.

He holds his hands as if in prayer, takes out a card and gives it to Collette, wrapping her hands firmly around it.

Collette turns away sharply but a broad smile crosses her face. She turns back and passes Ricky a slip of paper.

MAE

O.K. Let her know we're here.

Philip honks the horn. Collette looks over, waves and runs to the car. She climbs in back. Philip pulls away.

COLLETTE

Thanks for picking me up.

MAE

That's O.K. sweetie...new friend?

COLLETTE

Kinda sorta.

Mae pauses.

MAE

You've got to speak to her sooner or later, you know that.

COLLETTE

Yeah, I know. But, I'm embarrassed...I said some things I didn't mean. You know she hit me?. She's never hit me before. Ever!

MAE

Well, the way I heard it, you were very rude and unkind. Frankly I think you deserved a slap!

COLLETTE

I guess you're right. But I'm eighteen and I think I should be able to make up my own mind about certain things.

Mae looks at Collette kindly.

MAE

All I know is that your mother
loves you very much. She doesn't
want you to get hurt, or make the
same mistakes she's made.

COLLETTE

So, you think I should apologize?

MAE

Yes, I do.

Collette looks out of the car window.

INT. ANITA'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - EVENING

Anita reads a book. Collette enters silently. She slowly
walks towards her Mother and stands behind her. A tear rolls
down her cheek as she leans forward and hugs her.

COLLETTE

I'm sorry Mummy.

ANITA

So am I darling, so am I.

INT. ANITA'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - SAME NIGHT

Dinner is finished. Anita sits at the table while Mae helps
Anita's MAID (50's) small, Asian, black and white uniform,
clear the dishes.

MAE

(to Anita)

Go relax. We'll finish up here.
Won't take long.

ANITA

Thanks Mae. I am a little tired.

Anita leaves the room. Mae clears up as the maid fills the
sink.

Mae spreads a newspaper onto the counter and scrapes some
remnants from the plates onto it.

She passes the plates to the maid, stops and returns to the
counter. She moves the scraps aside. She sees Ricky's face.

INT. ANITA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME NIGHT

Anita paces up and down with the soiled newspaper in her hand.

ANITA

I don't fucking believe this girl.

Mae enters with a very sleepy Collette in her dressing gown.

COLLETTE

What is it Mummy?

Anita thrusts the paper into Collette's face.

ANITA

Recognize anyone?

Collette cannot focus initially but then sees Ricky's picture. She looks straight at Mae.

ANITA (CONT'D)

I understand you have formed some kind of relationship with this... this person.

Collette continues to stare at Mae.

COLLETTE

I've only *just* met him.

ANITA

Then *just* forget him!

COLLETTE

What?

ANITA

I forbid you to associate with a drug addict.

COLLETTE

He is not a drug addict!

ANITA

I repeat. You are not to see or speak to this boy! Do you understand me?

COLLETTE

I am not a child!

(to Mae)

And what are you? Her spy?

Mae looks away. The telephone rings. Anita snatches it up angrily.

ANITA

Hello? Who's calling?

Anita places one hand on her hip and looks directly at Collette.

ANITA (CONT'D)

Ah, Mr. Thomas. What a coincidence. I was just having a conversation about you...yes, yes I was. I just told my daughter that she is not to see or speak to you...Why? You ask why, when you are on the front page of the newspapers? Now please, do not try to contact my daughter again.

Collette tries to wrestle the phone from Anita. Mae pulls her away.

ANITA (CONT'D)

And if I ever find out you have, you'll wish you had never been born.

Anita slams the receiver down. Collette screams.

COLLETTE

I hate you. I hate you both! You are ruining my life!

Collette runs from the room. Anita looks at Mae and speaks calmly.

ANITA

She's totally grounded. No cell phone, no studio, nothing.

Mae nods and leaves Anita.

INT. XAVIER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Anita hosts another party. Xavier pulls her to one side.

XAVIER

May I just say, how very pleased I am with your efforts. There are however a number of areas that I think we can fine tune...so, I plan

XAVIER
to come over tomorrow to discuss a
few things.

ANITA
What do you mean, come over?

Xavier looks at Anita cheekily.

XAVIER
Well, you never invite me to your
place, so I thought I'd take the
liberty of inviting myself.

Anita panics.

ANITA
Can't we do it here?

Xavier ignores her, walks away and shouts back.

XAVIER
I'll be there around three! I like
tea in the afternoon. Make sure
it's hot!

He laughs, waves and disappears into the party.

INT. ANITA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Collette creeps down the stairs. She gently lifts the house
phone receiver and dials a number.

COLLETTE
Hi, it's me.

INTERCUT BETWEEN COLLETTE AND RICKY:

Ricky lies on a couch watching T.V. sipping a beer.

RICKY
Wow. I didn't expect...you're
taking a risk, aren't you?

YING
I don't care. I just want to see
you.

RICKY
What about your Mother?

COLLETTE

She's asleep. Look, she always goes out on Saturday nights, so I can see you then.

RICKY

Are you sure? Your Mother...

Collette impatiently.

COLLETTE

Fuck my mother. She's got her life, I've got mine. Now you wanna see me or not?

RICKY

O.K. But, I can't pick you up, my car's totally in the workshop. Two days at least. Can you get a cab? It's twenty-five zero-two, Stamford Tower Complex. Seven forty-five?

Collette scribbles on a note pad.

COLLETTE

Great. I'll see you then. Gotta go...bye.

Collette hangs up. Ricky smiles to himself. Frankie enters, a little drunk.

FRANKIE

Hey, bro. Whassup?

RICKY

Just got a date with that girl.

FRANKIE

The one with the Mother from hell?

RICKY

Yup! Saturday.

FRANKIE

Shit! Good luck pal.

RICKY

It'll be cool. How'd you go?

Frankie snatches Ricky's beer and takes a huge slug.

FRANKIE

Amazing! Been invited to a top party Saturday, and...and they've even hooked me up with a ride. Totally stoked man. At last I think I'm on my way.

RICKY

So the studio's out huh?

Frankie ignores the question, sips his beer, thinks a moment then turns to his brother.

FRANKIE

Hey, you know what? They said I could bring some friends. Maybe...

Ricky cuts him short.

RICKY

Er, not a good idea, first date an' all. We'll just probably go for a coffee, or a drink...so, what time you getting picked up?

FRANKIE

Seven thirty. Why?

RICKY

She's coming over at seven forty-five. Too bad, you'll miss her.

FRANKIE

(thoughtfully)

Yeah. Too bad.

Frankie continues to chug Ricky's beer.

INT. FRANKIE'S BEDROOM - SAME NIGHT

Frankie speaks softly into his cell phone.

FRANKIE

Hi. This is Frankie. No, nothing's wrong. I was just wondering if we could make it eight o'clock on Saturday? We can? That's cool. Thanks so much. See you then. Yeah, bye.

Frankie smiles to himself and empties his pockets. He throws the contents on the bedside table. Keys, gum and a small plastic bag.

INT. ANITA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Anita paces around like a caged animal. The doorbell rings. She stiffens as she hears Xavier's voice.

XAVIER (O.S.)
Miss Anita?

The hallway clock stikes three as Anita's maid ushers Xavier and Nick in. She leaves without speaking. Xavier extends his hand.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Anita. Notice we're on time?

She quickly shakes Xavier's hand, and looks past him.

ANITA
I thought you were coming alone.

XAVIER
Oh Nick? You know Nick. He goes everywhere with me.

SOPHIA
Please, sit down. We have tea coming.

They all sit. Xavier looks around.

XAVIER
What a lovely little place. You must have worked hard for this. I admire that in a person. It reminds me of myself. Y'see, I've worked very hard to get where I am today ...so, I guess you could say in that respect, we're alike.

Anita responds angrily.

ANITA
I am nothing like you!

George smiles and winks at Nick.

GEORGE

Oh, come on darlin'. Don't live in denial. We're both from the same mold. Ruthless, sometimes callous, yet...giving.

The maid arrives with the tea.

ANITA

Juat leave it. I'll pour.

The maid places the tray on the coffee table and leaves. Anita pours three cups.

ANITA (CONT'D)

Please help yourselves to milk, sugar, lemon, whichever.

(to Nick)

Do you enjoy what you do?

Nick leans forward. He looks briefly at his suit, shoes and the ring on his finger.

NICK

Oh yeah. Yeah I do. See, I come from a poor family. The boss, took me in, taught me things. He gave me money, clothes, food. He gave me a life, a good life. He looks after all of us boys, and our families.

Anita studies Nick, sipping her tea. Xavier takes over.

XAVIER

So now my dear, you know. Basically I'm a good person. But like anyone, I can be bad.

Xavier edges closer to Anita.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

(WHISPERING)

Good.

He raises his left hand.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

(WHISPERING)

Bad.

He raises his right hand.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
(WHISPERING)

Good.

He turns both hand upwards.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
(SHOUTING)

Bad!

Xavier slams both hands down hard on the coffee table. Cups fly. Anita is shocked.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
And now I have your full attention...I, sorry we, are coming under intense pressure from another outfit. This is nothing new, but it has focused me more on our business. It's time for us to step up our game.

Xavier rises and walks around the room.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
It's obvious that you know all the right people and you are very influential within that group. I think you're doing a great job. But, I need you to start expanding the numbers...we're going to target a younger, much younger set.

Xavier stands behind Anita. She moves forward on her seat.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
My view, is that the younger we get them, the longer we'll have them. What's yours?

Anita grits her teeth, jumps up, spins around and faces Xavier.

ANITA
You've forced me to do your dirty work, and during the process, I have lost all self esteem. But, introducing kids to drugs is something I will never do! Never!

Anita attempts to leave, but Xavier cuts her off. He smiles sympathetically.

XAVIER
O.K. Calm down. I thought you might
say that, and I understand
completely.

Xavier steps closer to Anita. He pauses.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
I think I have a solution.

Anita looks relieved as Xavier turns slightly, then punches
her in the face. She falls to the floor. Xavier kicks her
repeatedly.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
You will do what I want you to do,
when I want you to do it! You
fuckin' bitch, never back talk
to me again, never you hear
me?...you fuckin' hear me? Never!

Collette and Mae run into the room.

MAE
What's going on?

Mae catches sight of Anita on the floor. Slowly rising.

MAE (CONT'D)
Oh my God!

Collette screams as Xavier catches her by the arm.

XAVIER
So, this must be the beautiful
daughter.

Xavier roughly turns her towards Nick.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
What d'you think Nick? Bit of a
looker, huh? I'm sure we can find
her something to do in the
organization. Pretty girl like
this....

He is cut off in mid-sentence as Anita snatches Collette
away. She snarls in his face, spitting saliva and blood.

ANITA
You ever go near my daughter you
bastard, and I swear I'll fucking
kill you. Now get out of my house!
Get out!

Xavier smiles calmly, takes a pristine white handkerchief from his pocket and wipes the blood and spit from his face.

XAVIER

Nick, I think we may have overstayed our welcome. We must take our leave.

(to Anita)

See you soon sweetheart.

Xavier and Nick leave the room. The three women hug each other and cry. Xavier re-enters with a smug look on his face.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Anita, please remember.

He raises one hand.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Good.

He raises the other.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Or bad....your choice. We'll see ourselves out.

He turns, leaves and his laughter echoes through the house, as the women cower in fear.

COLLETTE

Mummy?

ANITA

This is what I'm projecting you from. I'm so sorry you had to see this.

EXT. PAULIE'S CAR - DAY

Paulie and his men are on their way to the races.

PAULIE

Is she going to win today?

JONNY

I spoke to the trainer this morning. He's very confident. In fact, his house is on the way. Wanna check him out?

PAULIE
O.K. Do it!

Paulie's car stops outside a large house with a long driveway.

Jonny gets out, knocks on the front door and returns to the car.

THE TRAINER (50's) appears wiping his mouth with a napkin. He approaches the car. Paulie winds down his window.

TRAINER
(sweating)
Good morning Sir. This is an unexpected pleasure.

Paulie doesn't acknowledge the trainer.

PAULIE
Just tell me if she'll win today.

TRAINER
Yes, of course. You can bet your life on it.

PAULIE
No pal. You bet *your* life on it!

The window rises and the car speeds off, showering the frightened trainer with gravel.

INT. XAVIER'S HOUSE - SAME DAY

Xavier does a line of coke. As he finishes he talks to Nick.

XAVIER
Your boys there?

NICK
Uh huh.

XAVIER
You sure it's untraceable.

NICK
Chemist guarantees it.

XAVIER
Good. O.K. Let's go!

Xavier heads for the door wiping his nose. Nick follows.

EXT. TRAINER'S DRIVEWAY - SAME DAY

The trainer drives his horse trailer to the front of his house. He leaves his car and enters the house.

TWO MEN (30's) appear from the shrubbery along the driveway. One enters the trailer, while the other keeps watch.

EXT. HORSE TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

The man inside the trailer produces a syringe and injects the horse. He climbs back out.

EXT. TRAINER'S DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

The trainer exits the house and kisses his WIFE (40's). She closes the door as he jumps into his vehicle, throws the engine in drive and leaves.

Nick's men are left lying on the ground where they hide.

They laugh, congratulate each other and run back into the shrubbery.

EXT. RACETRACK - SAME DAY

Paulie and his entourage are betting heavily on their horse. A small man, TAN (40's) sees this and follows suit.

The race starts, and Paulie's horse immediately takes the lead. Paulie, his cronies and Tan shout the jockey on.

Three furlongs from the finish line, another horse edges up alongside Paulie's mount. The rest of the crowd urge their horse on.

The two jockeys fight hard but at the finish, Paulie's horse is beaten by a nose. He is extremely angry, and tears his betting slips into pieces. He turns to Jonny.

PAULIE

That fuckin' trainer's
gone...fuckin' gone, right?

Xavier and Nick look on, laughing. Paulie notices this and whispers in Jonny's ear. Jonny nods slowly.

As Xavier and Nick leave, Nick spots Tan who looks very down. Nick places a caring arm around his shoulders.

NICK
Hey Tan, What's wrong man?

TAN
Lost all my money. I don't
understand...Mr. Garcia's mount,
beaten by an outsider.

As the men walk, Xavier fishes in his pocket. He hands Nick a wad of cash. Nick in turn places it in Tan's hand.

NICK
Here Tan. Now go home and look
after your family.

Tan cannot express his gratitude enough. He shakes Nick's hand, vigorously. Nick and Xavier walk away. Nick calls back over his shoulder.

NICK (CONT'D)
Just remember you owe us one Tan,
you owe us one!

EXT. XAVIER'S CAR - DAY

Nick and Xavier stone-faced, sit in back. Xavier speaks calmly.

XAVIER
Enough now Nick. We've had our fun.
Garcia has to go.

They drive on.

INT. ANITA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - SATURDAY NIGHT

Anita is ready for another party. She calls out.

ANITA
Collette, Collette darling! I'm
about to leave.

Collette comes down the stairs.

COLLETTE
O.K. Mummy. Wow! You look great!

ANITA
Thanks darling. If you need
anything call my cell

COLLETTE
Don't worry. I'll be fine.

The two hug.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)
Now you go and enjoy yourself. I'm
going upstairs to read.

Collette kisses Anita and runs upstairs. Anita leaves.

INT. COLLETTE'S BEDROOM - SAME NIGHT

Collette is putting the final touches to her make up. She smiles at herself in the mirror.

COLLETTE
Perfecto! Ricky Thomas, I'm coming
for you.

INT. ANITA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Collette quietly dials a number on the house phone.

COLLETTE
I need a cab.

As she hangs up the maid quietly watches.

INT. RICKY'S APARTMENT - SAME NIGHT

The boys are getting ready for their dates. Ricky is dressed casually, while Frankie is dressed to kill. Ricky looks at his watch.

RICKY
It's seven forty already. Your
ride's late. You sure they're
coming?

Frankie checks himself out in the mirror.

FRANKIE
Oh yeah. They'll be here.

The doorbell rings. Frankie rushes to answer it.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
That's probably them. I'll get it.

He pauses at the door, takes a deep breath and swings it open. Collette stands there, beautiful, seductive.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
Wow! Look at you!

Collette is embarrassed by Frankie's greeting.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
Collette, right?

COLLETTE
Yes, that's right. Is Ricky here?
We have a date.

FRANKIE
Sure. Please come in.

Collette enters, Frankie gives her the 'once over'.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
(under his breath)
Yeah he's here, but I wish he
wasn't.

Collette spins around.

YING
I heard that!

FRANKIE
Sorry. I mean you look so
good...O.K. I admit it, I'm
jealous. Y'see, I've got an invite
to a kick-ass party tonight but I
don't have a date.

Collette looks at him sympathetically. Frankie catches the look.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
Hey. Maybe you and Ricky can come?
It's gonna be a blast!

COLLETTE
Sounds cool. But Ricky might have
something planned.

Ricky enters.
Hi Collette.

He pecks her on the cheek, then looks at Frankie.

RICKY (CONT'D)
I thought you'd gone.

FRANKIE
No, not yet. I don't know where
they've gotten to.

Ricky leads Collette into the living room. Frankie follows.

INT. RICKY'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Collette and Ricky stand looking at each other,
uncomfortable.

RICKY
So you met Frankie huh? He's a bit
out there. Take a seat. Drink?

Collette slowly sits on the couch. She looks Frankie up and
down.

COLLETTE
Frankie or Frank?...Thanks. Red
wine?

RICKY
Sure.
(to Frankie)
Hey bro. Get us both a glass, would
you?

Frankie sulkily complies.

RICKY
So, what would you like to do?

COLLETTE
You haven't arranged anything?

RICKY
No. I mean, I thought we could
discuss things first. Maybe catch a
movie, or grab a coffee.

Collette looks at her outfit and raises her eyebrows,
disappointed.

RICKY (CONT'D)
Did you have anything in mind?

COLLETTE

No, not really. But Frankie did say there was a party tonight.

RICKY

I really don't think that's the sort of thing we should be going to...

Collette interrupts.

COLLETTE

It sounds like fun.

Ricky rises, annoyed.

RICKY

Look, you don't know these people...

Again Collette interrupts.

COLLETTE

Do you?

Frankie ambles back into the room with the drinks.

FRANKIE

Here we are guys. Hope I wasn't too long.

Ricky looks at his brother coldly.

RICKY

Why'd you mention your stupid party?

Frankie hands the couple their drinks.

FRANKIE

Shit bro, I was just making small talk. Look, I apologise if I overstepped the mark.

Ricky shakes his head in frustration. Collette looks at Ricky, then Frankie.

COLLETTE

You didn't do anything wrong.

She throws a withering look at Ricky.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)
I'd like to go!

Ricky looks at her in disbelief.

RICKY
What are you saying? You really
want do this freak show, 'cos
that's what it is?

Collette sits back in her seat and folds her arms,
petulantly.

COLLETTE
Yes!

FRANKIE
Look guys, I wish I hadn't metioned
the party...

RICKY
(angrily)
Why don't you just shut up Frankie.

Ricky looks at at Collette.

RICKY (CONT'D)
If you really want to
go...Frankie'll take you.

Collette stiffens. She rises abruptly and looks at Frankie.

COLLETTE
O.K. Frankie. You've got yourself a
date!

Frankly smiles smugly to himself. The doorbell rings.

FRANKIE
I'll get it. It's probably my ride.

Frankie leaves. Ricky softens.

RICKY
Look, you don't have to go...

Collette brushes past Ricky.

COLLETTE
Ricky, I like you, but you've
really got to learn to lighten up.
We're only here once and I intend
to live my own life.

Collette leaves. Ricky calls after her.

RICKY
What about your Mother?

Collette pokes her head back around the door.

COLLETTE
See what I mean?

She slams the door. Ricky is left alone.

EXT. FRANKIE'S RIDE - SAME NIGHT

Frankie and Collette are in the back seat.

FRANKIE
Thanks for coming. As I said
before, you look great!

COLLETTE
Forget it Frankie or is it Frank?.
I know what you did...with the cell
number that time...and get this,
I'm not interested in you.

Frankie looks puzzled.

FRANKIE
But...why?

Collette looks out of the window.

YING
Why've I come to the party? To
teach Ricky a lesson. See, I always
get what I want.

Frankie studies her.

FRANKIE
(under his breath)
Same as me baby...same as me.

INT. XAVIER'S HOUSE - SAME NIGHT

Xavier and Nick sit in large chairs with drinks and lines of
coke on the table between them.

They watch through a two-way mirror as a young girl and a
middle aged man have sex in a plush bedroom.

As they finish and leave, Xavier turns to Nick.

XAVIER
Not bad. Got her name?

NICK
Sure do.

XAVIER
Good. 'Cos now she's ours. I'll let
the senator know later. Can't let
the old man keep all the fresh
meat, eh?

The two men rise to leave but stop abruptly when Frankie roughly drags a vry drunken Collette into the room.

NICK
Who the fuck is that?

He moves to the door angrily. Xavier stops him.

XAVIER
No. Let me deal with this one.

He walks out.

INT. XAVIER'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Xavier stands at the head of the stairs admiring the fact that every part of his house is filled with revellers.

He catches Anita's eye as she works the floor and throws her two thumbs up. She soesn't respond.

He silently enters the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Frankie removes his shirt as Collette lies fsce down on the bed, partially clothed, out cold.

Xavier watches for a few seconds, then talks very loudly.

XAVIER
You know, rape carries a heavy
penalty in this state.

Frankie spins around with a look of surprise and fear on his face.

FRANKIE
Who the fuck are you?

Xavier sits on the bed, calmly

XAVIER
Personally, I don't think any woman
is worth going to prison for.

Frankie repeats.

FRANKIE
I said 'who the fuck are you?'

Xavier is amused by Frankie's bravado.

GEORGE
More to the point young man, who
the fuck are you? I'm interested
you see, because it would appear
that you were about to perpetrate a
crime on my property.

Frankie's jaw drops.

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Yes, my brash young friend. I am
your host!

Frankie's bravery departs. He motions to Collette

FRANKIE
I'm so sorry. I didn't mean any
harm or disrespect...I've just met
her.

XAVIER
No need to explain. But I do think
you're wasting your time.

He looks the half naked Frankie up and down, admiringly.
A good looking boy like you
deserves better.

Xavier pats the bed. Frankie obediently sits beside him.

FRANKIE
Well...I'm always open to offers.
What've you got in mind?

Xavier moves closer to Frankie.

XAVIER

First we must get rid of this...

He prods Collette.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

...and then we can talk. I'll get some people to help you. Once you're clear, ask one of the boys to bring you to me. O.K? By the way, I'm Xavier...and you are?

Frankie sticks out his hand.

FRANKIE

Frankie.

Xavier ignores the handshake. He walks to the door, opens it and looks back.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

If I didn't have a house filled with guests, I'd ask you to come as you are, but I suppose you'd better put your shirt on.

Xavier smiles and leaves as Frankie punches mid air in celebration.

INT. XAVIER'S HOUSE - MAIN ROOM - SAME NIGHT

Xavier and Anita are on the crowded floor. Xavier is crowing with pleasure.

XAVIER

Fucking fabulous. Fucking fabulous.

ANITA

And the private rooms?

XAVIER

A masterful idea, my dear, absolutely masterful. We should start increasing our quota soon

Xavier continues surveying the scene as Anita briefly notices three large men carrying a girl out of the bedroom. She nods towards the fracas.

ANITA

Problem?

XAVIER

Not at all. Drunk kid...now come, I
have someone I want you to meet.

Xavier takes Anita by the arm.

EXT. ANITA'S DRIVEWAY - SAME NIGHT

Two large MEN (30's) lower Collette to the ground.
One rings the doorbell.

They jump in their car and speed away.

INT. ANITA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - SAME NIGHT.

Anita and Mae enter. The maid descends the stairs, looking
guilty.

ANITA

Everything O.K?

MAID

Yes Ma'am. I was just checking on
Miss Collette. She's asleep

ANITA

That's good. I'm going to bed.
Goodnight both.

Anita climbs the stairs as Mae eyes the maid suspiciously.

INT. ANITA'S HOUSE - SHRINE ROOM - SAME NIGHT

Anita lies on a bed, crying.

INT. PAULIE'S HOUSE - MORNING

Paulie lounges on a couch. Jonny enters.

JONNY

Excuse me boss. You need the car
this morning?

PAULIE

Got nothing planned. Why?

JONNY

Needs a service. I was gonna drop
it off at Tan's. Does a good job.

Paulie swings his feet from the couch and stands, stretching.

PAULIE
Good! I'll freshen up and you can drop me at the club.

Paulie leaves as Jonny punches in a number on his cell.

JONNY
Tan?....

EXT. XAVIER'S CAR - SAME DAY

Xavier and his men are cruising the streets. Nick's cell rings.

NICK
Yeah...O.K. when?...Good. I'll be there.

He hangs up and smiles.

XAVIER
What?

NICK
That was Tan. I think today's gonna be our lucky day.

INT. RICKY'S APARTMENT - SAME DAY

The two brothers are chilling in their living room.

FRANKIE
I'm telling you man, it was out of this world. You should've come. The booze, the people, the gear...and there's this woman, an actress or something, runs the whole show... gets you anything you want... fuckin' anything.

RICKY
Did Collette enjoy herself?

Frankie looks embarrassed and avoids Ricky's eyes.

FRANKIE
Yeah. Well, I think so. I didn't see too much of her. We did our own thing, you know?

Ricky senses his brother's discomfort and presses him.

RICKY

No, I don't actually. You tell me.

Frankie rises and turns away.

FRANKIE

Well, these parties are for people to meet other people. Y'know, get noticed...and that's just what I did.

RICKY

So, you got yourself noticed, huh? That's good. What's her name?

FRANKIE

Look Rick. I need this shot.

RICKY

Whoa bro, no need to get defensive. You don't wanna tell me, s'all good.

Ricky rises and turns on the radio. Frankie immediately walks over and turns it off.

FRANKIE

Look, this might be the biggest chance of my life. I know I can be 'someone' given a chance. I just needed to meet the right person ...and now I think I have!

RICKY

O.K. So you think you've met your meal-ticket? Who is she? Some cougar, right?

Frankie looks at Ricky with real pain in his eyes.

FRANKIE

(shaking with emotion)

Don't make fun of me. As I said, I've got a shot and I'll do anything, *anything*, to make it!

Ricky is now a little frightened by Frankie's intensity.

RICKY

Whaddya mean 'anything'? What's she want you to do?... Hey, you're not in trouble are you?

Frankie turns his back on his brother.

FRANKIE
Promise me you'll understand.

Ricky pauses, sucks in his breath.

RICKY
I'll try.

FRANKIE
(sternly)
Don't try! Fucking promise!

Ricky is now more concerned.

RICKY
(coolly)
O.K. O.K. I promise.

FRANKIE
It's...it's a guy!

Ricky is momentarily struck dumb.

RICKY
What are you doing little one? What
the fuck are you doing? Don't let
these bastards force you....

Frankie interrupts

FRANKIE
No one's forcing me to do anything.
This is my time. He's invited me to
dinner on Wednesday. Just me and
him. We'll see what happens.

Ricky kisses his brother's head.

RICKY
Just be careful little one. I love
you.

FRANKIE
I know you do...and by the way, you
should call Collette. She's into
you man, big time. You just need to
lighten up with her.

Ricky grabs his cell phone then pauses, thinking.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
 Don't think about it. Just do
 it!...and thanks bro.

Frankie leaves.

INT. ANITA'S KITCHEN - SAME DAY

Anita and Collette chit-chat. Mae reads the newspaper while
 the maid pours them coffee.

ANITA
 You look a little tired today
 darling.

Mae stops reading and looks at Collette, then the maid. She
 notices the two exchanging glances. She puts the paper down.

COLLETTE
 Didn't sleep too well.

Collette is aware of Mae staring at her and changes the
 subject.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)
 So, how was your party last night?

ANITA
 Oh, you know. Same old boring
 stuff. Speeches and small talk. But
 all for a good cause.

She in turn changes the subject.

ANITA (CONT'D)
 O.K. Darling. Go and get ready. I'm
 taking you shopping! And you've got
 your cell phone back.

Collette excitedly jumps up and kisses Anita.

COLLETTE
 Oh, thank you Mummy, thank you so
 much!

She skips out of the room as the telephone rings. Sophia
 looks at a surprised Mae.

ANITA
 Well, she's been cooped up for some
 time...

MAE

Mmmmm...

INT. ANITA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Collette has answered the call.

ANITA (O.S)

Who is it darling?

COLLETTE

Wrong number Mummy.

Collette replaces the receiver, looking very pleased with herself.

EXT. XAVIER'S OFFICE - SAME DAY

Nick hands Xavier a cell phone.

NICK

Just hit 'send'.

XAVIER

How far?

NICK

Fifteen, twenty yards.

XAVIER

O.K. Today Paulie's gonna kiss his ass goodbye.

NICK

Adios.

XAVIER

Yeah...adios amigo.

They laugh.

EXT. XAVIER'S CAR - SAME DAY

Xavier, Nick and two others watch as Jonny pulls up outside Paulie's club. Seconds later Paulie emerges with two heavies. They jump in the waiting car.

Xavier presses 'send' on the cell phone and Paulie's car is blown to pieces.

INT. RICKY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Frankie nervously paces up and down the hall. The doorbell rings. He grabs an overnight bag.

FRANKIE

They're here. See you bro.

Ricky runs into the hall, too late to see his brother leave.

RICKY

(to himself)

Keep safe little one.

INT. XAVIER'S HOUSE - SAME NIGHT

Frankie walks around a beautifully furnished room. Xavier appears, casually but exquisitely dressed.

XAVIER

Hi. You look great.

FRANKIE

Thanks, so do you. You have some beautiful things.

XAVIER

Oh, this is just my 'every day' room. You'll see the real stuff later...drink?

FRANKIE

Please.

Xavier calls out.

XAVIER

Peter.

PETER (50's) dressed in white, crisp, clean, enters.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Two glasses of champagne. We'll be in the dining room.

Xavier takes Frankie's hand and leads him into a very ornate dining room.

XAVIER

I hope you like my choice for this evening. We'll start with some caviar, followed by frois gras, and

XAVIER

then share chateau briande. Now, as I'm not a dessert man, I've chosen a selection of cheeses. How's that sound?

Peter brings the champagne. Xavier takes both glasses and hands one to Frankie. He raises his glass in salute.

FRANKIE

It sounds great. I mean I think it's fantastic!

Xavier walks to the table and holds up a plate.

XAVIER

I see my staff have spoiled you. This is the finest porcelain, we will drink our wine from eighteenth century crystal and the silverware is purported to have been owned by the English Royal Family.

Frankie raises his eyebrows, not understanding a word.

Xavier walks over to a large urn. He lifts the lid takes a pinch of cocaine and snorts it. He beckons Frankie over, takes another pinch and offers it to him.

Frankie snorts it greedily

XAVIER

The best money can buy.

Frankie's eyes water as he rubs his nose. Xavier laughs.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

You'll get used to it. Now, come. I have a surprise for you.

INT. XAVIER'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Xavier sits Frankie on the bed. A huge mirror hangs on one wall, another on the ceiling. A king-sized bed dominates the room. On the bed is a cushion. On the cushion, a Rolex watch.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

This is yours and as long as you're loyal there'll be more. Y'see, all I ever want from anybody is loyalty. Not too much to ask, eh?

XAVIER (CONT'D)
Now, let's go eat. A good meal
always gives me an appetite...if
you get my drift.

Xavier places his hand on Frankie's shoulder. Frankie looks
at it and smiles.

SUPER: TWO MONTHS LATER.

INT. XAVIER'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Xavier showers. Frankie is still in bed.

XAVIER (O.S.)
You know you should come with me
and have a workout. You'll feel
great!

FRANKIE
No, it's O.K. You go ahead and
enjoy yourself. I did all my
exercise last night.

Xavier laughs and puts his head around the bathroom door.

XAVIER
Well, if you're saving yourself,
I'll expect a repeat performance
tonite.

FRANKIE
Whatever you want...whatever.

Frankie turns over with a sly look on his face.

INT. XAVIER'S BEDROOM - LATER

Frankie is dressed. He looks out of the window. Xavier is on
the driveway, about to leave. As he climbs into his car he
looks up and waves. Frankie waves back and smiles.

He watches the car until it's out of sight, grabs his
overnight bag and hurries from the room.

INT. XAVIER'S DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Frankie is at the urn pouring cocaine into his bag.

The door swings open and a maid enters.

FRANKIE

Shit! Shit!

Frankie pushes past her and runs from the room.

INT XAVIER'S HOUSE - OFFICE - SAME DAY

Xavier enters. Nick sits at Xavier's desk, grim-faced

XAVIER

Hi Nick. Man do I feel great! Had a workout, a massage and...I bought Frankie something, something special. We've been together for two months today...y'know I've not felt like this since Steve...

Xavier's voice trails off as he realizes Nick is not sharing his excitement.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

What?

Xavier walks to the desk and glares at Nick.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Nick, 'what'?

Nick places the urn on the desk and lifts the lid. George looks inside.

NICK

Sorry, boss.

XAVIER

Who?

Nick looks down.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

You are fucking with me right?

Nick shakes his head.

NICK

Boss...

Xavier picks up the urn and throws it across the room. He then trashes the rest of the office, smashing photographs of him and Frankie.

Nick grabs Xavier.

NICK (CONT'D)

Boss! Boss! stop. He's not worth it.

Xavier breaks down and cries.

XAVIER

Why, Nick why?

Nick is embarrassed. He holds Xavier.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

You know, I think I loved him.

Xavier pulls away and wipes his eyes. An evil look spreads across his face.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

Right, Nick. I want my blow back. I want it back today!...and make sure that little cunt gets more gear than he can handle...you understand me?

NICK

Already done boss.

As Nick leaves, Xavier calls out.

XAVIER

And get someone in here to clear this shit up.

EXT./INT. ANITA'S GARDEN/SITTING ROOM - SAME DAY

Anita and Mae walk in the garden. They talk, enjoying the day. Collette sits in a chair, watching them. She pulls out her cell phone and dials a number.

COLLETTE

Hi, it's me...she's in the garden. I don't have much time...she's going out at seven-thirty...pick me up at eight-fifteen?

Anita and Mae head back to the house.

COLLETTE

Cool! Gotta go. See you later O.K?

She ends the call.

ANITA (O.S)

Collette, Collette darling...where is she? It's such a beautiful day.

Collette walks out of the house to greet Anita and Mae.

ANITA (CONT'D)

Ah, there she is. Darling, it's so lovely out. You really ought to get some air.

Collette takes her mother's hand.

COLLETTE

I'm just about to take a nice bath, and read my new book. You two enjoy the day.

Collette pecks Anita on her cheek and leaves with a smile.

INT. ANITA'S HALL - THAT NIGHT

Anita enters with Mae as the clock strikes seven-thirty. She checks herself out in the mirror, and calls upstairs.

ANITA

We're going, darling.

Collette bounces down the stairs, checking the clock as she comes. She hugs Anita.

COLLETTE

Good luck tonite Mummy. I hope you make lots of people happy.

A car horn honks.

ANITA

Oh, I'm certain of that. Got to dash. Goodnight darling, sleep tight.

The maid appears.

ANITA
 (to the maid)
 Look after Miss Collette for me.

The maid nods.

COLLETTE
 Goodnight Mummy. Go safe.

Anita leaves as Collette skips up the stairs.

Before reaching the top, she turns and looks sternly at the maid who drops her eyes and backs away.

EXT. XAVIER'S CAR - SAME NIGHT

Nick and THREE HEAVIES (30's) are heading to Ricky's apartment. Nick looks at his watch.

NICK
 Come on, step on it. I want to do
 this piece of shit as soon as
 possible.

The car fish-tails down the road as it picks up speed.

INT. RICKY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - SAME NIGHT

Ricky is ready to leave. He looks at Frankie who lies on the couch.

RICKY
 Not going out?

FRANKIE
 Maybe later, dunno.

RICKY
 You and your 'friend' had a fight?

FRANKIE
 No, I'm just letting things cool
 down a bit.

RICKY
 Sounds like a good move.

Frankie changes the subject.

FRANKIE
Seeing Collette?

RICKY
Yep! Picking her up at
eight-fifteen.

FRANKIE
Where from?

RICKY
Her house, of course.

FRANKIE
Oh yeah, of course!

Frankie points to the clock on the wall.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
You're gonna be late, pal. It's
eight already.

Ricky looks at his watch.

RICKY
Shit! See you later bro.

He picks up his car keys and jacket and runs out.

INT. ELEVATOR - RICKY'S BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Nick and the others watch the floor counter.

INT. RICKY'S BUILDING - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Ricky runs, stumbling, putting on his jacket. Nick and his
crew walk out of the elevator. Ricky bundles into them.

RICKY
Wow! Sorry guys. Hot date.

As the doors close on Ricky, three of the men laugh.

MAN #1
She must be fuckin' hot, pal.

They continue to laugh but Nick stares at the elevator
doors, thinking.

INT. RICKY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The doorbell rings. Frankie goes to answer it.

FRANKIE
(to himself)
You're fuckin' useless bro....

He opens the door.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
Don't tell me....

Frankie is cut off in mid-sentence as the four men beat him mercilessly. Frankie screams.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
Nick, stop! Stop!

The beating continues until there is silence.

INT. RICKY'S APARTMENT - SAME NIGHT

Frankie is unconscious, tied to a chair. His face is swollen and cut from the beating. Nick sits directly opposite him. The other three men hover over Frankie.

NICK
Bring him round!

One of the men throws water into Frankie's face. He splutters into consciousness and speaks through swollen lips.

FRANKIE
Nick, there's been a mistake.

NICK
Yeah, you fucking piece of shit!
But the mistake was yours.

He grabs Frankie roughly.

NICK (CONT'D)
Where's our gear?

Frankie shakes his head. Nick looks at one of his men.

NICK (CONT'D)
Wrap him.

Frankie's head is wrapped with **cling wrap**. As he slowly suffocates Nick asks him again.

NICK
You gonna tell me now?

Frankie nodss vigorously. Nick makes a small hole in the **plastic**. Frankie gasps for air.

FRANKIE
Sold it, I sold it!

NICK
Gimme a name.

FRANKIE
Lou...Lou Ferrarro...

NICK
That spick?...Hope you got a good price for it but then, it ain't your money, is it? So where is it?

Frankie, barely conscious mumbles. Nick repeats out loud what he says.

NICK (CONT'D)
In the bedroom...on top of the closet.

Nick nods to one of his men.

FRANKIE
You've got the money, you know who got the gear...we're through, right?

The thug returns with the money and shows it to Nick, who checks it quickly

NICK
Yeah right. We're through...or should I say, you're through.

He produces a syringe, and plunges it into Frankie's neck. He moves closer to Frankie as one thug pulls his head back.

NICK (CONT'D)
Keep your eyes open you fuck-head. I want to be the last thing you see, before you die!

INT. LOU FERRARRO'S APARTMENT - SAME NIGHT

Nick and his men kick Lou's door in. They rush in and search around. It's empty.

NICK

I want this whole place ripped
apart. I want our gear found,
right?

(to himself)

Then, we'll rip you apart,
Ferrarro.

The men head off in different directions. Seconds later one
MAN (20's) returns with a wet plastic bag.

MAN

Not very bright. Found it in the
toilet.

Nick unwraps the bag, wets his finger and tastes it.

NICK

Well done boys. That's ours
alright. Now, let's go and settle
this once and for all!

EXT. NIGHTCLUB - ENTRANCE - SAME NIGHT.

Nick and his men talk to two DOORMEN (40's).

DOORMAN #1

Hi Nick, boys. What's up?

NICK

Lou in tonight?

DOORMAN #2

Yeah. Came in about half an hour
ago. Why?

NICK

Just need a word. Might want him to
do a job for us.

DOORMAN #1

O.K. Come in, but no trouble boys.

NICK

No worries. There won't be any
trouble.

Nick presses some money into doorman #1's hand.

NICK (CONT'D)
That's for you guys.

INT. NIGHTCLUB - CONTINUOUS

Nick spots Ferrarro doing a deal at a small table. As the music pounds, Ferrarro heads for the restroom. Nick and his men follow. One guards the door, the other three enter.

INT. NIGHTCLUB - RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ferrarro is busy taking a piss. Nick walks up behind him.

NICK
Hi Lou.

Ferrarro cringes, anticipating the next move. Nick slams his face into the wall. The two other men drag Ferrarro into a stall, cut his throat, lock the door and climb out over it.

One man takes the bloodied knife and washes it in the sink.

EXT. NIGHTCLUB - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS.

Nick and his men walk past the doormen.

DOORMAN #1
How'd it go?

NICK
Nah. He's not for us. Not enough
life in him.

The men laugh as they leave.

INT. XAVIER'S OFFICE - SAME NIGHT

Xavier walks around his office arms folded, unhappy. Anita sits at his desk following his every move.

ANITA
It's a good turnout tonight. Why
are you so down? Is it because your
'little friend' isn't here?

Xavier spins around, venomous.

XAVIER

For your information, I no longer have a 'little friend'...I tend to put too much faith in people and invariably they let me down. But, I always get my own back...remember? Good or bad?

Xavier raises each hand in turn as he speaks.

XAVIER (CONT'D)

I sincerely hope this won't be the case with you.

Xavier stroke Anita's face. She shudders and pulls away. Xavier is amused.

EXT. RICKY'S CAR - SAME NIGHT

Collette and Ricky are cozied up, chatting.

RICKY

You liked the movie then?

COLLETTE

What makes you think that?

RICKY

Oh, I don't know. Maybe the fact that you never stopped crying.

COLLETTE

I'm sorry. I'm just a big softy.

Ricky draws her closer.

RICKY

Mmm. Soft and sweet.

Ricky kisses her gently.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Hey look. Frankie said he might be going out tonite. Maybe we could go back to my place, and....

Collette pulls away from Ricky.

COLLETTE

Just what sort of girl do you think I am?

Ricky is embarrassed.

RICKY
 Sorry. I didn't mean anything...

Collette quickly cuddles up to Ricky again and puts her finger to his lips.

COLLETTE
 (giggling)
 Ssshhh! Just shut up and drive,
 will you?

Ricky looks at her, smiles, drops the car into drive and roars off.

INT. RICKY'S APARTMENT - SAME NIGHT

Ricky and Collette enter the hallway. The light is on.

RICKY
 Frankie, you here?

Silence. He turns to Collette.

RICKY (CONT'D)
 You know my brother is so dumb. He just doesn't care. I follow him around all the time, turning off lights, picking up clothes...

Collette pecks him on the cheek.

COLLETTE
 Getting busted for him...Your brother's a little shit, we both know that. He's never gonna change...now I need the restroom.

RICKY
 Down the hall, second on the left.
 Drink?

COLLETTE(O.S.)
 Please.

Ricky heads for the kitchen. As he passes the living room he notices a lamp still burning. He shakes his head.

RICKY
 This just ain't on bro.

He carries on to the kitchen reappears with a bottle and two glasses and heads back to the living room.

INT. RICKY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ricky enters and looks at the light.

RICKY

This really pisses me off....

When his eyes adjust to the light, he sees Frankie's lifeless body. The glasses and bottle fall from his hand, smashing on the floor. He starts to hyperventilate.

COLLETTE (O.S.)

Ricky, are you O.K? What was that noise?

She enters the room looks at Ricky then follows his stare and sees Frankie. She screams.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)

Oh my God! Oh my God!

She continues to scream uncontrollably. Ricky in shock, shakes, speechless.

LATER:

Collette and Ricky hug each other. Ricky reaches for his cell phone.

COLLETTE

What are you doing?

Ricky wipes his eyes.

RICKY

Calling nine one one.

COLLETTE

No Ricky. Please, I beg you. I can't be found here!

Ricky looks at her, pauses then continues dialing. Collette throws herself onto the couch sobbing.

RICKY

Hello. I need a cab.

Collette stops sobbing. She looks up at Ricky.

COLLETTE

Thank you. Thank you so much.

INT. XAVIER'S HOUSE - SAME NIGHT

The party is in full swing. Everyone is high. Anita having done her job, makes her way to the main door, bidding farewell to guests and staff alike. Eventually, she passes Nick, who looks at her disapprovingly.

Anita at first walks past, then stops and returns.

ANITA

Is there a problem, Nick?

As she speaks she grinds her stiletto heel into Nick's foot.

ANITA (CONT'D)

Just remember, Nick. My agreement is with Xavier, not you. As long as he's happy...I come and go as I please.

Anita smiles sweetly.

ANITA (CONT'D)

You have a good evening.

She leaves, while Nick tries to hide his embarrassment from the onlookers.

INT. ANITA'S HALL - SAME NIGHT

Collette enters. The maid approaches.

COLLETTE

(in tears)

Go to bed.

She tries to push past the maid, but underestimates her strength. The maid grabs her arm.

MAID

What's wrong Missy?

Collette struggles to get free but cannot. She looks at the maid and breaks down.

COLLETTE

It was terrible! Terrible!

The maid holds her close and allows her to cry.

MAID

Come, Missy. I'll take you to your room.

They climb the stairs, holding each other.

INT. POLICE STATION - SAME NIGHT

Stern leans on a desk directly opposite Ricky. Another OFFICER (40's) looks on.

STERN

Ricky, you're not telling me the whole story...I think someone else was there tonite.

He sits down and places his feet on the desk.

STERN (CONT'D)

Now, why would you be protecting someone?

RICKY

I swear I'm not.

Stern places his hands behind his head.

STERN

So when you found you're brother, you'd just got yourself a drink?

RICKY

Yes.

Stern drops his feet and gets in Ricky's face.

STERN

With two glasses?

Ricky holds his head in his hands.

INT. ANITA'S HALLWAY - SAME NIGHT

Anita and Mae enter. They are met by the maid.

MAID

It's Missy, Ma'am. She's very upset.

ANITA
Where is she?

MAID
In her room, Ma'am. She's crying.

Anita rushes up the stairs. Mae follows.

INT. COLLETTE'S BEDROOM - SAME NIGHT

Collette lies on her bed crying into her pillow. Anita and Mae enter. Anita rushes to her daughter.

ANITA
Darling, darling. Mummy's here.

Collette stops crying, looks up and clutches Anita.

COLLETTE
Mummy, I'm so scared, so scared.

ANITA
Calm down. I'm here. Nothing can hurt you.

MAE
I'll fetch some tea.

ANITA
And tissues, please.

LATER:

Anita, Mae and Collette are now all seated on the bed, with tea and tissues.

COLLETTE
...and then I took a taxi, leaving poor Ricky to face the police alone...he's probably in trouble now.

She begins to cry again. Anita delves into her handbag and produces some tablets.

ANITA
Here, darling. Take these. They'll help you sleep.

Collette takes the tablets.

COLLETTE

Promise me you'll help him.

ANITA

As soon as you sleep I promise I will call the police.

COLLETTE

(drowsily)

Thank you mommy. I love you....

ANITA

You are so precious to me, my darling. I will never let anyone or anything hurt you.

She cradles her daughter in her arms.

INT. ANITA'S LIVING ROOM - SAME NIGHT

Anita is on the telephone.

ANITA

Hello. I have information regarding a murder that took place this evening...no, I need to come and see the investigating officer...yes now!...I think I know who's responsible.

INT. POLICE STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM - SAME NIGHT

Anita sits across a desk from Stern. They both have coffee.

STERN

So you've been running these parties for Xavier Browne, right?...And you think he had Frankie Thomas murdered?

ANITA

Yes.

STERN

Why?

Anita sips her coffee and answers calmly.

ANITA

Frankie's brother knows my daughter. He told her that Frankie

ANITA
 was having a relationship with
 Browne...now he's dead and Browne's
 boyfriend has disappeared.

STERN
 You realize that you're implicating
 yourself here?

Anita remains calm.

ANITA
 Yes, I understand that...but this
 whole thing has to stop!

Stern smiles smugly.

STERN
 O.K. If you do what I want, I'll do
 a deal with you. But let me tell
 ya, you ain't free and clear by any
 means...Now, you're gonna act as
 though nothing is wrong...

INT. POLICE STATION - CORRIDOR - SAME NIGHT

Ricky is being led out by a POLICE OFFICER (40's). He passes
 the interview room and sees Anita talking to Stern. He stops
 and stares. The officer quickly moves him on.

INT. ANITA'S HOUSE - SHRINE ROOM - SAME NIGHT

Anita walks around the room, touches the memorabilia and
 switches on the old movie. She prepares a syringe and lies
 on a bed.

ANITA
 (whispering)
 I'm so sorry. Forgive me.

EXT. ANITA'S CAR - NIGHT

Mae sits in front with Philip. Anita eases herself into the
 back seat. The other rear door swings open and Ricky jumps
 in, startling the three.

ANITA
 What the hell?

RICKY

Ot;s O.K...I'm Ricky Thomas.

Philip looks round.

PHILIP

Miss Anita?

ANITA

It's O.K. Philip.

(to Ricky)

I know exactly who you are. What do you want?

RICKY

You're going to Browne's party right? You've gotta take me with you.

ANITA

What are you talking about?

RICKY

I saw you with the cops. Collette told me why you were there. You're up to your neck in this crap.

Anita rests her head back on the headrest and eyes Ricky warily.

ANITA

So?

RICKY

So, I don't know what Frankie did to piss him off but Browne had him killed, and you know it.

ANITA

And you want revenge?

Anita laughs in his face.

ANITA (CONT'D)

You cannot be serious. You really don't know what you're getting yourself into.

Ricky unbuttons his jacket and reveals a gun.

RICKY

Oh, I'm deadly serious...and I saw what they did to Frankie, so I know

RICKY
exactly what I'm getting into. I've
gotta do this for Frankie.

ANITA
And if I don't agree?

RICKY
Then I'll tell Collette everything.

Anita looks away.

ANITA
She'll find out soon enough.

Ricky grabs her arm.

RICKY
That's as maybe, but the way I'll
tell it she'll hate you for the
rest of her life.

Anita bites her lip.

ANITA
O.K...Philip we can go.

She looks out of the window.

ANITA
You screw this up for me...

RICKY
I won't.

ANITA
When I leave you'll have thirty
seconds. No more no less. Then the
shit goes down.

Anita taps a number into her cell phone.

ANITA
Hi it's me. Yes, on the way...about
twenty minutes. By the way, I have
a young friend with me. He's dying
to meet you...an actor...I'm sure
you'll like him.

She hangs up. Ricky smiles to himself.

INT. XAVIER'S HOUSE - SAME NIGHT

The party is busier than ever. Xavier flirts with Ricky. Anita approaches the pair.

ANITA
(to Xavier)
So sorry to interrupt. Just got a call. I need to leave.

XAVIER
That's fine. I think we'll be O.K.

He winks at Ricky who laughs. Anita appears to kiss Ricky on the cheek, but whispers in his ear.

ANITA
Thirty seconds.

Ricky returns the compliment.

RICKY
Tell Collette I love her.

Anita pulls away and leaves. Nick watches as she departs. He then turns his attention to Ricky who studies his watch.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. RICKY'S BUILDING - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Ricky bundles into Nick and his three thugs as they exit the elevator

BACK TO PRESENT:

INT. XAVIER'S HOUSE - SAME NIGHT

Nick pulls out his weapon and screams across the room to Xavier.

NICK
Boss, boss. It's a set-up!

Xavier briefly turns around, straining to hear Nick. He turns back and sees Ricky has drawn his gun.

RICKY
This is for Frankie you fuckin' asshole!

Ricky fires three shots. The lights go out. Stun grenades, tear gas and shots are fired as the SWAT team enters the building.

INT. ANITA'S HALLWAY - SAME NIGHT

Anita and Mae are hugging and crying at the foot of the stairs. Anita pulls away.

ANITA

You know where I'll be when they
come.

She starts to climb the stairs.

INT. - XAVIER'S HOUSE - SAME NIGHT

Police officers and SWAT team members round up the guests. Most of Xavier's men lie dead or wounded.

Stern walks around with Reynolds. They come across Xavier with three bullet holes in his chest.

STERN

Good. That's Browne taken care of.
Did you find Cotton?

REYNOLDS

Uh uh. Disappeared into thin
fuckin' air.

Stern shakes his head, disappointed.

Ricky sits at the foot of the stairs, head down still holding his gun. Stern walks over.

STERN

You O.K?

Ricky nods towards Xavier

RICKY

It was me.

Stern sees the gun. He gently takes it and places it in his pocket.

STERN

This was never here, right? Right?

RICKY

Why?

STERN

Let'e just say you did me a favor.

Ricky grabs Stern by the arm.

RICKY

In that case you can do me one.

STERN

I just did.

RICKY

When you pick up Anita Jensen, I
have to be there... for Collette.

A POLICE OFFICER (30's) calls out. He kneels next to Xavier.

POLICE OFFICER

Get the paramedics. He's still
breathing.

Stern looks across.

STERN

Fuck!

He walks across and straddles Xavier.

STERN

I hope you're suffering you cunt.

Stern spitefully stamps on Xavier's chest causing him to
open his eyes. He laughs, coughing blood.

XAVIER

Sure not as much as you pal. Not as
much as you.

Reynolds grabs Stern's arm.

REYNOLDS

Come on bud. Leave this
sonofabitch. We've gotta go pick
our lady up.

He drags Stern away who stops abruptly and turns to Ricky.

STERN

You coming?

Ricky jumps up and follows the two detectives out.

INT. ANITA'S HOUSE - SHRINE ROOM - SAME NIGHT

The film is running. Anita lies on the bed whispering, crying.

ANITA

I'm so sorry...please forgive me...

She gently reaches across.

ANITA (CONT'D)

...Mummy!

Rose is still alive.

ANITA (CONT'D)

I have done such terrible things, committed so many sins, just to keep you with me. After Daddy died, I couldn't bear to lose you too. I had to keep you near me, even if it meant using this.

Anita holds up the syringe.

ANITA (CONT'D)

Just as long as we are together.

Anita administers the drug. Rose stirs.

ROSE

Darling...darling, are we going to see Daddy?

Anita gently raises Rose onto her pillows.

SOPHIA

Yes, Mummy. Look, there he is.

They both watch the old movie. It shows the young couple with a newborn baby.

YOUNG MAN

(in the movie)

This child is a gift from God, and we must protect her from the evils of this world.

Rose slowly points at the screen.

ROSE
 Look darling. How sweet you were as
 a baby, and Daddy is so handsome.

Anita kisses her Mother on the cheek and strokes her hand.

INT. ANITA'S HALL - SAME NIGHT

Stern, Reynolds and Ricky are shown in by the maid. Stern
 addresses her.

STERN
 Anita Jensen?

The maid looks confused. Mae appears at the top of the
 stairs.

STERN (CONT'D)
 (to Mae)
 We're here to help.

MAE
 Yes I know. We've been expecting
 you. Please?

She beckons the men to follow her. A sleepy Collette enters.

COLLETTE
 Ricky? What are you doing
 here?...Mae?

Ricky takes her by the hand.

RICKY
 Be strong baby.

They follow the others up the stairs.

INT. ANITA'S HOUSE - SHRINE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Anita and Rose both cry.

ANITA
 You know Daddy always loved you.

ROSE
 I know darling and he's waiting for
 me...it's time to go.

Rose clasps Anita's hand and raises it. Anita smiles and
 continues to watch the movie. She feels the grip loosen and
 looks at her Mother, who is already at peace.

SOPHIA

Oh no, dear God. Oh no! Mummy,
don't go. Don't leave me...I love
you so much.

She falls on Rose, sobbing.

Stern and the others enter. Anita lies with Rose still,
silent. Collette rushes to the two women. She screams.

COLLETTE

Oh God. No!

SUPER: FOUR MONTHS LATER

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Collette and Ricky walk up the aisle as the organ plays
'Here comes the Bride'.

Anita glows with pride as she follows.

A MAN (20's), shaven head, dark glasses, steps from the
congregation and approaches Anita.

MAN

Lovely service. Beautiful
couple...oh yeah, Xavier sends his
regards.

Anita freezes. She looks hard at the man.

ANITA

Nick?

NICK

We need to talk. I'll call.

Nick walks away followed by two heavies.

INT. ANITA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - PRESENT DAY

Anita sits on her couch across from Collette and Ricky.

Her cell phone rings. She checks the number and punches
'answer'.

INTERCUT BETWEEN ANITA AND NICK:

Nick sits in his speeding limo.

NICK
Boss, yeah it's me.

ANITA
All clean? No issues?

NICK
S'all good.

ANITA
Everyone taken care of?

NICK
The three main players're outta the game. Got the rest of 'em on the payroll or by the balls, from City Hall down.

ANITA
Girls?

NICK
Plenty.

ANITA
Good work Nick. I'll see you later.

Anita hangs up. She nods slowly, smiles then looks at Collette and Ricky.

ANITA
O.K. you guys. Three days 'til our first party...let's do it!

Collette and Ricky leave as Mae enters carrying a tray. She places it on the coffee table.

Two glasses of champagne sit alongside two lines of cocaine.

ANITA
Mae, make sure you keep an eye on Nick. He turned once, he can turn again.

Anita snorts one line and offers the other to Mae. She also snorts.

MAE
This is good stuff.

ANITA
The best that money can buy...and that's how we're gonna stay on top, by giving the best to the best.

She picks up both champagen glasses and passes one to Mae.

MAE

Thanks to Xavier Browne, huh?

Anita clinks glasses with Mae. She raises hers in a toast.

ANITA

To Xavier Browne. May you rot in
hell.

She downs her drink and sits back, relaxed, confident.

FADE OUT:

THE END