

HOLY ROLLER

by

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FADE IN

EXT. THE STRIP, LAS VEGAS - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

The Strip is bumper-to-bumper and the sidewalk shoulder-to-shoulder. The men are in suits and hats, and the women dressed to kill. It's 1960 Las Vegas, baby.

The marquee at the Flamingo headlines:

TONIGHT ONLY - THE RAT PACK: FRANK SINATRA, DEAN MARTIN, AND SAMMY DAVIS JR.

INT. FLAMINGO CASINO - SAME

The casino is packed and the cigarette smoke thick. It's loud and there's a lot of energy in the air.

The lights and din of slot machines can hardly compete with the commotion at a Craps table when a player is on a run.

CRAPS TABLE

It's crazy. The excitement and enthusiasm of the crowd is focused on the current shooter, FATHER DAVE (50'S).

In a black suit and clerical collar, he stands with eyes closed and hands clasped high. His silent prayer so earnest that his interlaced fingers are clenched white.

FATHER DAVE

Amen!

A couple of Amens and a Hallelujah comes from the crowd.

The CROUPIER smiles and appears to be on his side as well.

CROUPIER

Four in a row, let's see the throw!
Father Dave, you're the still the
shooter.

In his now open hands are a ROSARY and a pair of RED DICE.

FATHER DAVE

Come on, Jimmie Hicks! Hard six!

It's slow motion as he throws the dice. The congregation gasps as they tumble against the far bank and stop.

Both dice show a three.

CROUPIER

Six-Six-Six, winner six! Came hard!

The cheers are deafening. The pay-out is huge as piles of chips are pushed and placed around table.

A nearby PLAYER grabs their chips from the table and hands a stack to Father Dave with a tear in his eyes.

PLAYER

For the kids. Or Bibles. Or, hell,
I don't know...go buy yourself a
hooker! Nice run, Padre, thanks!

The player turns and disappears into the masses.

FATHER DAVE

Uh, bless you, son.

The Croupier slides the dice back to Father Dave with his stick and smirks.

CROUPIER

Throwing five! Keep it alive!

Father Dave retrieves all his winnings except for a short stack to cover his original bet.

FATHER DAVE

I can only pray.

He picks up the dice and pulls out his Rosary. He clenches his hands high once more for a short prayer.

FATHER DAVE

Amen!

The dice take a high arc, hit the bank, and stop.

CROUPIER

(sheepish)

Up pops the Devil. Seven out, line
away.

A collective sigh of disappointment. The dealers rake in the losses and the crowd quickly dissipates.

Father Dave slides a stack of chips to the Croupier.

FATHER DAVE

Something for the boys.

The Croupier shakes his head and slides the stack back to Father Dave.

CROUPIER

Sorry, Father. No can do. Give it
to the homeless.

FATHER DAVE
 You're top shelf. Pass on my
 blessings to the house.

CROUPIER
 You got the Lord on your side,
 that's for sure. See you Sunday.

Father Dave racks his chips and turns for the cashier.

EXT. FLAMINGO ENTRANCE - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

As Father Dave exits, a Valet hails a cab and opens the door. He offers a tip but the Valet refuses as well.

INT./EXT. CAB - CONTINUOUS

He slides into the back seat.

FATHER DAVE
 Saint Alphonsus, please.

He watches with a faraway stare as the lights of the Strip fade away as the taxi distances itself from Sin City.

EXT. SAINT ALPHONSUS - DAWN

The church is remote with barren desert on both sides and across the street. From the outside, it's modest at best.

Father Dave strolls up the front path and enters the church as the taxi pulls away from a weathered sign: Saint Alphonsus Redemptorist Center.

INT. SAINT ALPHONSUS - CONTINUOUS

Upon entry, he gives the sign of the cross. He walks down the aisle, turns at the pulpit, and through a side door.

CLERGY OFFICE

Behind the desk is a combination safe. He kneels, spins the dial a few turns, and opens the safe.

From one pocket he pulls two banded stacks of twenty dollar bills. He places one stack in a shoebox labeled RENOVATION and the other stack in one labeled CAYMAN FUND.

From the other pocket comes the Rosary and a pair of RED DICE. He kisses the dice and places them gingerly in a small velvet bag.

The dice bag gets placed in the safe while the Rosary gets tossed on the desk.

Father Dave locks the safe and has a seat at the desk.

He takes off his clerical collar, puts it in a drawer, and pulls out a bottle of Irish whiskey from another.

As he pours two fingers, FATHER ROSS (50) enters. He wears a sweatshirt and shorts. He's covered in sweat.

FATHER DAVE
(raises his glass)
Brother Ross.

FATHER ROSS
Brother Dave.

FATHER DAVE
Good run?

FATHER ROSS
Five miles. And you? A good run?

FATHER DAVE
Five times. Never suspected a
thing.

FATHER ROSS
(thumbs his collar)
Perk of the trade.

FATHER DAVE
It's a sure thing.

FADE TO BLACK