HIT ME

by

Doug L. Starks

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ROLL OPENING CREDITS

FADE IN:

TITLE UP: 1977

INT. SHED - DAY

Sunlight peeks through the cracks of the wood.

An old humble man, GRANDPA STAAB, sits across from a young curious boy, PHILLIP STAAB. Grandpa has a deck of cards in his hand.

GRANDPA

Okay Phillip, now in blackjack, an ace doubles as a one or an eleven. Say it with me.

He holds up an ace.

GRANDPA AND PHILLIP

(simultaneously)

An ace doubles as a one or an eleven.

GRANDPA

Very good.

Grandpa shows Phillip a king, queen and jack.

GRANDPA

(continuing)

Now, all face cards like the kings, queens and jacks have a value of ten. Cards two through ten have...

PHILLIP

(interrupting)

Grandpa?

GRANDPA

Yes?

PHILLIP

What's the point of playing cards?

He puts the cards down and scoots closer to Phillip.

GRANDPA

Well, if your real good at it you can make a living at it.

PHILLIP

But Grandpa, I'm only eight!

Grandpa laughs.

GRANDPA

Yes, but it takes many years to become good enough to live off it. When you get older I'm going to teach you how to count cards. You're going to be the best damn player in the world.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

(yelling)

Phillip! Phillip!

Grandpa puts his hand over Phillip's mouth and with his other hand he puts his index finger over his own mouth.

GRANDPA

Shhh.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

(fading)

Phillip! Dad! Where are you?

The pair relax.

GRANDPA

Don't tell your mother about this. She'll have my hide. Let's keep this between you and me. Promise?

He extends his hand.

PHILLIP

Promise.

Phillip just looks at Grandpa's hand.

GRANDPA

You got to shake on it. You make a promise, men always shake on it.

Phillip shakes his hand.

GRANDPA

(continuing)

Good.

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY

A nice hot sunny day. CHILDREN play on the jungle gym having a good time.

A GROUP OF KIDS in a circle shoots marbles.

Down a little farther, Phillip, TOMMY, JACOB, and JOSH are in a circle of their own.

Phillip has a deck of cards in his hand.

PHILLIP

Place your bets, place your bets.

TOMMY

Phillip, I don't know how to play this game.

PHILLIP

It's easy. It's kind of like math. You just try to get to twenty one without going over.

JOSH

I'd rather play kickball.

JACOB

I'm not very good at math.

PHILLIP

Come on, I'll help as we go.

TOMMY

Okay.

PHILLIP

You in Jacob?

JACOB

Yeah, I guess.

PHILLIP

Josh?

JOSH

Yeah.

Phillip gets his cards ready.

PHILLIP

Okay, place your bets.

JOSH

What does that mean?

PHILLIP

That means you put down money.

JOSH

Money? No way! All I got is milk money.

PHILLIP

Yeah, but if you win you can get two milks.

TOMMY

Stop being a pussy and throw some money down.

The three boys each throw down a quarter.

Phillip deals the cards.

MISTER BARTLETT, an angry looking teacher, scowls over the children. He spots Phillip and his gang.

Phillip picks up the quarters.

Mister Bartlett stands behind Phillip but he doesn't notice, except for Tommy, Josh and Jacob. They all have a look of fear on their faces.

PHILLIP

Thanks for playing boys.

He stuffs the money in his pocket. He stops to look at the boys faces staring at Mister Bartlett.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

What?

He slowly turns around and sees Mister Bartlett. Phillip closes his eyes.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

Oh, no.

Mister Bartlett grabs Phillip by the ear and hauls him off as the boys giggle.

MISTER BARTLETT

Let's go. Your mother is going to hear about this.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

In the kitchen, a raggedy looking woman, JILL STAAB, stands next to Phillip with his deck of cards in her hand.

JILL

Who taught you how to play cards?

PHILLIP

I learned on my own.

JILL

No! I don't believe you. Tell me, who taught you?

He stands mute.

JILL

(continuing; yelling)

Who taught you?

GRANDPA (O.S.)

I did.

Grandpa enters and sits at the table.

JILL

You did?

GRANDPA

Yes, I did.

JILL

Why in the hell are you teaching an eight year old how to play cards?

GRANDPA

Jill, I'm just trying to spend quality time with the boy. I'm just teaching him something that is fun and helpful.

JILL

No, playing cards is not helpful! (to Phillip)

Listen, cards are no good. They will not help you in any way. All they will do is get you in trouble, like at school. Speaking of which you're grounded for one week. You play cards again at school, your punishment will be worse. Do you understand?

PHILLIP

Yes, ma'am.

She chucks the cards in the trash.

JILL

In fact, I don't ever want to see you with another deck of cards in your hand, ever!

Jill storms off.

JILL

(continuing; angry)

Thanks a lot dad!

Phillip looks around and leans towards Grandpa.

PHILLIP

(whispering)

I made seventy five cents today.

Grandpa gives him a thumbs up.

INT. SHED - DAY

Grandpa and Phillip sit on a couple of wooden boxes.

GRANDPA

Look, I got something for you.

Phillip's eyes widen with excitement as Grandpa pulls out of his pocket a braided leather necklace.

PHILLIP

Wow! That's nice.

He puts the necklace on Phillip.

GRANDPA

It looks good on you. Now, this is your good luck charm.

PHILLIP

Will it bring me good luck?

GRANDPA

Well, let's just say that it will be a reminder that you can do anything.

Phillip hugs Grandpa.

PHILLIP

Thank you.

GRANDPA

Okay, okay, let's play some cards.

Grandpa smiles and deals out the cards as Phillip admires the necklace.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

TITLE UP: PRESENT DAY

TITLE UP: WEDNESDAY - CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

A large dark room with a single light hanging over a small round table. The light enhances thick cigar smoke.

SLIM, a skinny, lurpy guy sits across from JOE LOGGIA. Joe is a neatly dressed man and the one who is smoking the cigar. The dim light hides his face.

They are enjoying a game of poker. A large wad of money sits in the middle of the table.

Slim holds a pair of queens.

SLIM

Your move, boss.

Joe looks at his cards and slams them on the table.

JOE

Goddamn it!

Slim lays his pair on the table.

SLIM

You make this too easy for me.

Joe reclines, puffing away on his stogie.

JOE

Hey, why don't you take those cards and shove them up your ass?

They both laugh as Slim gathers his winnings.

THE SOUND OF THE DOOR OPENING AND CLOSING

MICK VENTO stands by the table. He is a husky man, rugged around the edges.

He withdraws a bulging envelope from his suit pocket. He hands it to Joe, accompanied by a hug.

MICK

How are you doing?

JOE

I'm alive. How your mother?

Mick straightens out his suit.

MICK

Well. Doing very well.

JOE

Good. Hey Mick, do you like to travel?

MICK

Sure boss.

Joe reaches to the side of him and places a black briefcase on his lap.

JOE

I need you to deliver this to Paul in Los Angeles. Can you do that for me?

MICK

Sure. Not a problem.

JOE

Do you remember Paul? The short, stocky guy with the temper.

MICK

Yeah, a couple of years ago I did a job for him.

JOE

Good. Make sure he gets this.

Mick grabs the briefcase, Joe holds it tight.

JOE

(continuing)

If he doesn't get this it's my ass. Understand?

MICK

Of course.

JOE

He knows you're coming. Get it there no later then next Friday.

Joe hands the case to Mick. He once again straightens out his suit.

MICK

No worries.

Mick turns to leave.

JOE

Mick! Don't fuck up!

MICK

No worries.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

TITLE UP: FRIDAY - BULLHEAD CITY, ARIZONA

A skeleton of a house where the outside can be seen. walls are missing here and there.

A group of WORKERS huddle in a circle playing cards. HYDE collects the cards.

PHILLIP STAAB, now a grown man, confident, but not overly cocky is amongst the group. He chews on his braided leather necklace.

Next to him is STEVE, who is a nervous wreck.

HYDE

Okay, place your bets. Don't be pussies, lay down some money.

They lay down a few greenbacks. Hyde deals out the cards for the game of blackjack as Phillip concentrates on the cards.

Steve is dealt a queen of hearts and an eight of spades.

STEVE

Finally, a good hand.

Phillip is dealt a two of spades and a four of diamonds.

STEVE

(continuing; to

Phillip)

Oh, that's it. Your fucked.

PHILLIP

Am I?

Hyde has a ten of clubs showing with the hole-card down.

HYDE

Okay Steve, what do you want to do?

STEVE

I'm fucking staying.

HYDE

Phillip?

PHILLIP

Hit me.

Hyde tosses a jack of diamonds, landing in front of Phillip.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

Hit me again.

Hyde throws a four of diamonds.

STEVE

Stay! You got twenty.

PHILLIP

I think I know how to play cards Steve. And besides, I like living on the edge.

Phillip sports a huge grin.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

Hit me.

STEVE

Crazy fucker.

Hyde looks at Phillip with a big smile as he throws another card to Phillip. The card lands in front of him.

It's an ace of spades!

PHILLIP

Twenty one!

Everyone freaks out.

HYDE

You lucky motherfucker.

PHILLIP

Is it luck?

Hyde turns his attention to Steve, who is sweating bullets.

STEVE

(to Hyde)

What do you got?

Hyde flips over his hole-card, it's a queen of hearts.

HYDE

Twenty.

STEVE

Fuck, fuck, goddamn it!

Phillip swipes up his money.

STEVE

(continuing; to

Phillip)

How do you do it?

Phillip stands and stuffs the money in his pocket.

PHILLIP

I don't know.

(a beat)

Hyde said it was luck.

STEVE

Bullshit. That's not luck. You know so much about this, why are you still here?

Phillip displays a confused look.

PHILLIP

What do you mean, why am I still here? I have to hang drywall for a living, that's why I'm still here.

STEVE

No, that's not what I meant. What I mean is, you're very good at this. You should be in Vegas right now cashing in. It's Friday! Take off for the weekend.

PHILLIP

I'm not going back there. I promised myself.

STEVE

Promised yourself? Why? You got talent and skill. Go use it and fuck Vegas in the ass for a change.

PHILLIP

I can't go back.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

On an empty road, Phillip cruises along in his 1981 dull silver Honda Accord. The Accord is falling apart from rust and sounds like it's on its last leg.

Phillip stares blankly at the road.

INT. PHILLIP'S APARTMENT - DAY

An empty, but some what clean place. Beat up lawn furniture accent the quality of class.

Phillip enters the door.

THE SOUND OF PEOPLE HAVING SEX

He proceeds with caution.

INT. LIVING ROOM

BARLOW WINSLOW, a huge, sloppy looking man and a mute, kicks back reclined in a lawn chair.

TANNEY BALTZ sits on an empty milk crate. He looks like a cheap hustler, complete with a ton of gel slicking back his hair.

The television is playing a porno.

PHILLIP

What's this?

TANNEY

We're watching some of your family home videos. Hey Phillip, do you toss off to this shit everyday?

Phillip turns the television.

PHILLIP

What do you want?

Tanney turns it back on.

TANNEY

It's not what I want, it's what Mister Hoyt wants.

Barlow stands up. He is so tall that he's only a couple of inches from the ceiling.

PHILLIP

(nervous)

Look, you'll have it in a few weeks.

Tanney nods to Barlow. Barlow slugs Phillip in the gut. He drops to the floor and coughs.

TANNEY

That felt good, didn't it? I know that you have a lot of bills to pay.

Tanney scopes out the room.

TANNEY

(continuing)

I mean look, you have to keep up on the payments on your furniture. And I'm sure that you're still paying on that nice car of yours. But Mister Hoyt doesn't give a shit about your problems. All he cares about is his money.

Tanney motions to Barlow. He grabs Phillip by the shirt and slams him against the wall. The wall crumbles a little behind him.

Barlow fists him in the jaw. Phillip spits some blood.

PHILLIP

(to Barlow)

Thanks.

TANNEY

You owe Mister Hoyt ten thousand plus interest, which makes it twenty thousand. We're here only as messengers. He said that he wants it by next Friday. That's one week.

PHILLIP

And if I don't?

TANNEY

(laughing)

Well, you'll think this beating was a massage. Come on Barlow, let's go.

Barlow punches Phillip once again in the gut and slams him to the floor.

THE SOUND OF THE DOOR CLOSING

Phillip rolls around in pain, spitting up blood.

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

A trashed room with only a mattress on the floor. Clothes are scattered across the room.

Phillip franticly grabs a few shirts and pants and throws them on the bed. He lifts the mattress and snags a bulging sock. He pulls out a wad of money, counting it.

PHILLIP

Eight hundred, nine hundred, thousand.

He darts out of the room.

INT. KITCHEN

Not much here either, except for empty fast food wrappers.

Phillip swipes a garbage sack.

INT. BEDROOM

Phillip wads up his clothes and shoves them into the sack. He picks up the money and pauses. Sitting on the bed, he rubs his necklace.

PHILLIP

Got to do it.

EXT. PHILLIP'S APARTMENT - DAY

Phillip opens the door on the Honda and tosses the bag in. He hops in and drives off in a hurry.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY

A lonely stretch of asphalt cuts through the dusty flatland.

Mick looks stylish driving in his 2003 Buick Park Avenue.

INT. BUICK

Mick sings along with the golden oldies playing on the radio. Cigarette in one hand and the other hand taps on the briefcase that's occupying the front passenger seat.

He comes upon a sign that reads: NOW ENTERING NEVADA

He takes notice of the sign.

MICK

Finally.

He spots a small, run-down restaurant in the middle of nowhere.

Mick pulls off the road.

EXT. RESTAURANT - DAY

The place is in dying need of repair. A few cars are lined in front of it.

Mick parks in an empty spot. He scouts out the place.

MICK

What a fucking dump.

He grabs the briefcase and gets out.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

The restaurant looks like it hasn't been remodeled since the sixties. The light sound of country music fills the room.

A FEW COWBOYS sit at the bar sipping on coffee.

At a booth, a man sits by himself. This is OLENE, pure white trash and covered in filth. He noticeably bites on his tongue.

Mick makes his entry. He stops by the door and looks around.

Everyone in the place stops drinking and stares at Mick. Olene pops his head out of the booth and sees Mick's briefcase.

Mick continues to the back of the restaurant. Olene, with his eyes, follows the briefcase.

INT. REST ROOM - DAY

Brown filth covers the room. Toilet paper is strung out everywhere. Flies buzz around the sinks and urinals.

Mick stands alone using the urinal while swatting flies out of the way. The briefcase is on the floor between his legs.

He shakes his head in disgust.

MICK

(to himself)

Probably catch something.

THE SOUND OF THE DOOR SQUEAKING OPEN

Olene comes in and parks himself in front of the urinal next to Mick. Still biting his tongue, he scopes Mick out.

Mick gives him a quick glare.

Olene stares at the briefcase.

MICK

(continuing)

What?

(sarcastically)

You want to suck my dick or something?

OLENE

Actually, I do!

Mick flushes and zips up his pants.

MICK

Sick fuck.

OLENE

But instead, why don't you just hand me that case?

MICK

What?

Olene zips up his pants and withdrawals a butterfly knife. He is a little shaky, biting his tongue faster and faster.

OLENE

Hand me the goddamn case.

MICK

(laughing)

Okay, I'll play. But you don't even know what's in this case.

OLENE

I know that it must be pretty important if you're carrying it in here. Come on, hand it over.

MICK

You know, it's people like you that make this world a shitty place.

OLENE

Give me the case. I'm not going to ask you again.

MICK

Okay, it's not worth dying for, right?

OLENE

Right!

Mick smirks.

He lugs the case upwards, smacking Olene in the chin. The tip of his tongue cuts off. He drops to the ground like a sack of potatoes. Blood spills out, covering him.

Mick spits on him.

MICK

Get a fucking job.

Mick casually walks to the sink and turns on the faucet, no water.

MICK

(continuing)

Shit.

Olene tries to scream.

OLENE

(slurring)

You cut off my tongue, fuck! You cut off my tongue.

Olene cries like a baby. Mick squats next to him.

MICK

Well, that's what you get for being a piece of shit.

Mick stands up. He takes out a nine-millimeter Beretta and twists on a silencer.

MICK

(continuing)

Let me fix that for you.

Olene's eyes widen in terror.

Point blank, Mick shoots Olene in the chest and in the head. Blood paints the wall.

INT. HONDA - DAY

Phillip is parked off the side of the road as cars wiz by. He stares at the famous LAS VEGAS sign.

PHILLIP

Okay, you can do this Phillip. You can do this.

He starts up the dying Honda and takes off towards the city.

EXT. VEGAS STRIP - DAY

Bumper to bumper traffic. Phillip's Accord is stuck right in the middle of it at a stand still.

INT. HONDA - DAY

Phillip looks out his window at all the different walks of life along the sidewalk.

Phillip starts to drives a little.

PHILLIP

Alright!

He comes to a red light.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

Damn.

He tilts his head back on the headrest.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The room has a beautiful view of Vegas.

A nicely dressed and groomed Phillip sits on the bed. Tanney and Barlow stands in front of him.

Tanney hands Phillip a bulging envelope.

TANNEY

Use it wisely.

Phillip accepts the envelope. He opens it and flips through the greenbacks.

INT. HONDA - DAY (BACK TO PRESENT)

Phillip has a blank look in his eyes.

THE SOUND OF A CAR HORN

He shakes it off and sees that the light is green. He proceeds to drive.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO - DAY

Today the casino is pretty packed. People are enjoying themselves, drinking and laughing.

Phillip stands motionless amongst the crowd. A worried look is plastered on his face. He turns around and around starting at all the commotion.

Frantically, he darts out of the crowd.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO REST ROOM - DAY

A squeaky clean rest room with a few MEN lined, using the urinals.

Phillip rushes through the room, disoriented. He staggers to a closed stall. He tries to open it but it's locked.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Someone's in here.

He pushes open the next stall door and kneels in front of the toilet. He lets out a load of vomit. Wiping his mouth, he stares at the wall.

INT. CASINO, HIGH ROLLERS ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A small room with one blackjack table.

An attractive female dealer, PAT SILVER, passes out cards to Phillip and a well dressed cowboy, TRAVIS WILLHAM.

Phillip, with a huge stack of chips in front of him, easily sixty grand, eyes the cards carefully but not noticeably.

The bets are already placed.

Travis has a couple of thousand on the table and Phillip has three thousand placed.

The cards are dealt, Phillip glances at Travis' cards. He's got a five of clubs and eight of diamonds.

Phillip takes a look at his cards and he has two aces.

Pat has a ten of hearts showing.

PAT

(to Travis)

Sir? Insurance?

TRAVIS

No.

PAT

(to Phillip)

Insurance?

PHTTTP

No.

Pat barley lifts her hole-card to peek and lays it back down.

PAT

Sir?

Travis taps the table.

She slides a king of clubs.

TRAVIS

Shit! That's it, I'm done.

PAT

Sorry, Mister Willham.

(to Phillip)

Sir?

Phillip places the same amount of chips next to his other bet.

She makes the split and deals him a queen of hearts on one ace and a ten of spades on the other.

PHILLIP

Oh, yeah!

PAT

Good job sir.

Pat flips over her hole-card and it's a jack of spades. She pays Phillip.

Travis gets up to leave.

PAT

(continuing)

Place your bets.

PHILLIP

You know, I'm feeling lucky today.

Travis stops in his tracks.

Phillip slides all his chips, even his new earnings, in the middle of the table.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

I'm going to bet it all.

Pat's eyes are wide open. She motions with her hand, waving.

A stern male pit boss, James, enters. He leans over to Pat. Nothing can be heard, but a light chatter. James nods his head a few times while Phillip casually bites on his necklace.

James goes over to a nearby phone that's in the room and chats on it for a brief moment. He hangs up and gives Pat the thumbs up.

PAT

Good luck Mister Staab.

She taps her hand on the table.

Travis is in full attention. James stands nervously with his arms folded.

Pat begins to deal.

She lays out for Phillip a jack of hearts and a two of spades. She has a king of clubs showing.

PAT

(continuing)

Insurance?

PHILLIP

No.

She peeks at her hole-card.

PAT

Sir?

Phillip taps the table. He receives a three of clubs. He taps again.

He gets a four of diamonds.

PHILLIP

Stay.

Pat slowly turns over her hole-card.

James and Travis lean a little closer to get a better view.

Pat's card flips over. It's a ten of hearts!

Phillip slumps over the table, with his head down.

James smiles and walks out the door.

Travis trots to Phillip and pats him on the back.

TRAVIS

You're good, but not that good. I'd hate to be you.

Travis leaves.

Phillip looks up and witnesses all his chips be taking away by Pat.

PAT

I'm sorry Mister Staab.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO REST ROOM - DAY (BACK TO PRESENT)

Phillip, still next to the toilet, has a blank stare in his eyes.

PAT (V.O.)

I'm sorry, I'm sorry.

He shakes it off and straightens himself out.

PHILLIP

(to himself)

You can do it, you can do it.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO - DAY

The casino is still busy, Phillip walks with confidence through the crowd.

He stops a fine looking WAITRESS. He points to a blackjack table.

PHILLIP

I'm going to need a club soda at this table.

Phillip parks himself at a table on the far right, along with another MAN.

A YOUNG DEALER, that's just excited to be here, greets him.

Phillip throws down a few bucks on the table and the dealer complies with chips.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

I feel good!

YOUNG DEALER

Place your bets.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO - LATER

Phillip, sitting at the table alone, has a big grin on his face due to the growing amount of chips in front of him.

The young dealer passes out cards.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO - LATER

Phillip, at another blackjack table, watches the cards being dealt.

His stack is a little bigger.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO - LATER

At the same table, but with a different DEALER, Phillip collects a nice amount of chips. He's having a good time.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO - LATER

Phillip gets up and collects his winnings. He tosses down a few chips on the table.

PHILLIP

For the dealers.

DEALER

Thank you, sir.

INT. FRONT DESK - DAY

The area is nicely decorated. THREE CLERKS are maintaining the desk. There is a line of PEOPLE for each of the clerks.

Phillip's turn is next.

CLERK

May I help you?

PHILLIP

Yeah, I need to get a money order for twenty thousand.

The clerk types away on the computer.

CLERK

Sure. And who would you like to make that out to?

PHILLIP

Tanney Baltz.

She types out the money order as Phillip places the cash on the counter. She takes the money and gives him the money order.

CLERK

There you go sir. Do you need anything else?

PHILLIP

Just tell me where your mailbox is located.

CLERK

Just around the corner. It's in the wall.

PHILLIP

Thank you.

EXT. VEGAS STRIP - DAY

Traffic backed up forever. Cars honking all over.

Mick sits patiently in his Park Avenue.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Mass of PEOPLE from all walks of life stroll the sidewalk.

One guy stands out like a sore thumb, JOBE WINTERS, a low-life that's been on the streets way too long. He is as skinny as they come without being dead.

He watches the traffic with a close eye. He spots Mick's Buick.

He lifts up his filthy shirt and pulls out a crowbar. Keeping it close to his side, he sprints towards the Buick.

Jobe lashes the crowbar through the window shattering the glass on the passenger side. He quickly snags the briefcase off the seat and runs away.

MICK

Jesus Christ!

Mick bolts out of the car.

He gives chase towards Jobe. Through the crowd, Jobe pushes people out of the way. Mick does the same.

MICK

(continuing)

Get the fuck out of the way!

Jobe makes a sharp turn into the Mirage's parking lot. Mick is a close second behind.

INT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Just about every stall is taken.

Phillip's Honda Accord is noticed very well amongst the much nicer cars in the lot.

Phillip saunters to his Accord. He retrieves his garbage sack luggage.

Jobe, running as fast as he can and looking behind him, careens into Phillip. They both get knocked to the ground. They stare at each other for a quick second.

PHILLIP

You okay?

Jobe continues on his way.

Phillip slowly gets up and brushes himself off.

MICK (O.S.)

Stop him!

Mick comes to a stop right next to Phillip, out of breath.

MICK

Why didn't you stop him?

Phillip grabs his luggage as Mick gasps for air.

PHILLIP

I think that they have a gym here. You should check it out.

Phillip moves on as Mick gets a good look at him, still gasping for air.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

A small place with trash everywhere.

Jobe enters with the briefcase, out of breath.

He brushes some garbage off a table and places the case on top. He struggles to open the locked case.

JOBE

Damn it!

THE SOUND OF A KNOCK AT THE DOOR

Jobe answers the door and is greeted by a couple of men, TIM and DAVID. The pair are decked out in cheap suits and each holding a nine-millimeter.

TIM

It's time to pay.

Tim whacks Jobe on the head with the butt of his gun. Jobe falls to the ground.

INT. SAAB - DAY

Driving along on a back road.

Tim is at the wheel and David is in the passenger seat staring back at the unconscious Jobe.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO ROOM - DAY

A tidy one bed room with the curtains shut. Phillip is sprawled out on the bed snoozing.

INT. BATHROOM - LATER

Phillip is relaxing in a bubble filled tub. A washcloth covers his eyes.

PHILLIP

I deserved this.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO - NIGHT

At the bar, Mick is sipping on a White Russian. He surveys the place landing on Phillip walking into a restaurant.

Mick stares hard at him.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO - LATER

Mick is on his cell phone, eyeballing Phillip at a blackjack table a couple of yards away.

MICK

Yeah, yeah, I'll be there on time. Yeah, I got the money. Bye.

He clicks the phone off and strolls to the table where Phillip is.

Phillip has a healthy stack of chips in front of him.

Phillip wins his hand, happy he looks around and sees Mick. He nods to him, Mick replies.

INT. MIRAGE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lines of elevator doors. A couple of TOURIST wait for their turn.

Phillip walks up to a door and also waits.

Mick enter and stands next to Phillip.

THE SOUND OF A BELL

The elevator door opens and everyone herds in. One of the tourist pushes the button for floor three. Phillip pushes floor five. Mick is out of reach.

PHILLIP

(to Mick)

What floor?

MICK

The same. Five.

The tourists get off at their floor.

Phillip looks at Mick from the corner of his eye. Mick catches him and Phillip smiles nervously, nodding to Mick. Mick does the same.

Phillip sticks his necklace in his mouth and starts chewing.

THE SOUND OF A BELL

They both exit. Phillip gets a little head start down the hall.

INT. HALLWAY

Mick causally walks behind Phillip. Phillip picks up speed while digging in his pocket. He gets his room card ready.

At the door, he frantically tries to slide the card in.

He looks down the hall at Mick getting closer. He finally gets the door open and slams it.

The door won't close. Mick's foot is in the way. Mick forcefully pushes the door open and enters.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO ROOM

Phillip is taken back a little. Mick locks the door with the dead bolt.

PHILLIP

You know, this is a large casino. I'm sure there are plenty of rooms left.

He pushes Phillip on the bed.

MICK

Shut the fuck up.

Mick grabs a chair and lights up a smoke.

PHILLIP

I'm in a non-smoking room.

MICK

Shut up.

Mick whips out his Beretta and gently places it on the table next to him.

Phillip digs into his pocket and pulls out his cash.

PHILLIP

Look, take my cash. Just don't kill me.

MICK

Give me your wallet.

Phillip reaches behind him and gives Mick his wallet.

He opens it and only takes out Phillip's drivers licence. He pulls out a little memo pad and pen. He jots down information from the licence. He puts the pad back into his suit pocket, tossing the wallet and licence to Phillip.

Phillip puts his licence back in his wallet and gives Mick an odd look.

PHILLIP

There's got to be a couple grand there. Please take it, just let me go. I can always win more.

MICK

Exactly!

PHILLIP

What?

MICK

That's what I want you to do for me. Remember earlier today in the parking lot?

PHILLIP

Yeah.

MICK

That piece of shit that ran into you, he got away with something very important. Something that I am responsible for.

PHILLIP

Well, no offense, but that's not my problem.

MICK

That case needs to be delivered by next Friday. It has a large sum of money in it.

Phillip gets up.

PHILLIP

Going to take a leak. You scared the piss out of me.

He heads for the bathroom.

PHILLIP (O.S.)

Sorry, I can't help.

MICK

Yes you can and you will!

THE SOUND OF THE TOILET FLUSHING

Phillip makes a mad dash for the door. Mick grabs him by the shirt and tosses him like a rag doll onto the bed.

MICK

(continuing)

You trying to leave? Do that again and I will kill you. Got it!

PHILLIP

Yeah, yeah, got it.

MICK

Good. Now, you will help me.

PHILLIP

What? Help you find the guy that stole the money?

Mick sits back down.

MICK

No.

PHILLIP

Why not? I'm sure with your connections you can get your money back.

MICK

In my business it doesn't work that way.

PHILLIP

Why not?

MICK

Let's just say I will be taking an early retirement. Got it.

PHILLIP

Yeah, so where do I come in?

MICK

Your going to gamble it back for me.

Phillip sits up in full attention.

PHILLIP

How much are we talking? Twenty, thirty grand?

MICK

Two hundred.

PHILLIP

Holy sweet mother of Jesus! I'm sorry, I can't do it.

MICK

Yes you can. I watched you play down in the casino. You're pretty fucking good.

PHILLIP

What's in it for me?

MICK

Your life.

PHILLIP

Will you give me time to think about it?

Mick reclines in his chair.

MICK

By all means.

Without hesitation.

PHILLIP

Nope, there's no way I can get two hundred grand in a week. It's just not possible.

Mick stands and proceeds to Phillip as he backs away a little.

MICK

You have no choice. You are going to do it.

(more)

MICK (cont'd)

I wrote all your information from your licence, including your social security number, so if you go to the police or try anything fucking stupid, you are dead. Sure, you can get me thrown in prison, but there will always be someone there to take you out. Just remember that. Now, sense we are on a time schedule, you are going to need some motivation. Each day that goes by I'm going to beat you like a wet nigger. The quicker you get the money, the sooner the beatings will stop.

PHILLIP

What's wrong with a few words of encouragement and a pat on the back?

MICK

That doesn't have the same effect as this.

Mick pulls back and slugs Phillip in the nose. He falls flat to the ground.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

The room is dark except for a single light shining on Jobe. He is strapped to a chair, still unconscious.

Out of the dark, Tim chucks a glass of water onto Jobe's face.

TIM

Come on. Wake up.

Tim slaps him across the face. Jobe moans. Tim slaps him again.

MIT

(continuing)

Wake up, fucker!

Jobe comes to.

JOBE

I'm awake! Fuck off!

Tim slugs him in the gut. Jobe coughs a little.

THE SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS

LAWRENCE, a smooth, calm and intimidating man, grabs and sits a few feet from Jobe.

LAWRENCE

How are you doing, Jobe?

JOBE

I've been better.

Tim waits patiently, dying to hit Jobe again.

LAWRENCE

Do you remember me?

JOBE

Yeah.

LAWRENCE

Good! So then you remember that you still owe me, right?

JOBE

Yeah, but...

Lawrence nods to Tim. He lands a fist into Jobe's jaw.

LAWRENCE

I don't want to hear "yeah but". What I want to hear is that you have my money.

JOBE

I can get it.

Again, Lawrence nods to Tim. He throws another fist into Jobe's mouth, splitting his lip. Blood oozes from his lip.

JOBE

(continuing; softly)

Fuck.

LAWRENCE

No, that's not what I wanted to hear either. Where is it?

JOBE

Please, give me some time.

LAWRENCE

Okay, I'm a nice guy. You have until Thursday. But if you don't have it, Tim here will have no choice but to kill you.

Tim grins.

LAWRENCE

(continuing)

Got it!

JOBE

Yeah.

LAWRENCE

Remember, we know where you live.

Lawrence leaves.

LAWRENCE (O.S.)

Get that piece of shit out of here.

Tim steps up and hits Jobe one more time.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jobe staggers through the front door. He wipes his bleeding lip as he inspects the case.

INT. BATHROOM - LATER

The bathroom is more filthy than the rest of the apartment.

Jobe opens a pill bottle and shakes out a few pills. He puts them in his mouth and turns on the faucet, leaning over and taking a few gulps.

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Jobe flops down on the stained mattress. His eyes start to slowly close.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO - DAY

TITLE UP: SATURDAY

Very busy today, even in early morning. Most of the tables and slot machines are occupied.

Mick and Phillip enter on the casino floor. Phillip has a wad of tissue lodge up his nose. He pulls it out and checks if it's still bleeding. He tosses the tissue.

MICK

Come on, let's grab a table.

They climb on chairs at a blackjack table and make themselves comfortable. Phillip looks at Mick, surprised.

PHILLIP

You going to play?

MICK

No, I'm just going to watch.

PHILLIP

Well, you can't sit there then. These chairs are for players only. You got to stand.

MICK

Fuck you. I'm not standing.

An ORIENTAL DEALER cuts in.

ORIENTAL DEALER

(to Mick)

He's right, sir. For players only.

Phillip smiles at Mick.

MICK

Shit.

Mick stands.

The oriental dealer notices Phillip's injuries.

ORIENTAL DEALER

What happened to your face?

PHILLIP

Train wreck. Come on, let's play some cards.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO - LATER

Phillip sits at a different blackjack table as Mick stands.

PHILLIP

If you are just going to stand there you may as well play.

MICK

We are trying to make money, not lose it.

You're right.

Phillip continues to play.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO - LATER

Phillip and Mick weave their way through the swarm of people.

PHILLIP

You know, we should go to a different casino.

MICK

Why?

PHILLIP

You don't know a whole lot about this, do you?

MICK

No.

PHILLIP

If you stay at a single casino for too long and win money over and over like I am, they get a little suspicious. They will recognize you and keep a close eye on you. What I do is illegal. I count cards and if they do catch on, it's my ass. Then you can say goodbye to your two hundred grand. You see, casinos like their money and hate losing. They spend millions of dollars on security to catch cheaters like me who take their money. They rely on people like you that suck at gambling to make their money.

MICK

Okay, let's go to a different casino.

PHILLIP

But first, can we get something to eat? That candy bar that you gave me is wearing off.

MICK

The longer we waste time, the longer it will take to get the money and the more beatings you will get.

PHILLIP

Okay, let's go find another casino.

INT. BELLAGIO CASINO - NIGHT

Adults at their worst. Drunken business men, wild and loud women having a good time.

Phillip and Mick are at a blackjack table. Phillip chews nervously on his necklace. His eyes are red and bloodshot.

The bets are placed as the DEALER deals the cards.

Phillip's cards are a jack of clubs and a five of diamonds.

The dealer has a three of hearts showing.

PHILLIP

Hit me.

The dealer complies with a king of clubs.

MICK

Fuck!

Phillip gets up.

PHILLIP

Okay, I'm done for the night.

He moves on as Mick quickly gets up to follow.

MICK

You just lost a hundred bucks. You're not supposed to be losing.

PHILLIP

I'm only human, Mick.

MICK

Come on, we still have a long way to go. Get back there and play.

Listen Mick, I can't win them all. I'm tired and my judgement is all cloudy. We will start fresh in the morning. I need some sleep. And besides, it's getting kind of late, I still need my beating.

MICK

Shit!

INT. MIRAGE CASINO ROOM - NIGHT

Mick is on the chair next to the table counting money.

The light in the bathroom is on and the SOUND OF BRUSHING TEETH CAN BE HEARD.

Mick finishes the counting.

MICK

It looks like we got about eleven thousand.

PHILLIP (O.S.)

That's good.

Phillip pops his head out of the bathroom with a mouthful of toothpaste.

PHILLIP

If we keep steady like this we will have no problem getting the money on time.

He goes back into the bathroom. Mick heads into the bathroom, out of sight.

MICK (O.S.)

Yeah, no problem. So are you ready?

PHILLIP (O.S.)

Wait. Hold on.

THE SOUND OF WATER RUNNING AND TURNING OFF

PHILLIP (O.S.)

(continuing)

Now I'm ready.

THE SOUND OF A FIST HITTING FLESH AND PHILLIP MOANING

INT. BELLAGIO CASINO - DAY

TITLE UP: SUNDAY

A happening place. Wild gamblers are all around enjoying losing their money.

Phillip limps as he walks with Mick right by his side. Phillip holds his ribs.

PHILLIP

Do you think tonight you can hit me on my other side? This side hurts a lot.

 MICK

Yeah. Come on, let's get busy.

INT. BELLAGIO CASINO - LATER

Phillip sits at a blackjack table with a stack of chips and Mick stands towering next to him.

The dealer, RUFUS, an old man that's looks like he has been doing this for a long time.

Phillip eyes the cards as they are being dealt.

Rufus catches his movement. He motions towards a middle aged pit boss, DAN.

DAN

What's the problem?

RUFUS

(to DAN)

Counting.

PHILLIP

No I'm not!

RUFUS

I watched him. He's counting cards.

MICK

(angry)

You're full of shit! He's not counting cards!

PHILLIP

I'm not.

DAN

(to Mick)

Sir, please.

MICK

(to Rufus)

Fuck you, you old geezer.

DAN

(to Phillip)

Take your winnings and leave.

Phillip collects his chips as Mick eyeballs Rufus. The pair start walking away as Mick turns around.

MTCK

(to Rufus)

Fucker!

Rufus smiles. Phillip grabs Mick's arm.

PHILLIP

Come on, let's go.

EXT. PATIO - DAY

Trees shade a nice corner for Phillip and Mick who are drinking a cup of coffee at a table.

A pool is nearby as GUESTS soak up the sun.

PHILLIP

You know, I was counting. But I just made it too obvious. That dealer knew it right off the bat.

MICK

What's wrong?

PHILLIP

I just don't feel good.

Phillip rubs his neck.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

I don't know, maybe it's just lack of sleep or the pressure.

He feels for his necklace and can't feel it. He panics.

(continuing)

My necklace! Where did it go?

MICK

Relax, I saw it in the bathroom this morning. Christ.

PHILLIP

That's why I've been playing so bad today.

MICK

It's just superstition.

PHILLIP

Maybe so, but I still need it.

Mick rolls his eyes.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO ROOM - NIGHT

Phillip is crashed out on the bed. Mick stares out the window admiring all the glittering lights.

He turns to look at Phillip and checks his watch. The time reads nine-thirty five.

MICK

(to himself)

Call it an early night.

He stares at the large bundle of money on the table. He once again looks over at Phillip and smirks.

INT. NEW YORK NEW YORK CASINO - DAY

TITLE UP: MONDAY

Fairly packed and noisy.

Mick stands next to a smiling Phillip who has fresh bruises on his face and his necklace is on. He claps his hands together once and takes a deep breath, coughing from the smoke in the air.

PHILLIP

Ah, I feel good today. Let's do it!

INT. NEW YORK NEW YORK CASINO - LATER

At a blackjack table, Phillip makes himself comfortable. A female dealer, CLAIR, stares at his bruises.

CLAIR

What happened to you?

He throws down some money.

PHILLIP

I slipped in the shower. Shall we get started?

He slides his necklace in his mouth. He places his bet.

Clair deals him a three of hearts and a two of clubs. He notices that Clair is showing a king of spades.

Phillip casually taps the table. Clair passes a ten of diamonds.

Again, he taps. She slides a five of hearts.

He waves his hand over the cards.

Clair flips her card and reveals a ten of clubs. She pats the table twice.

CLAIR

Push. Place your bets.

Phillip places his bet.

She deals him a queen of diamonds and a jack of spades. She shows a queen of hearts. Phillip leans back and thinks.

CLAIR

(continuing)

Sir?

Mick looks on with a worried expression. Phillip still thinks, staring at Clair's queen of hearts.

Phillip slowly raises his index finger and pauses for a moment.

Clair stares at the finger. Finally, he waves his hand over the cards.

Clair flips over her card, it's a nine of clubs. Phillip relaxes into his chair.

That was close.

INT. NEW YORK NEW YORK CASINO - LATER

Phillip and Mick casually stroll through the casino.

PHILLIP

What are we up to now?

MICK

About eighty five thousand.

PHILLIP

You know, this way will take awhile. Let's play with the high rollers. We can get the money a lot sooner. What do you say?

Mick stops Phillip in his tracks.

MICK

No fucking way! If you lose, you lose big! No, fuck that! I lose too. Too risky.

PHILLIP

Well, it was just a thought.

MICK

Let me do the thinking.

INT. TREASURE ISLAND CASINO - DAY

TITLE UP: TUESDAY

Phillip, with some new bruises accompanying the old ones, relaxes in a chair watching the keno board with Mick. Phillip holds a keno card, while the numbers come up.

MICK

So how long have you been playing cards?

PHILLIP

Since I was eight. I used to play at school. Got caught and my mother, well she told me that gambling is not a way to make a living. I saw different. So naturally I stilled played, but only after school.

MICK

You're really good.

PHILLIP

Yeah, well I owe it all to my grandfather. He taught me everything. But I still have flaws.

MICK

Doesn't everybody?

INT. CASINO, HIGH ROLLERS ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Still in the same room with Pat, Phillip slowly lifts his head and stands up.

He stares as his chips being taken away faster and faster and faster, until a blur.

INT. TREASURE ISLAND CASINO - DAY (BACK TO PRESENT)

Mick grabs Phillip's arm.

MICK

Phillip? Phillip?

Phillip shakes it off.

MICK

(continuing)

Phillip?

PHILLIP

Yeah?

MICK

What the fuck is wrong with you?

PHILLIP

Nothing, why?

MICK

You just seem out of it.

PHILLIP

I'm fine.

MICK

Good, let's get some money.

INT. TREASURE ISLAND CASINO - LATER

At a blackjack table, Phillip takes a seat. Mick watches on.

The dealer, DAVE, looks at Phillip's damaged face.

DAVE

What the hell happened to you?

PHILLIP

Yeah, it's a funny story. I got really drunk last night and I guess, what everyone was telling me, I fell down a flight of stairs. Haven't you every got so piss drunk that you can't remember what happened?

DAVE

No.

PHILLIP

Well, I'm not ever going to get that drunk anymore, that's for sure.

Phillip chuckles a little.

Dave glances at Mick. Mick returns a smile.

DAVE

Yeah, funny story.

Phillip starts to chew on his necklace.

PHILLIP

Okay, enough wasting time, let's play.

Dave deals out the cards.

Phillip is dealt a ten of clubs and a six of spades. Dave has a two of diamonds showing.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

I'll stay.

MICK

What?

Shhht! I know what I'm doing. Watch this.

Dave turns over his card, it's a three of clubs.

DAVE

Five!

Dave draws another card, a queen of hearts.

DAVE

(continuing)

Fifteen!

Once more Dave draws and turns over a king of diamonds.

DAVE

(continuing)

Bust.

Phillip turns towards Mick and sports a cheesy smile.

A young man, BARRY, joins the game. He smacks gum with a nervous twitch.

Phillip looks at him as does Barry, with a scared smile.

DAVE

(continuing)

Okay, place your bets.

Phillip throws his chips in and so does Barry with shaky hands. Dave deals the cards.

Barry eyes the cards counting them, making it way too obvious. Phillip shakes his head, trying not to laugh.

Dave notices. He waves over at a pit boss, LEWIS.

LEWIS

What's going on?

Dave mumbles to Lewis.

LEWIS

(continuing; to Barry)

Sir, take your chips and leave.

BARRY

Why?

LEWIS

Counting.

BARRY

I was not!

LEWIS

Leave.

Barry gets up and leaves.

MICK

Yeah, get the fuck out of here! It's people like you that destroy the game!

Lewis leaves.

MICK

(continuing; yelling
to Barry)

Cheater!

DAVE

Sorry about that. Place your bets.

Phillip doesn't place a bet.

PHILLIP

(to Mick)

You know, we haven't tried roulette since we've been here.

Phillip collects his chips and walks off. Mick follows.

MICK

What are you doing?

PHILLIP

Leaving!

MICK

Why? It was that guy they caught counting, not you.

PHILLIP

Yeah, I know. He was so bad at it, a blind man would have noticed.

(more)

PHILLIP (cont'd)

But now the dealer is on edge and he will be staring at me to make sure I'm not counting of anyone else who sits at that table. You see, it's kind of like a rush for them to catch a cheater.

(a beat)

Like us.

MICK

Well, let's get another table.

PHILLIP

You up for roulette?

MICK

No!

INT. TREASURE ISLAND CASINO - LATER

A large crowd gathers around a roulette table. Phillip is amongst the crowd. Everyone cheers and laughs.

Mick, with a pissed off look, stands back looking at the action.

Phillip places chips on numbers as the ball spins. The ball comes to a stop and everyone cheers again. Phillip collects his winnings.

He looks back at Mick. Mick shakes his head in annoyance.

Phillip again places his bets.

An awfully dressed tourist, HAROLD, approaches the roulette table. Everyone's attention is on the table, except Mick.

Harold looks around and squeezes closer in next to Phillip.

With the ball spinning, Phillip bends over and places more bets.

Harold's hand creeps up a little on the table next to Phillip's chips. He snags a few chips.

Mick grabs Harold by the shirt and drags him into a clearing.

MICK

Fucker!

Mick lands a hard fist into Harold's face. He drops like a ton of bricks as the chips fly out of his hand.

Everyone at the table turns to watch the action. Phillip watches in shock.

MICK

(continuing)

Get up you fucker!

Mick repeatedly kicks him in the stomach.

MICK

(continuing)

You piece of shit!

Phillip pulls Mick away, but not before Mick kicks Harold in the face.

PHILLIP

That's enough. What are you doing? What's with you?

Adrenaline is pumping through Mick, breathing heavy.

MICK

That fucker stole chips from you at the table.

PHILITP

Oh!

Phillip kneels down by the moaning, bleeding Harold.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

I get this kind of beating from him everyday.

TWO CASINO SECURITY GUARDS rush over and pick Harold up.

SECURITY GUARD

What's the problem?

MICK

He was stealing chips.

One of the guards whips out a walkie-talkie.

SECURITY GUARD

(on walkie-talkie)

Yeah, can we get a playback on table five?

A pause.

VOICE ON WALKIE-TALKIE

Yeah, it looks like you got the man. He did steal the chips.

SECURITY GUARD

(on walkie-talkie)

Okay, thanks.

The guards haul Harold away. One of the guards stops by Mick.

SECURITY GUARD

(continuing;

whispering)

Nice job.

He gives Mick a thumbs up and leaves.

MICK

(to Phillip)

Stick to cards.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO ROOM - NIGHT

THE SOUND OF THE SHOWER RUNNING CAN BE HEARD

Phillip lays alone on the bed watching television. He turns off the television and gets up. He pauses to stare at the glowing lights of the city.

His attention turns towards Mick's suit jacket on the back of the chair. Taking a closer look, he spots Mick's gun holster underneath the jacket. He slightly slides the jacket over, revealing Mick's Beretta.

THE SOUND OF THE SHOWER TURNING OFF

Phillip's hand slowly grabs the Beretta, pulling it out of it's holster.

MICK (O.S.)

We are going to crack harder tomorrow, wouldn't you say?

Phillip starts to sweat and shake. He raises the Beretta aiming it at the bathroom.

MICK (O.S.)

(continuing)

Phillip?

Mick enters the room in a bath towel. Phillip has the nine millimeter pointed at Mick.

MICK

What? You're going to shoot me?

Phillip starts to shake uncontrollably.

MICK

(continuing)

Go on. Do it. Shoot me. Let's see if you have the stomach for it.

Mick slowly walks towards Phillip.

PHILLIP

I...I can't.

Mick carefully raises his hand and holds the barrel.

MICK

Come on. Let go.

Phillip releases the gun. Mick checks it.

MICK

(continuing)

You had the safety on.

He places the Beretta back into the holster.

Phillip plops down into the chair.

MICK

(continuing)

I hate to burst your bubble, but that's not the first time I has a gun pointed at my head.

PHILLIP

How do you do it? How can you take another persons life?

Mick enters the bathroom.

MICK (O.S.)

Well, not everyone can do it. I guess you just get use to it.

PHILLIP

(softly, to himself)

How did I get myself into this?

MICK (O.S.)

Try to get some sleep. We got a long day ahead of us.

PHILLIP (quietly)

Yeah.

INT. STRATOSPHERE CASINO - DAY

TITLE UP: WEDNESDAY

Today the place is packed. More people are walking and standing rather than gambling.

Phillip, with no new bruises, sits at a blackjack table.

Mick is off to the side.

The dealer, MICHELLE, tosses out cards.

PHILLIP

(to Mick)

Thanks for not kicking my ass last night. I appreciate it.

MICK

Don't mention it.

Michelle overhears the conversation and gives Phillip an odd look.

Phillip places his necklace in his mouth. He has a queen of diamonds and a king of spades. She has a seven of clubs showing.

PHILLIP

Stay.

He turns to Mick, ignoring the game.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

Hey, why don't we go on top and ride the roller coaster?

MICHELLE (O.S.)

Thirteen.

MICK

No, I'm not a fan of rides.

MICHELLE (O.S.)

Twenty three.

PHILLIP

Come on, it will be great.

MICHELLE (O.S.)

Sir? You won.

Phillip swings around.

PHILLIP

Yeah, thanks.

He swings back to Mick.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

What do you say?

MICK

I get sick on them. I just don't like them.

MICHELLE (O.S.)

Place your bets.

Without looking, Phillip grabs a few chips and carelessly places them on the table.

PHILLIP

I need a break. My brain is starting to hurt.

MICK

Alright.

PHILLIP

Yeah!

Phillip bolts out of his chair and starts walking away.

MICHELLE

Sir! Sir! You still have a bet on the table.

Phillip stays standing by the table.

PHILLIP

Okay, what do we have? I got thirteen and you have a four showing. I'll stay.

Michelle turns over her card, it's a ten of clubs. She draws again, it's a king of hearts.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

Bust! Thanks!

He swipes up his chips and pats Mick on the back.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

Let's go!

INT. STRATOSPHERE CASINO - DAY

A line of PEOPLE is formed waiting in excitement for the ride. Phillip and Mick are part of the line.

Mick points to Phillip's necklace.

MICK

So what's the story with your necklace? I see you chewing on that when you play.

PHILLIP

My grandfather gave it to me. It's my good luck charm.

MICK

Well, you're going to have to ask your grandfather for a new one. That one is hanging by a thread.

PHILLIP

I can't.

MICK

Why not?

PHILLIP

He's dead.

The pair are to the entrance of the ride. Mick pushes back and heads away.

MICK

You're on your own. I hate these rides.

Phillip raises his hands in disappointment.

PHILLIP

Well, to hell with you then.

INT. STRATOSPHERE CASINO - LATER

Mick waits by the exit of the ride, smoking.

A man, CARL, taps Mick on the shoulder.

CARL

Hey dawg, got a square?

MICK

What was that?

CARL

Hey-dawg-got-a-square?

MICK

First off, do I look like a dog?

CARL

Um. No.

MICK

Then why did you call me a dog?

CARL

(laughing)

It's just a term, man.

MICK

No, if you don't know my name you say sir or mister, but not dog. And what the fuck is a square?

CARL

A cigarette!

MICK

Oh, you sound like I should know that.

Mick holds up his smoke and inspects it.

MICK

(continuing)

That's funny, it doesn't look like it's square.

CARL

That's just another term, too.

MICK

Well, fuck the term shit. Now, the correct way to ask somebody for a cigarette is "excuse me sir, do you have a cigarette that you can spare?" try it. CARL

Excuse me sir, do you have a cigarette that you can spare?

MICK

No, no I don't. Get the fuck out of here.

Carl leaves in disappointment, mumbling under his breath.

A mass of PEOPLE walk down the stairs. Phillip is the last one coming down. He mopes over to Mick.

MICK

(continuing)

So, how was it?

Phillip walks right pass him.

PHILLIP

Pussy.

INT. THE STEAKHOUSE - DAY

A top notch, high-class restaurant located in the Treasure Island casino. Beautiful music plays in the background.

The place is empty except for an OLD COUPLE.

Mick and Phillip are at a table, each dining on a huge steak.

PHILLIP

So, what is it you do exactly?

MICK

Let's just say I work for a wealthy business.

PHILLIP

How did you get involved in something like that?

MICK

You ask a lot of fucking questions.

PHILLIP

Sorry, just curious.

MICK

My father worked for them, so I just followed in his footsteps.

You said worked. Where is he now?

MICK

Dead. He was shot.

PHILLIP

Doesn't that bother you? I mean, it can happen to you.

MICK

Yes it can. But I try not to think about it. But nobody lives forever. This is all I know. I can't do anything else.

PHILLIP

What's it like?

MICK

What?

PHILLIP

Killing somebody.

MICK

I can't explain it. It's just something you have to experience for yourself.

PHILLIP

I don't think I could do it.

MICK

Not everyone can. That's why I wasn't worried last night when you were pointing my gun at me. I knew you couldn't do it.

Mick takes out a pen and writes the numbers: SIX-SIX-SIX-ONE, twice on a napkin. Phillip looks on.

PHILLIP

What are you doing?

MICK

Writing the number for the safe in our room.

He rips the napkin in half and places it in his jacket. He gives Phillip the other half.

MICK

(continuing)

Don't lose it.

PHILLIP

I won't.

Phillip stuffs it in his pocket.

They continue eating with the music in the air.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

You know what's a funny word?

Mick stops eating. He wipes himself with a napkin and lights up smoke.

MICK

What do you mean? There's lots of funny words.

PHILLIP

Scrotum!

MICK

Scrotum?

PHILLIP

Yeah, isn't that a funny name? Who came up with that name?

The old couple over hears their conversation and looks away in embarrassment.

MICK

Jesus Christ, Phillip. What makes you think of shit like that?

PHILLIP

I don't know. Just trying to make conversation.

Phillip continues to eat.

PHILLIP

(continuing; with a

mouthful)

Don't you ever stop and think about other things other than work and everyday life?

MICK

No, not really.

PHILLIP

Well, you should. That's how I think of things like that. The reason I said it because I always wondered how they came up with that name. Don't you ever wonder why or how things are named or made in this world?

MICK

No. I never have time.

PHILLIP

Too bad.

(a beat)

That's still a funny name though.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO ROOM - NIGHT

Phillip slouches on the bed playing along with keno on the television.

THE SOUND OF THE DOOR OPENS, FOLLOWED BY GIGGLING

Phillip jumps out of bed.

Mick and a half naked show girl, LACY LONG, both staggering and drunk, enters. She giggles uncontrollably.

PHILLIP

I see that you brought your better half with you.

MICK

Get the fuck out of here.

LACY

Yeah, get the fuck out of here.

She slowly grabs for Mick's crotch.

PHILLIP

That's my cue.

Phillip heads for the door.

MICK

Hey, Phillip? Do you want one? I can get one for you.

You make it sound like you order these girls at a fast food joint. See ya.

Lacy starts to undress, revealing a perfect set of perky breast.

LACY

Maybe he can stay and we can have a threesome.

Phillip hears that and quickly runs out the door.

She grabs Mick by the suit jacket and aggressively takes it off.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO - NIGHT

An OLD WOMAN deposits nickels into a slot machine like it was going out of style.

Phillip sits next to her doing the same.

She turns and gives Phillip a gentle look.

PHILLIP

Hi, how are you?

She winks at him. He turns away in fear.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO ROOM - NIGHT

Mick and Lacy are under the covers in bed. Mick is sound asleep.

Lacy lifts her head and looks around. She carefully squirms out of bed, showing her naked body.

She grabs his suit jacket and searches all the pockets. She finds the napkin and unfolds it. She reads the numbers.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO - DAY

TITLE UP: THURSDAY

Phillip is crashed out on a chair in the keno section.

Mick approaches and bumps Phillip's chair.

MICK

Wake up. This is the last day.

Phillip slowly rises and rubs his eyes.

PHILLIP

What time is it?

MICK

Eight.

PHILLIP

At night?

MICK

No, in the morning.

Phillip cuffs his hand over his mouth and blows. He is taken back by the stench.

PHILLIP

Whoa! Let me go and get cleaned up before we get started. I'd hate to kill somebody with my green mist.

MICK

Hurry up. We got about fifty grand to make.

Mick pulls out a massive wad of money out of his pocket.

MICK

(continuing)

Here, while you're up there put this in the safe. Winnings from last night.

Phillip snags the wad.

PHILLIP

I'm surprised this didn't go to your date last night.

MICK

Just put it the fucking safe.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO ROOM - DAY

The room looks like a tornado hit it. The bed trashed and bottles everywhere. A clear sign that the maid haven't got to their room.

Phillip is in the bathroom brushing his teeth. Still brushing, he opens the closet.

He looks down and sees the safe's door is open. He bends down and looks inside, nothing. He raises in shock as the toothbrush falls out of his mouth.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO - DAY

Phillip, with toothpaste foam around his mouth, darts through the casino franticly.

He stops in the middle of the floor and scopes out Mick at the bar.

He dashes over to him, out of breath. Mick stares at Phillip's foaming mouth.

MICK

Jesus Phillip, you could have finished brushing. I'm not in that much of a hurry.

PHILLIP

The money! All the money is gone! Where is it?

MICK

What? That's impossible. The safe was locked.

Phillip wipes the foam off his face.

PHILLIP

Well, it's open now.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO ROOM - DAY

Mick and Phillip slam the door open and heads straight for the safe. Mick surveys the closet as Phillip watches on.

PHILLIP

You just couldn't believe me.

MICK

Shut up! Let me think. Fuck! Who could of taken it?

PHILLIP

Got me!

MICK

The maid!

Phillip flops down on the unmade bed.

I know you're smart and all, but look around! The place is trashed! The maid hasn't got to our room yet. And besides, do you think she would know the combination? No, only you and I know the combination.

Mick grabs Phillip by the shirt and swings him into the wall. Mick sucker punches him in the gut.

MICK

(yelling)

Where the fuck is the money? Where is it?

PHILLIP

What are you talking about?

MICK

You're right! Only you and I know the combination. I know that I didn't take the money, so that kind of narrows it down, doesn't it?

PHILLIP

Okay, you got me. Let me get it.

Phillip starts to limp away from Mick and suddenly turns and whacks Mick in the face. Blood streams down from his nose.

MICK

Oh, fucking son of a whore!

Mick grabs his Beretta and pushes the barrel tight against Phillip's forehead.

PHILLIP

Listen to me! Listen! Don't you think if I had the money I would stick around so you can kill me? No, I would be enjoying a margarita in Taiwan! Far away from you! Think about it!

Mick lowers his gun.

(continuing)

Get a hold of yourself. You need to think these things through before you go ape like that.

Phillip winches in pain.

MICK

Where the fuck did it go?

PHILLIP

How should I know. I'm surprised that high class date didn't cost you a hundred and fifty grand.

Mick comes to life. He dashes to the closet and grabs his suit jacket he wore last night.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

What are you doing?

Mick searches all the pockets, nothing. He slumps and slides to the floor.

MTCK

That bitch. That fucking bitch! I should have seen it coming.

PHILLIP

What?

MICK

That high class date last night?

PHILLIP

Yeah?

MICK

She did cost me a hundred and fifty grand. She stole the combination out of my jacket and when I was asleep, she took the money and ran.

PHILLIP

No! How could you?

Phillip lightly bangs his head against the wall.

(continuing)

Way to be responsible, Mick.

MICK

Don't need to fucking rub it in. Christ! I'll be back.

Mick slams the door.

INT. AUDITORIUM - DAY

A large spacious building. The auditorium is dark except for the stage. A GROUP OF DANCERS dressed in sweats and leotards are practicing their moves.

Lacy is amongst the group.

Mick enters on the top row of chairs. He finds a seat and watches patiently.

The dancers finish their set and walk off the stage. Mick gets up and steps on the stage.

Lacy, not noticing, Mick follows her through the back room.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - DAY

A long stretched empty path with trash lining the walls on each side.

Lacy and a male dancer, LEO, exit out the back door into the alley.

LEO

So, what do you want to do?

LACY

Let's get something to eat and celebrate. We're out of debt now.

Mick enters into the alley and heads towards the pair.

Lacy looks back and spots Mick. He reaches inside his jacket and pulls out his Beretta.

LACY

(continuing)

Oh shit!

Leo looks back and runs. Lacy too runs trying to catch up to Leo. Mick sprints as fast as he can, but still has distance between the two.

Leo bolts in a different direction.

Lacy slips and falls on a thin puddle of water.

Mick catches up to her and grabs her by the hair. He yanks her up as she struggles to get away. Mick takes her behind a couple of dumpsters.

He throws her to the ground.

MICK

Where's my fucking money?

LACY

What are you talking about? I don't have your money.

MTCK

Is that why you ran?

LACY

I swear, I don't have it.

By the look on Mick's face, you can tell he is getting impatient.

LEO (O.S.)

She's telling the truth.

Mick turns around and sees Leo. Leo, with caution, walks up to Lacy.

LEO

She doesn't have it.

Mick grabs Leo by the throat and lands a blow to his face with the butt of his nine millimeter.

MICK

(to Lacy)

Tell me where it is!

Mick slugs another blow in Leo's jaw. Lacy starts to cry.

LEO

Neither one of us have it. We paid off a loan shark with the money.

Pissed off, Mick slams Leo to the ground. He kicks him repeatedly in the stomach.

LACY

Stop! Please stop!

Out of steam, Mick stops. Leo pukes up blood. He crawls into Lacy's arms.

Mick calmly twists on the silencer.

MICK

Let me tell you both a story. When I was a little boy I had to buy booze for my old man because he was such a drunk he couldn't leave the house. So, one day I was at the store getting booze, I wanted some candy real bad. But I didn't have any money. So I stole it. The owner caught me and instead of turning me in to the police, he said I would get off easy. So you know what he did?

Leo and Lacy look at the gun.

MICK

(continuing)

He took me out back. He said I'm going to teach you a lesson. He told me to hold out my hands and he whip my hands with a skinny metal rod. My hands swelled up to the size of a plum. After he was done, he handed me the candy I stole. He said if you want candy, this is the price you are going to pay, nothing is for free. And you know what? I never stole again. So, now you have to pay the price.

Mick points the gun at the crippled pair. They close their eyes.

Mick fires a single shot into Leo's forehead and another shot in the heart. He shoots Lacy in the head and the heart.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO ROOM - DAY

Phillip sits on the bed playing solitaire.

THE SOUND OF THE DOOR SLAMMING

Mick enters.

So? Anything?

MICK

No, nothing.

Phillip snags his luggage off the floor and starts to collect his clothes.

The plastic bag has a hole in it and the clothes fall out of the bag.

MICK

(continuing)

What are you doing?

PHILLIP

What does it look like I'm doing? Game's over. I'm done.

MICK

No, fuck that. We got to win that money back.

Phillip stops packing.

PHILLIP

Today is Thursday! You have to have the money there by tomorrow. There's no way that we, what a minute, I should say I, can get two hundred grand in one day. It's not possible. You're on your own. I did my part.

MICK

It happens all the time in Vegas. Some people make it big in one day.

PHILLIP

Good! Go threaten them with their life. I had enough!

MICK

It's still not over. You're mine until tomorrow. You're not going anywhere.

Phillip pauses by the door.

PHILLIP

How much do we have?

MICK

About twenty.

Phillip takes a deep breath.

PHILLIP

Okay, if I take that twenty grand and turn it into two hundred, we are going to do it my way.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Jobe is on the phone. On the table, the briefcase is pried open with all the money showing.

JOBE

Yeah, I got the money. Come pick me up.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO - DAY

A packed casino today. Phillip struts his stuff through the crowd. He tries to look sharp by tucking in his wrinkled t-shirt. Mick trails behind.

They come to halt by the high rollers room.

PHILLIP

Okay, give me the money.

Mick hands Phillip the large wad of greenbacks.

MICK

Are you feeling okay?

PHILLIP

How do you think I feel? I've got to turn twenty thousand into two hundred in one day. Yeah, no pressure. I feel fine. I can't count cards in here. They watch you like a hawk. It's all skill in here.

MICK

You think you will be able to do it?

PHILLIP

Well, I'm going to give it a shot.

Phillip breathes in heavily.

(continuing)

Wish me something.

MICK

Luck?

Phillip shakes his head and walks into the room.

INT. CASINO, HIGH ROLLERS ROOM - DAY

One table is positioned in the middle of the room. A familiar dealer, Pat, stands with a smile.

PHILLIP

(nervous)

Hi, how are you doing?

PAT

I'm doing fine sir. You look so familiar. I usually remember faces but not names.

PHILLIP

Staab. Phillip Staab. I was in here awhile back. I lost big.

PAT

Oh yeah. Now I remember. Well, take a seat.

Phillip nervously grabs a chair.

PAT

(continuing)

Not to many high rollers today. So, what are we starting off with?

Phillip lays the twenty grand on the table. Pat slides his chips to him.

Phillip starts chewing on his necklace.

PAT

(continuing)

Okay, place your bets.

Phillip slides a thousand dollars worth of chips.

She deals a three of diamonds and a three of clubs to him. She shows a king of clubs.

Phillip taps the table.

She turns a jack of hearts.

PHILLIP

Hit me.

He receives a two of spades.

PHILLIP (continuing)

Stay.

Phillip's eyes zone in on her cards. She flips over a seven of spades.

Under the table, Phillip's fist shakes in excitement.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO - LATER

At the bar, Mick nurses a White Russian. He throws down a few bucks and leaves.

EXT. MIRAGE CASINO - DAY

By the front entrance, taxies and cars come and go, dropping off GUESTS.

Mick has his cell phone out.

MICK

(on the phone)

No, it's fine. I'll be there. Yeah, yeah. I just hit a bump in the road. No worries.

He clicks off the phone. He stands looking around, enjoying a smoke.

INT. CASINO, HIGH ROLLERS ROOM - DAY

Phillip places a two thousand dollar bet. Pat deals him a ten of clubs and an ace of diamonds.

PAT

Blackjack!

Phillip smiles.

EXT. MIRAGE CASINO - DAY

Mick finishes his smoke and starts to head in when he takes a double look.

He sees Jobe across the street getting out of the passengers side of a black 2003 Saab Sports Sedan. Jobe waves at the driver and walks away.

MICK

Motherfucker.

Mick, without looking out for traffic, crosses the street.

Cars and taxies slam on their brakes and honking their horns.

Jobe hears the commotion and sees Mick coming towards him. Jobe tears off down the sidewalk.

Mick picks up speed and follows Jobe on the sidewalk.

INT. CASINO, HIGH ROLLERS ROOM - DAY

Phillip's chips have grown to a decent size.

A WAITRESS enters with a refreshing club soda.

WAITRESS

Your drink, sir.

PHILLIP

Oh, thank you.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

The chase still on a crowded sidewalk. Mick is trailing behind Jobe. Jobe slams and shoves PEDESTRIANS out of the way. He makes a mad dash into the heavily traffic streets.

Desperately, Jobe jumps on the hoods of cars, causing accidents. Cars careen into each other.

With the streets backed up, Mick stands hunched over staring at Jobe.

Jobe now walks on the other side of the street looking at Mick.

MICK

Fuck!

INT. CASINO, HIGH ROLLERS ROOM - DAY

Phillip's chips haven't moved much, but his bets are getting larger. Five grand worth of chips are placed as his bet.

Pat displays an ace, while Phillip has a two of hearts and a five of diamonds.

PAT

Insurance?

PHILLIP

No.

Pat peeks at her hole-card. She flips it over.

PAT

Blackjack. Sorry.

She snags his five grand. Phillip sinks into his chair.

PAT

(continuing)

Place your bets.

He slides a thousand. She deals him two kings. She has a three of clubs showing.

Phillip waves his hand over his cards.

She turns over her card and it's a two of hearts. She draws again and comes up with an ace of diamonds.

Phillip sits up.

She slowly draws one more card. Phillip leans over with anticipation. She lands a five of spades.

Phillip shakes his head in disappointment.

PHILLIP

Unbelievable.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO ROOM - DAY

Mick stretches out on the bed watching television. His eyes slowly start to close.

INT. CASINO, HIGH ROLLERS ROOM - DAY

Phillip's chips have accumulated nicely. His face grows tired. Pat waits patiently.

PAT

Mister Staab?

Phillip snaps out of it.

PHILLIP

Yes?

PAT

Your bet.

He stares at the chips, counting them.

PHILLIP

You getting tired?

PAT

I'm doing okay.

Phillip places ten thousand worth of chips as his bet.

PHILLIP

Let's play.

She deals a king of hearts and a four of spades to Phillip. She shows a two of clubs.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

I'll stay.

Pat turns over her card and it's a four of clubs. She draws again getting a ten of diamonds. Once again she draws a six of spades.

Phillip smiles from ear to ear.

PAT

Bust. Very good, sir.

A male DEALER walks in.

PHILLIP

(to male dealer)

No, no don't do that! Don't tap her yet. Wait. Just one more hand.

PAT

Sorry, my shift is up.

PHILLIP

Just one more hand. Please.

Pat thinks and nods to the other dealer.

PAT

Okay, one more hand. Place your bets.

Phillip, with fear in his eyes, pauses. He takes time to look around.

INT. CASINO, HIGH ROLLERS ROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

In the same room, Pat swipes the huge stack of chips away from Phillip.

PAT

I'm sorry, Mister Staab.

INT. CASINO, HIGH ROLLERS ROOM - DAY (BACK TO PRESENT)

Phillip is in a daze.

PAT

Mister Staab? Mister Staab?

Phillip comes to.

PHILLIP

I'm sorry. Yeah, my bet. Let's see.

He looks at his chips again.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

I have here about a hundred thousand.

Pat's eyes widen.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

Let's get this over with.

He slides all his chips in the middle of the table.

PAT

Mister Staab, are you sure?

PHILLIP

I think so.

Pat grabs the phone that's hanging on the side wall.

PAT

(on the phone)

I need you over here to confirm this.

She hangs up.

PAT

(continuing)

This won't take long.

PHILLIP

I know, I've done this before.

Remember?

She just smiles.

A stuck up pit boss, LARRY, enters. He leans over to Pat as he stares at Phillip. Phillip is relaxed in his chair with a smile.

Larry nods and picks up the phone. Only a slight mumble can be heard from Larry. He hangs up the phone and gives Pat the thumbs up.

Pat taps the table.

PAT

Good luck, sir.

PHILLIP

Is it luck?

She smirks and deals the cards.

Larry and the other dealer looks on like they are staring at a traffic accident.

Phillip is dealt a jack of spades and a king of diamonds. She has a jack of hearts showing.

PAT

Sir?

Phillip gets tense. He leans forward and touches his cards. He looks at Pat. She has a worried look on her face.

He then glances over at the other dealer biting his nails. Larry has a look of death written all over his face.

Phillip's attention is now on the cards. His head down, he slowly rubs his temple. He chews out of control on his necklace.

PHILLIP

Hit me.

Larry face turns from death to happiness.

Pat pauses and returns a look of concern.

Larry clears his throat and sports an angry stare at Pat.

Phillip lifts his head to see the action. She slowly draws a card. All eyes are wide open.

She turns over an ACE OF SPADES!

PAT

Twenty one.

Larry grinds his teeth in frustration.

Pat turns over her card, it's a queen of spades. With a confused expression, she looks at Phillip as he smiles.

LARRY

Pay the man!

He leaves.

PAT

Well done. I haven't seen playing like that in a long time.

PHILLIP

Thank you. But not to be rude, I got to go.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

A pair of TOURIST walk down the long hall.

From around the corner, accompanied by TWO SECURITY GUARDS, Phillip struts his stuff. A black suitcase is handcuffed to his wrist.

The tourist see the gang coming closer and they put their backs against the wall.

PHILLIP

(to tourist)

Thank you very much.

They get to Mick's and Phillip's room.

GUARD #1

Sir, when you're ready to go, let the front desk know and we will escort you out.

Phillip whips out a single dollar bill and snaps it. He stuffs the bill in the pocket of the guard and pats him on the arm.

PHILLIP

Thanks guys.

GUARD #1

Thank you, sir.

Phillip enters the room.

The two guards stroll down the hall and the one guard pulls out the dollar bill.

GUARD #1

(continuing)

Cheap bastard.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO ROOM - NIGHT

The lights are dim as Phillip quietly walks in. Mick is sawing logs on the bed. Phillip sneaks to the side of the bed.

PHILLIP

(yelling)

Wake up!

Mick bolts up.

MICK

Jesus Christ!

Phillip laughs uncontrollably.

MICK

(continuing)

You asshole.

Mick looks at the case. His anger turns to happiness.

MICK

(continuing)

Sooo?

PHILLIP

What?

MTCK

From the looks of it, I'm assuming you did good.

At the table, Phillip lays the case and unlocks the cuffs. He opens the case and turns it around to show Mick the green.

Phillip kicks back in the chair with a moment of pride.

PHILLIP

Yeah, you can say I did very well.

Mick places his hands on the money.

MICK

Jesus, you did it.

PHILLIP

Yes I did. You can kiss my ass later.

Mick extends his hand out to Phillip. He shakes his hand.

MICK

You came through. And for that, I thank you.

Phillip, a little uneasy, stares at Mick.

PHILLIP

Don't mention it.

MICK

Well, I hate to leave but I got to go. This has to be to my contact by tomorrow. Got to hit the road.

Mick whips out a small stack of bills and hands it to Phillip.

MICK

(continuing)

Here you go. It's the least I can do.

PHILLIP

Wow. A grand. Not a bad swap for two hundred. Hey, you might want to use those cuffs. Well, you know, so it doesn't get stolen again.

MICK

Yeah, I will take that advice. So what are you going to do now?

Mick gathers his clothes. He handcuffs himself to the briefcase.

PHILLIP

PHILLIP (cont'd)

I got to be back at work, if I still have a job.

Mick heads to the door.

MICK

You should take that money I gave you and turn it into a few thousand.

PHILLIP

Nope! No more. I'm done with this addiction.

Mick hangs half way out the door.

MICK

You know, you're not a bad guy. I mean I can tell because you never gave up, even after we lost the money.

PHILLIP

You mean you.

MICK

Yeah, but anyway, that's dedication, loyalty and you can take a beating. Do you like your job?

PHILLIP

No!

MICK

I can talk to some people and get you with on with me. Interested? It pays well.

Phillip contemplates for a moment.

PHILLIP

No.

MICK

Are you sure?

PHILLIP

Yeah, I hate my job, but it's a honest living.

MICK

Okay, good luck and take care of yourself.

PHILLIP

You too.

Phillip slowly closes the door but is stopped by Mick's foot. He peeks his head through the door.

MICK

By the way, scrotum is a funny word.

Phillip chuckles as Mick leaves.

PHILLIP

(to himself)

Is it luck?

INT. MIRAGE LOBBY - DAY

Phillip stands at a pay phone. He deposits several coins and dials.

PHILLIP

(on the phone)

Hey, yeah. This is Phillip. I'm on my way. I got caught up in something. Yeah, yeah, anyway I will be into work tomorrow.

A slight pause.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

What? I don't have a job anymore? Thanks a lot!

He slams the phone.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

A few cars occupy stalls. No one in sight, except Phillip walking to his rust bucket of a car.

He looks around for awhile before he jumps into his Honda. He quickly gets out and shoots a sharp stare at Jobe walking on the other side of the lot.

Phillip stealthily gets out and quietly closes his door.

He uses the other cars and concrete pillars as cover. He doesn't take his eyes off Jobe as he gets closer and closer.

Jobe doesn't notice a thing.

Phillip pops out of cover and casually follows behind Jobe.

He reaches out and grabs Jobe by his filthy shirt. Jobe turns around in shock.

JOBE

Sweet shit!

Jobe struggles to break free and brandishes a Glock. He swings the gun around as Phillip snags the gun out of Jobe's hand.

Phillip socks him one in the testicles. Jobe drops to the ground in the fetal position, coughing.

Phillip points the Glock at the crippled Jobe.

PHILLIP

Sorry to hit you there. I know it's a cheap shot, but I'm not much of a fighter.

JOBE

Fuck! You fucker!

PHILLIP

I know I am, where's the money?

JOBE

Who the fuck are you?

PHILLIP

I'm the guy you ran into a week ago. Remember? You had a briefcase with you.

JOBE

(under his breath)

Shit.

PHILLIP

In fact, I'm surprised that your still around here after you pulled a stunt like that. You either have a lot of balls or you're stupid. If I had to put my life on it, I would have to say stupid.

JOBE

I had some unfinished business.

Jobe gets up but is hunched over. Phillip has a tight grip on his shirt.

PHILLIP

Well, unless you want me to rack your balls again, I suggest handing over the money.

Jobe coughs a little more. Phillip drags him towards his Honda. They get in.

INT. HONDA - DAY

Phillip buckles up.

PHILLIP

Where is it?

JOBE

At my place.

PHILLIP

Show me the way.

Phillip fires up the car.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

Buckle up! There's lots of bad drivers out there.

Jobe ignores the command.

EXT. APARTMENT - DAY

A slum, trash ridden complex where everything needs repair.

TWO TODDLERS, covered in dirt, attend to their playing.

Phillip and Jobe walk up a flight of rusty metal stairs. Jobe fiddles, searching for his keys. Phillip grabs him by the shirt and chokes him with the collar, pointing the Glock in the back of his head.

PHILLIP

Listen, there's not going to be anyone in there, right? No friends or your maid in there waiting to take me down?

Jobe is choking.

JOBE

No, how would anyone know you're coming?

Phillip releases a little on the collar. Jobe gasps for air.

JOBE

(continuing)

Paranoid fucker.

Phillip glances around, worried.

PHILLIP

I'm just a little on edge. I just don't feel good about this.

JOBE

We can call it off!

PHILLIP

Open the door!

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Phillip is taken back by the stench. He throws Jobe to the middle of the front room.

Phillip puts the collar of his shirt over his nose.

PHILLIP

Go get the money.

Jobe disappears into another room.

Phillip scopes out the place being careful not to touch anything.

Jobe enters with the case and a Smith & Wesson six-shooter tuck in the back of his jeans, out of sight from Phillip. Jobe hands the case to him.

Phillip carefully makes a clearing on a nearby table, placing the Glock down. He sets the case on top and opens it. The cash is still there.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

Did you spend any?

JOBE

Yeah, a little.

Phillip looks around the room again.

PHILLIP

I don't see anything in here that stands out. How much did you spend?

JOBE

Five thousand. I paid off a debt.

PHILLIP

You're lucky that I'm not going to make you pay that back like I has to. Besides, I'm not sure how you can pay me back. Do you work?

JOBE

No!

PHILLIP

See, now instead of beating you, like I got from the guy you stole this from, I'm going to do something nice.

Jobe pretends to scratch his back, inching towards the six-shooter.

Phillip takes a few hundred from the case and slaps it on the table.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

Take it! Why you ask? So you can get a job instead of stealing. Take that money and get cleaned up. Buy a suit and get a hair cut. And it will probably help if you shower too.

Phillip grabs the case.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

Good luck and I hope I never see you again.

Jobe hurriedly swings the Smith & Wesson around, pointing it at Phillip.

JOBE

No! I want it all. Pass it here.

PHILLIP

Unbelievable.

Phillip shakes his head in disbelief.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

You try to help someone out and this is the thanks I get.

Phillip hands the case to Jobe and without letting go, Phillip suckers punches him in the gut.

The gun dislodges out of Jobe's hand. He shakes it off and tackles Phillip.

They wrestle and each throwing punches. Jobe gets a few more swings in as the commotion continues. Jobe's hand rips off Phillip's necklace. Phillip is unaware of it.

Jobe climbs his way to the top of Phillip, swinging his fists left and right. Phillip manages to tuck his knees in and set his feet on Jobe's stomach.

Phillip thrusts Jobe with his legs, launching him off the ground and into the wall.

Jobe is knocked out. Phillip stands and wipes blood from his nose. He turns away from Jobe and spots the six-shooter on the ground.

He picks it up and opens the chamber. He sees each hole filled with live rounds.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

What's this world coming to?

Jobe, without moving, opens his eyes and stares at Phillip. His hand slides across the mounds of garbage coming to a butchers knife. He grasps it tight. He slowly gets up and raises the knife.

JOBE

Give me the fucking money.

Phillip turns around and sees Jobe running towards him, yelling.

Phillip, with one hand, slaps the gun shut and fires one shot into Jobe's chest. He staggers back, using the wall as a crutch.

Jobe looks down at the damage and touches his wound. In shock, he launches towards Phillip again.

Phillip shoots another round into Jobe's head. Brain and blood covers the wall.

Phillip, with eyes wide open, looks at the gun, shaking.

EXT. APARTMENT - DAY

Still no one around, except the two toddlers, who are silent and motionless. They watch Phillip as he walks down the staircase. Phillip has the briefcase in hand.

INT. HONDA - DAY

Phillip drives through a dirt covered back road. He is physically slump.

He stares down at the Smith & Wesson, that's on the passenger seat, for a moment.

He looks up and swerves to miss a German Shepherd. He pulls to the side and comes to a complete stop by a dumpster.

He grabs the gun and gets out.

He unloads the rounds into his hand and tosses the gun into the dumpster. He then tosses the bullets into some bushes.

Bracing himself on the dumpster, he bends over and vomits.

INT. HONDA - DAY

On the Vegas strip, jammed packed with cars, Phillip waits patently for the traffic.

He glances over at the Mirage Casino and does a double look. He stares down at the briefcase and back at the Mirage Casino.

INT. CASINO, HIGH ROLLERS ROOM - DAY

Pat stands behind the table with a smile on her face. Phillip, sitting at the table, tries to smile, but is too nervous.

He has one hundred and ninety five thousand in chips.

PAT

Mister Staab. It's nice to see you again. I knew you would be back.

PHILLIP

How did you know?

PAT

Someone like you can never give this up.

PHILLIP

Nope, that's where you're wrong. You see these chips. I'm going to triple it and move far from here as possible and retire.

PAT

Okay, let's get started. Place your bets.

PHILLIP

Call your pit boss.

Phillip slides the whole stack of chips in the middle of the table.

Pat picks up the phone. She mumbles a little and hangs up.

PAT

This will only take a...

PHILLIP

(interrupting)

Moment.

Larry enters and smiles at Phillip.

Pat leans over and whispers in his ear. Larry nods his head. He picks up the phone and mumbles a little. He gives Pat the thumbs up.

Pat taps the table.

PAT

Good luck.

PHILLIP

Is it luck?

She deals the cards. He gets a king of spades and an eight of diamonds. She has a five of clubs showing.

Phillip waves his hand over his cards.

Larry watches on with anticipation.

Pat turns over a ten of hearts. She draws again and it's a king of clubs.

PAT

Bust.

Larry cringes as he begins to leave. Phillip gently grabs Larry's arm.

PHILLIP

You might want to stay. I've got one more bet to do.

He complies. Phillip places all of his three hundred and ninety thousand in chips as his bet.

Larry once again picks up the phone, mumbling away. He gives Pat the thumbs up.

She taps the table again.

Phillip smirks as he grabs for his necklace. He freaks out a little. He feels around his neck, nothing. He concentrates on the game.

Pat lays down for Phillip a queen of spades and a jack of hearts. She has a three of diamonds showing.

Phillip's hands shake uncontrollably.

PHILLIP

(continuing)

Stay.

She slowly turns over her card and it's a ten of clubs. She draws again and it's a three of spades. Once more she draws and turns over a five of spades.

PAT

Sorry, twenty one.

Phillip buries his head into his arms on the table.

Larry leaves with a huge grin on his face.

Phillip peeks up and witnesses all his chips taken away by Pat.

PAT

(continuing)

I'm sorry, Mister Staab. I'm sorry.

EXT. MANSION - DAY

By the pool, PAUL TUCCI, sits by a lawn table underneath an umbrella. Paul, in his mid fifties and dressed in shorts and a Hawaiian shirt. He sips on a Martini.

A COUPLE OF BLONDES, dressed in string bikinis, lay out catching some rays.

a LARGE BODYGUARD, in a nice suit, stands no more than five feet away from Paul.

A sharply dressed Mick walks up to the bodyguard with case in hand.

MICK

I'm here to see Mister Tucci.

Mick raises his arms out. The bodyguard frisks him up and down. The bodyguard pulls out Mick's Beretta and guides him to Paul.

MICK

(continuing)

Hello, Mister Tucci.

Paul turns to greet him. Mick gives him a hug.

PAUL

Mick! Please, call me Paul. Have a seat.

Mick makes himself comfortable.

PAUL

(continuing)

Can I get you anything?

Mick checks out the blondes.

MICK

Um, no. I'm fine, thank you.

PAUL

You're a little later than I thought. I thought you would be here yesterday.

Paul takes a sip of his drink. A little dribble spills on his shirt.

MICK

I had..

Paul furiously gets up and slams his drink on the ground.

PAUL

Fuck! This was a new shirt!

He sits down.

PAUL

(continuing)

Sorry. You were saying?

MICK

I had a few obstacles on the way.

PAUL

Everything okay then?

Mick places the case on the table.

MICK

No worries. I took care of it.

Mick unlocks the cuffs and slides the case to Paul. He opens the case and places his hands on top of the cash.

PAUL

That's what I like about you. You let nothing get in your way. You always take care of your business.

Paul slams the case close.

PAUL

(continuing)

Well, it looks like you did your job. What are you going to do now?

Mick gets up and straightens his suit.

MICK

Vacation.

PAUL

Vacation?

MICK

Yeah, get away for awhile. I need time to think, relax and enjoy some of the finer things in life.

Mick bends over and gives Paul another hug.

MICK

(continuing)

See you, Paul.

PAUL

Yeah, take care of yourself.

Mick walks away and picks up his Beretta from the bodyguard on the way.

PHILLIP (V.O.)

Maybe I should have left Vegas when I was ahead. I mean two hundred thousand dollars is a lot of money. But greed and a big head got the best of me. Pat was right! Someone like me can never get away from gambling. It's in me, in my blood. I did learn one thing though, it's a little bit of both. Gambling is luck and skill.

INT. MIRAGE CASINO - DAY

A packed and noisy place where every table and slot machine is busy.

Phillip stands out in the crowd. He's the one that's standing motionless behind a blackjack table dressed in a dealers uniform.

He stares blankly at the ceiling.

PHILLIP (V.O.)

I also came to the conclusion, if you can't beat them, join them.

FADE OUT:

THE END