

"STRIPPERS ARE PEOPLE TOO"

Written by  
O'Shea Wright

(315) 800-2555  
osheawright@outlook.com

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FADE IN.

INT. THE STRIP JOINT - MIDNIGHT.

Club music playing.

PETE, STEVE, CANDY, and ERIE CANAL.

PETE is having the time of his life. With plenty of cash, he REWARDS the strippers. Even those just WALKING by, get HANDED a few dollars.

He is getting a feel of the strippers. TOUCHING their butts, giving them HUGS, and trying to get KISSES from the girls.

STEVE on the other hand is not having much fun. He LOOKS around the room constantly, trying to find a clock to see what time it is.

PETE.

(Throwing money on the stage.)

Now, that's what I like to see!

CANDY.

(To Steve)

Hey honey, can I do something for you, baby?

(Places her hands on Steve's knee.)

STEVE

(Wipes her hands off of his knee and grunts.)

No, thank you!

(Turns to Pete.)

Hey Pete, I'm ready to go!

PETE

(Sighs.)

Enjoy the party Steve, shit! I'm not ready yet.

(He grabs one of the strippers hands.\_

Keep going, we aren't leaving yet.

STEVE RISES from his seat to GO to his car and on the way, he SEES ERIE CANAL doing her usual BEND OVER routine. He STOPS, TAKES A LOOK at the floor under her to notice no money.

STEVE

(Voice over)

Rough night I'm guessing.

He CONTINUES to his car.

A few minutes later, STEVE WALKS back into the strip joint to ERIE CANAL.

STEVE.

So, what's up beautiful? No customers tonight?

ERIE CANAL

(Approaches him, lifting her leg)  
I don't know, are you a customer?

He COUGHS up.

STEVE.

No beautiful, I don't agree with this stripping thing.

ERIE CANAL.

Well, why are you talking to me then? Get the fuck out of here!

He GETS up and THROWS \$20 at her.

STEVE.

Here you go, do something beneficial with yourself!

He TURNS away with disgust on his face. He then WALKS to PETE, who is getting a LAP DANCE from CANDY.

STEVE.

Pete, why are you doing this? You're acting just like the rest of these maniacs.

(Steve looks around the club at all of the guys.)

PETE

(Turns to Steve.)

Man, fuck that, she likes doing it, and I like getting it.

PETE TURNS back to CANDY.

STEVE

(Looks around the room.)

Man look, I'm ready to go, if you're not, I'm leaving your ass!

PETE quickly JUMPS up.

PETE.

All right man, shit! Let's go.

They WALK out of the club.

CUT TO.

INT. CAR - EARLY MORNING - NEXT.

PETE DRIVES, STEVE SITS on the passenger side.

STEVE.

(To Pete)  
Hey Pete?

PETE.

Yeah, man, what's up?

STEVE.

What do you know about that chick, Erie Canal?

PETE

(Laughs.)

Man, that chick is a professional. She's been doing this stripping shit for a minute. Why, what's up? Don't tell me you're catching feelings for that broad.

STEVE

(Chuckles)

No! I don't even know her to be catching feelings. But man, she just seems like she's confused.

PETE.

Man, to be honest with you, I think all of them girls are confused. They're basically selling themselves short.

CUT TO.

EXT/INT. STEVE AND PETES APARTMENT BUILDING - EARLY MORNING  
- CONTINUED.

STEVE and PETE WALK into the building. PETE TURNS his attention to STEVE.

PETE.

Hey Steve, I've got to run somewhere real quick, I'll be right back.

He makes a quick EXIT for the door.

STEVE.

(Looks at him weird, while calling out to him)  
Man, don't go to that strip club!

PETE.

I'm not. I'll be back!

He WALKS out the door.

CUT TO.

EXT. THE STRIP JOINT PARKING LOT - EARLY MORNING -  
CONTINUED.

The strip joint is closing.

PETE EXITS his car and STANDS by the entrance of the Strip  
Joint, which has a closed sign in the front window.

PETE

(Says to himself)

Damn!

CUT TO.

INT/EXT. THE STRIP JOINT - DRESSING ROOM - EARLY MORNING -  
CONTINUED.

ERIE CANAL is GETTING her things out of the dressing room.  
When she EXITS the club, she is APPROACHED by a DRUNK MALE  
CUSTOMER.

DRUNK MALE CUSTOMER.

Hey cutie! How you doing tonight baby? Why don't you come

here, and show me what you're working with!

He GRABS her.

ERIE CANAL  
(Struggling to go free)

Let go!

DRUNK MALE CUSTOMER.  
Come on baby, what you mean let go?

PETE hears the ruckus and he GOES to see what is going on.  
When he SPOTS the DRUNK MALE CUSTOMER, he WALKS over to him.

PETE.  
Hey man, what are you doing? Let her go!

DRUNK MALE CUSTOMER  
(To Pete)  
What the fuck you just say to me? Let her go? You don't  
know me.

PETE.  
Come on man. Relax. Just let her go. I don't need no  
problems.

PETE APPROACHES him.

DRUNK MALE CUSTOMER  
(Lets Erie Canal go and approaches Pete.)  
If I let her go, I'm grabbing you, bitch!  
(He gets in Pete's face and grabs a hold of his arm.)  
Do you like when I do that? No?  
(He shoves Pete's arm away.)  
So stay the fuck out of my business!

FIGHT SCENE.

PETE PUSHES the DRUNK MALE CUSTOMER and THROWS a swift jab to his face. He HITS him again, and then JUMPS on him, THROWING swift blows to his face. ERIE CANAL TRIES to break it up and she STRUGGLES for a bit, but finally, PETE CALMS DOWN and STOPS. He RISES from the DRUNK MALE CUSTOMER, PICKS him up off of the ground and THROWS him to his car.

PETE.

(To the drunk male customer)  
Get the hell out of here!

PETE TURNS to ERIE CANAL.

PETE.

Are you Okay?

ERIE CANAL.

Yes, I am. And thank you.

PETE.

No problem.

(Pulls out a cigarette.)

You smoke?

ERIE CANAL.

Oh, no thank you. What are you doing here anyway? It's closing time.

PETE

(Grunts, while looking up and down her body)  
I'm just coming to enjoy the scenery.

ERIE CANAL.

Oh!

She GIGGLES.

PETE

(Takes a hit of cigarette.)  
But, if you don't mind me askin, where you from?

ERIE CANAL.  
Missouri.

PETE.  
Oh! Well, what are you here for?

He takes a PUFF of his cigarette.

ERIE CANAL  
(Sighs.)  
For this. The only way to make good money these days.

PETE.  
Yeah, I know what you're saying. But listen, you remember that guy who was here earlier? He was the one who was at your stage.

ERIE CANAL.  
Oh him? Yeah. Guy's crazy.

PETE.  
(Raises eyebrow)  
What you mean?

ERIE CANAL.  
He said he doesn't approve of what I'm doing.

PETE  
(Laughs)  
Yeah, that sounds like him. I think he's got an interest for you. I don't know, just the way he was talking about

you.

PETE TAKES a PUFF of his cigarette.

PETE.

So why do you do this anyway? This stripping thing?

ERIE CANAL.

My daughter. I got to take care of her and this seems like this is the only way. I've been doing this all my life. It seems to pay the bills, so, this is what I do.

PETE.

Yeah, I feel you. But, you got to work tomorrow?

ERIE CANAL.

Yes I do.

PETE.

All right, I'll see you tomorrow.

PETE LEAVES.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

INT. PETE AND STEVE'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON.

STEVE is WATCHING TV, when a commercial comes on about the strip joint. ERIE CANAL is on it.

ERIE CANAL.

So guys, do you like your girls hot and horny? Or wet and sexy? We have em both right down here on Tip Side Road. Come and see.

STEVE TURNS off the TV.

STEVE

(Talking to himself)

I don't think this is what she should be doing. To be a damn stripper? No, that can't be it.

PETE COMES from the bathroom.

PETE.

Still talking about that Erie chick? Man, why you on her like that?

STEVE.

It's not even that. I just think she's belittling herself.

PETE.

That's all them strippers bro. But, you know how the game works. Got to get that quick dollar.

He SITS beside STEVE.

PETE.

Hey buddy, last night, I went there.

STEVE

(Sighs.)

I thought you did.

PETE.

Yeah, and when I did, I seen Erie Canal getting picked on by this guy, talking about, "Come with me baby." And I won't lie, I fought him.

STEVE.

You fought him? Why the hell would you do something that stupid?

PETE.

What kind of brother would I be if I didn't? I know you are attracted to her, and I'm not going to let anybody mess with my brothers romantic interest. I know you want to talk to her Steve, you just don't want to admit it.

(He rises from his seat.)

Look man, you need to go back down there, and tell her how you feel. Just let her know that she's doing the wrong thing, and then, get her to leave with you, and just explain to her that she's in the wrong line of business.

STEVE.

You crazy Pete!

(Rises from seat.)

But, I think I'll do that. What time does it open?

PETE.

Not till nine tonight, so you got a minute, but, just prepare yourself for the worst.

STEVE.

Worst? What do you mean worst?

PETE.

Man, a girl well known like her, ain't just going to give that kind of job up. It's a quick way to make some money. And by what she told me, she does this, so she can take care of her daughter, so, you already know, it's going to be difficult to persuade her to leave a business where she gets paid big time.

STEVE.

Oh, she's got a daughter? Well, I'm pretty sure her daughter wouldn't want her doing a job like that. I got this bro. Don't worry about it.

CUT TO.

INT. THE STRIP JOINT - NIGHT - LATER.

Tonight CHOCOLATE is WORKING at the cash register.

Tonight is another good night. Mostly men in their thirties are there. Not as much action going on as the night prior.

RICK is WALKING out of his office a lot to make sure money is still coming to these strippers.

STEVE and PETE WALK into the strip joint, being GREETED at the door.

CHOCOLATE.

Hey guy's. Twenty dollars each!

STEVE HANDS her the money for both, and they COME to a seat near ERIE CANAL.

ERIE CANAL has a lot of customers tonight, so she's making a lot of money. Constantly doing her BEND OVER ROUTINE, but also, is ADDING more new flavor to the mix. When she SEES STEVE, SEATED close to the stripper pole that she is using, she quickly TURNS her head from him.

When ERIE CANAL finishes, She WALKS to the bar to get a drink. STEVE FOLLOWS.

STEVE.

Hey Erie? How you doing tonight?

ERIE CANAL.

Good. Is there a way I can help you?

STEVE.

Well yeah, actually there is. You can let me treat you tonight after you're done here.

ERIE CANAL.

For what? Why are you trying to make something out of

this? I'm fine doing this and you should just let me be.

STEVE.

You deserve so much more than this. You really are belittling yourself. You are way too beautiful to be just settling for this crappy job.

ERIE CANAL  
(To bartender)

Let me get a margarita!

BARTENDER.  
Coming up Erie!

ERIE CANAL  
(Back to Steve.)  
Listen honey, I understand what you're saying, but, this is what I like to do. This is my job.

STEVE.  
I realize that, but you never had a profession you wanted to do? I don't know, teacher, nurse, or something like that?

ERIE CANAL.  
Look-  
(Thinks of name.)  
Steve is it?

He NODS.

ERIE CANAL.  
This is what I like to do. No other job or profession interests me. So, I really respect your concern and all, but please, I really do not have time.

She GETS her margarita and quickly DRINKS it.

As she begins to LEAVE the bar, STEVE GRABS her arm gently.

STEVE.

Hold on. Don't you have a daughter?

ERIE CANAL

(She pauses)

Yeah. Who told you that?

STEVE.

My brother. The guy who was helping you deal with that customer last night.

ERIE CANAL.

Oh, well, yeah I do.

STEVE.

Okay. Well, what does she think of her mom doing this job?

ERIE CANAL.

(Looks at Steve in disbelief.)

Listen, don't bring my daughter into this. You don't know her, and you don't know me!

On the intercom an announcement is made.

RICK

(On the intercom)

Now Presenting, the beautiful, the queen, the professional, of the strip joint, yours truly, Erie Canal! Give it up!

The crowd gives APPLAUSE.

ERIE CANAL TURNS to the stage, and then TURNS back to STEVE.

ERIE CANAL.

And, my daughter doesn't need to worry about my job. She's only seven. I'm grown!

ERIE CANAL TURNS from STEVE, and HEADS to the stage, and GETS ON and begins her DANCING and STRIPPING. STEVE STANDS by the bar and cannot get his eyes off of her.

As ERIE CANAL is STRIPPING, she is sidetracked about what STEVE said to her.

CUT TO.

INT. THE STRIP JOINT - EARLY MORNING - LATER.

The Strip Joint is closing.

ERIE CANAL is WALKING to RICK'S office with concern on her mind.

DISSOLVE TO.

INT. THE STRIP JOINT - EARLY MORNING - CONTINUED.

RICK and BUBBLES.

The Strip Joint is closed. ERIE CANAL is asked to get BUBBLES and BRING her to RICK. After she does, she is told to leave the room. But, she decides to SPY on their conversation.

RICK.

So, Bubbles, I hear you're not making much money!

(He slams his fists onto his desk.)

Why are you not making my money? Do you think the money is just going to make itself? Is that what you think?

He WALKS to BUBBLES and GRABS her hair.

RICK.

Let me tell you something, that is not how it goes. You have to work for my money. And then, if you make as much as you need to, I may decide to give you your little paycheck. You keep it up bitch, and you'll be back on that corner. Got it!?

BUBBLES  
(Scared)

Yeah... Yeah I got it boss, I'll make more money.

RICK RELEASES her hair.

BACK TO.

INT. THE STRIP JOINT - EARLY MORNING - CONTINUED.

Previous scene of ERIE CANAL WALKING to RICK'S office.

ERIE CANAL  
(Voice-over)

What is Rick going to do? Hit me? fire me? Oh, I don't need to be fired right now.

When she gets to his office, she OPENS his door slowly.

ERIE CANAL.  
Hey boss... You asked to see me?

RICK

(Chair turned to the back.)  
Bitch, you know I asked to see you. Get your ass in here!

She WALKS in.

RICK.  
Close that door!

She CLOSES it.

RICK.  
Now, I don't know what you were doing earlier with that guy  
at the bar, but I seen you talking to him. What was that  
about?

ERIE CANAL.  
Oh, him? He was just asking me questions about the job.

RICK TURNS his chair to FACE her, and then he GIVES her a  
LOOK of disgust.

RICK.  
What kind of questions was he asking you?

ERIE CANAL  
(She thinks as she speaks.)

Um, just questions like, what do you like about the job,  
how long have I been doing this, and, uh, how good is the  
pay.

RICK RISES from his seat and APPROACHES her.

RICK.  
Would I be wrong if I told you I didn't believe you? That I  
thought you were lying to me? You know I hate liars right?

SHE NODS her head.

RICK.  
So, are you sure you're telling me the truth?

ERIE CANAL  
(In a panic)

Yes boss. Please believe me; I have no need to lie to you.

RICK goes back to his seat, SITS, and TURNS his chair to the wall.

RICK.  
Get the fuck out of my office!

As she is WALKING out, he STOPS her.

RICK.  
And Erie? Let me tell you something, if it comes back that you were lying to me, I'll see you again!

She EXITS his office.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

INT. THE GYM - NOON.

STEVE, PETE, SAMMY, and JOHN.

They are PLAYING each other in a game of basketball. Single match of 1 on 1 on 1 on 1.

STEVE gets CROSSED by SAMMY and he TRIPS and FALLS on the ground.

STEVE.  
Good job Sammy, that was a good cross man.

SAMMY HELPS STEVE off of the floor.

STEVE.

So listen guys, the other night, me and Pete were at the strip joint, and I saw this gorgeous girl there-

He is cut off.

SAMMY.

Hold on man! You guys are always at that damn strip joint. I hope y'all getting treated good. That's all you guys do, go to that damn strip joint.

STEVE.

Nah, man! That be Pete, his ass loves that place. To be honest with you, that's probably his second home, I'm telling you.

STEVE, SAMMY, and JOHN LAUGH.

They go back to their basketball game.

PETE

(Laughs)

Man, you always go with me though!

SAMMY

(To Steve.)

So tell me Steve, what happened?

STEVE.

So, I'm there. And, I'm watching this beautiful girl strip. Man, I'm caught at this moment! Like, she really caught my eye! She was working on the pole though, so, I had to wait for her to get done, and then, I was at her! And at first, she was a little hesitant to talk to me. But, you know how I do!

(Shakes John's hand)

I convinced her to let me talk to her.

PETE.

Oh, you convinced her?

STEVE  
(To Pete)

Yeah, I convinced her.

(Back to everybody)

So, we're just chilling and talking, and I could tell she gained interest.

SAMMY PUTS the ball down.

SAMMY.  
So, what happened next?

STEVE.  
She had to leave to go back to work. But, I could tell I was in there.

SAMMY.  
Okay, well let me ask you a question. What are you going to do next? See, you're already in there, but, now you have to work at a clincher. Something that can grab her and, you know, can show her that you're a cool dude. Like, I don't know, you don't want to do nothing too big yet, but something that at least can show her you're interested.

STEVE THINKS for a little, then SITS on the floor by the hoop.

STEVE.  
I don't know, I've never been a ladies man like that. Do you guys have any ideas?

PETE LOOKS at JOHN.

PETE  
(To John)

You married man! Teach him some of your knowledge.

JOHN LOOKS around and TAKES a DEEP BREATH.

JOHN  
(Whispers to himself.)

You guys always depending on me.

PETE  
(Laughs.)

Well, you can't play basketball, you suck. So, what else  
can we use you for?

JOHN GRINS at PETE.

JOHN  
(To Steve.)

All right, look man, I'm going to teach you the style I  
call, "*John's romance.*"

SAMMY.  
Hold on John.

(Chuckles)

Why you call it that?

JOHN.  
Because man, this is how I got Rachel.

(Turns to Steve.)

Okay, so look, if there's no more interruptions?

(Looks at the others.)

This is how you do it. You got to get dressed up real  
nice. You know, a nice suit, or a button up. Or shit,  
even a sweater. Get a nice pair of shoes, and shit, a  
little jewelry never hurt nothing either. Then, you got to  
make sure she is looking at the door when you walk in!  
When you are sure of that, you walk in with some swag, You  
know, put a little pimp in your step. Show her that it  
don't matter who's in there when you come through! Let the  
attraction of everybody be on you! Then, just go up to her  
and say, "Baby, how you feeling tonight? You look a little  
hurt. I'm guessing that you fell from heaven." And raise

your eyebrow, and she'll be on you! I'm telling you, it'll work.

(Looks at watch.)

But look, I got to get going because I told Rachael I'll be home before twelve, and shit, it's eleven thirty. So, I'm a holla at y'all.

(To Steve.)

And trust me man, it'll work.

He EXITS.

They all GRAB their things.

STEVE

(To Pete and Sammy)

Do you guys think it'll work?

SAMMY.

Trust him man. He's married. I think he knows what he's talking about.

STEVE.

Yeah, I guess you're right.

CUT TO.

EXT. THE STRIP JOINT - NIGHT - LATER.

STEVE did as JOHN told him. He got dressed in a nice button up, has jewelry on, and a nice pair of shoes.

When he WALKS in, he OPENS the door hard to draw attention from everybody.

STEVE

(Arms raised.)

Yes! Yes! Steve is in the building!

He WALKS to the stage that ERIE CANAL is on.

STEVE

(To Erie Canal.)

Hey baby, why don't you get off that stage and come talk to me. You know you want to.

ERIE CANAL BENDS OVER to STEVE.

ERIE CANAL.

Don't you see I'm doing something? I don't have time to talk to you right now.

She GOES back to doing her DANCE. STEVE is shocked from the outcome and he EXITS the club.

CUT TO.

EXT. THE STRIP JOINT - NIGHT - CONTINUED.

STEVE

(To himself.)

It's not working. Damn you John, you told me it would work.

(He pulls out his cell phone.)

Let me call this bastard.

He DIALS the number and waits for JOHN to answer.

JOHN ANSWERS.

STEVE.

Hey John, what's up man? I'm at the club. I tried what you said, it didn't work. Why?

JOHN.  
What did you do?

STEVE.  
I walked in there, drew everybody's attention. Then I approached her, and it didn't work. You told me it would work man!

JOHN.  
Was she stripping when you talked to her?

STEVE.  
Yeah.

JOHN.  
Well then, that's why! Wait until she's done. Then call me back and let me know what happened.

STEVE.  
All right man.

STEVE HANGS UP his phone

CUT TO.

INT. THE STRIP JOINT - NIGHT - CONTINUED.

STEVE MAKES his way back into the Strip Joint. He sees ERIE CANAL is still BUSY at work, so he just SITS and WAITS. ERIE CANAL is constantly getting paid a lot of money for the things she does. She's doing the BEND OVER ROUTINE, She is doing The BANANNA SPLIT (In which she does a SPLIT and makes it BOUNCE) and she seems to be having a good time.

CUT TO.

INT/EXT. THE STRIP JOINT - NIGHT - CONTINUED.

Thirty minutes later.

When ERIE CANAL gets done, she GOES to the bar to get a drink. STEVE SPOTS her and APPROACHES.

STEVE  
(From a distance)

Hey Erie!

(Walks closer to her.)

How you doing beautiful? You mind if I talk to you for a minute?

ERIE CANAL  
(She looks at both sides of her.)

No! My boss doesn't like when I speak to you. He seen me talking to you the other night and he told me not to let it happen again. Or else! I can't risk it.

STEVE

(Shocked.)

Well, from what you just said, "or else," it sounds like he might have threatened you. You know you could let the cops know right?

ERIE CANAL.

Yeah, I know that; but, in this line of business, you don't do that; because if you do, bad things can happen.

STEVE.

Bad things? Well, I don't know what kind of bad things you're talking about, but, when I see you again, hopefully outside of here, I'll talk to you.

STEVE EXITS. When he gets outside, he is APPROACHED by RICK.

RICK.

Hey man! What's up? I seen you talking to that stripper in there, what was y'all talking about?

STEVE

(Pulls out a cigarette and lights it.)

Nothing, we were just talking. She cut me off too soon to even actually engage in a conversation.

(Takes a puff of cigarette.)

Why you want to know?

RICK.

Just wondering. You know, I hear that she loves this job.

STEVE

(Takes a puff of cigarette.)

Yeah, I know. She informed me of that. But, I think there's more out here for her.

RICK.

Well, you know it's a bad idea to worry about that. Because, I mean, let's face it. She's a grown woman, and she'll do whatever she wants to do. If it turns out she doesn't like stripping, I'm sure she'll leave. But, if she does like it, she'll probably stay no matter what.

STEVE

(Takes a hard look at Rick.)

Yeah, I guess you're right. But hey, what's your name man?

RICK.

Oh, just call me Damien.

STEVE.

All right Damien, well, I got to get going, but, I'll probably see you later.

RICK

(With a grin.)

Oh yes, I'm sure you will.

CUT TO.

INT. THE STRIP JOINT - EARLY MORNING - LATER.

RICK CALLS ERIE CANAL to his office.

ERIE CANAL  
(Enters his office.)

Yes boss?

RICK.

I'm going to need you to stay after. I need help doing  
some things. That's an order!

(Hand gesture to say get out of my office.)

Dismissed!

ERIE CANAL.

But boss, I need to get to my mother's, I have to pick up  
my daughter.

RICK  
(Looks at her as if she is stupid.)

She can wait! I need you! Now dismissed!

She EXITS his office.

CUT TO.

INT. THE STRIP JOINT - EARLY MORNING - NEXT.

When the night ends at the Strip Joint, ERIE CANAL SAYS  
goodbye to her fellow strippers.

After the last person LEAVES, ERIE CANAL WALKS to RICK'S

office. When she gets there, RICK is drunk and furious.

RICK.

So bitch! Guess who I seen today? Some guy who thinks that you can do better than the strip joint.

(He rises from his seat.)

You think you're going to leave this club?

(He backhands her.)

Well, bitch you got another thing coming! Get your ass up!

He PICKS her up, only to SMACK her down again.

ERIE CANAL.

Boss... Boss... Calm down.

(Wipes her face.)

I'm not leaving.

RICK.

You're damn right you're not leaving!

RICK PICKS her up again, but yet again, he SLAPS her down. He continuously does so, until her lip is busted. ERIE CANAL feels as if she can't move, as if she is stuck on the floor like glue sticks to paper.

RICK.

Now bitch, you see. I had to do something I never wanted to do. But, bitch, I gave you everything, and if you think you're going to leave this club, you got another thing coming. You owe me your life, and damn it! I'm a be sure to get mine!

ERIE CANAL cannot move. Still in a state of silence, she is unable to get any words out.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

INT. CANDY'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON.

BUBBLES

(Enters the entrance of Candy's house.)

Girl, I'm sorry to come bum rushing your door, but have you heard anything from Jessica?

CANDY.

No. You can't get in touch with her?

BUBBLES

(Sits on couch.)

No, and last night, I know she stayed after with Rick to do something. And he's not answering his phone either. I'm getting worried.

CANDY.

About what?

BUBBLES.

Do you remember that guy who was always showing interest in Jessica?

CANDY.

Yeah. Why?

BUBBLES.

Well, he's been spending a lot of time with her, and I think that he doesn't like her stripping. I think he's been trying to talk her out of it. And you know how Rick gets when he finds out that one of his workers are trying to leave the business.

CANDY.

You're right. But, how long has Jessica been working for him? Since he opened the club right? Jessica would never do that.

BUBBLES.

But, you know how Rick is; if he thinks something, he'll do whatever he can to resolve it. Look, I'm just saying, keep your ears to the street, if anything pops up, please let me know.

CANDY.

Of course girl. That's my girl too.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

EXT/INT. THE STRIP JOINT/JESSICA'S HOUSE - DAY/NIGHT.

About a week goes by. No sign of RICK, no sign of JESSICA. But, finally the club opens back up.

CUT TO.

INT. THE STRIP JOINT - NIGHT.

RICK and all of the strippers.

RICK

(Gets on a stage.)

Now...

Two strippers are caught TALKING.

RICK

(To the two who are talking)

Excuse me ladies!

(To all of the strippers)

Now, I know me and Erie Canal have been gone for about a week. But, I want to let all you fine ladies know that business is ready to start booming again! My apologies for the inconvenience. Nine o'clock, I want them doors open.  
Dismissed!

CUT TO.

INT. THE STRIP JOINT - DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT - NEXT.

All of the strippers are getting ready.

BUBBLES

(As she is getting suited up in her stripping out fit.)

(To Jessica)

So, where did you guys go Jessica?

JESSICA

(In a low toned voice)

I don't want to talk about it. Let's just get dressed and go out there and do what we got to do and make this money.

JESSICA stays silent and GETS dressed. When she FINISHES, she quietly HEADS to the front.

BUBBLES

(To all of the strippers.)

I think that bastard did something to her.

BOUNCY.

Why do you think that?

BUBBLES.

Because, think about it. They were both gone for about a week. They did not call anybody, email anybody, or nothing. Now, Jessica is acting weird as ever as if she doesn't have a clue. Before she would be excited to go out

there and get this money, but now, she doesn't show any amount of interest? I don't know, I just don't buy her being okay.

CANDY.  
Girl, I think you're trippin.

BUBBLES  
(Gets in Candy's face.)  
Well bitch, I didn't ask you!

BOUNCY.  
Calm down girl!

BUBBLES  
(To Bouncy)  
No, this bitch always seems like she doesn't give a fuck  
(To Candy)  
Bitch, I'm getting real tired of you acting like shit is all cool when it's really not.

CANDY.  
Hold on bitch. Slow your role before shit gets hectic. Okay, now look, all I'm saying is that I think Jessica is fine. She's not complaining, so why give a fuck.

BOUNCY.  
Well, because that's our friend.

BUBBLES.  
No, not this bitch, this bitch ain't nobody's friend. She's fucking fake.

CANDY JUMPS on BUBBLES and they begin to FIGHT.

FIGHT SCENE.

After five minutes of them going at it. RICK STEPS in and BREAKS UP the FIGHT.

RICK

(Yells.)

What the hell is going on?

CANDY.

This bitch is talking shit!

POINTS at BUBBLES.

BUBBLES.

Well this bitch is fake! Stand up for your friends.

RICK

(Puts a finger in front of Bubbles mouth.)

Shh. Now the only standing up you ladies are doing is standing up for this money, you got me? Now get the fuck out there and get busy! We have customers!

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

INT. THE STRIP JOINT - NIGHT - CONTINUED.

The night is going through as smoothly as ever before. Each of the ladies are making fair amounts of money, and they are making RICK happy. Forty five minutes later, STEVE WALKS in. GREETED by FLASH GIRL, a new stripper that RICK has promoted.

FLASH GIRL.

Hello, welcome to the strip joint!

STEVE.

Yeah, I'd like to pay to get in. Twenty dollars right?

She NODS her head.

STEVE HANDS her \$20 and PROCEEDS inside the club. When he spots ERIE CANAL, he gets a feeling of relief. He STOPS BUBBLES, who is WAITING to strip.

STEVE

(Taps on Bubbles shoulder.)

Excuse me? I don't mean to bother you. But, that girl  
right there

(Points to Erie Canal)

I notice she hasn't been here these past couple of days.  
Where has she been?

BUBBLES.

She has been with the boss somewhere. I don't know where,  
but, I'd like to find out. They were gone too fucking long.

STEVE.

Yeah, you're right about that.

STEVE BACKS UP, and GOES to WAIT by the stage ERIE CANAL is on. Tonight he can see that something is different about her. She's not moving as much as other nights. She's not doing her bend over routine or anything of the usual.

When JESSICA FINISHES, STEVE APPROACHES her.

STEVE.

Hey Erie Canal. I'm sorry to keep bothering you, but, I  
haven't seen you in a while. I was just wondering, if  
everything was all right?

JESSICA

(Takes a seat at the bar.)

Yeah, I'm Okay. What's up?

STEVE.

Nothing much. What time you done here?

JESSICA.  
Twelve. Why?

STEVE.  
Well, I know you're usually not down for this, but, can I  
take you to get something to eat after work?

Just thinking about all that RICK has put her through, she  
THINKS, "might as well."

JESSICA.  
Sure. Just come get me at twelve.

STEVE.  
Okay beautiful, I'll see you then.

Time flies by. When time presents itself, STEVE ARRIVES to  
pick ERIE CANAL up.

CUT TO.

INT. THE STRIP JOINT - EARLY MORNING - LATER.

Less people are there.

STEVE.  
What's up beautiful? You ready to go?

JESSICA.  
Yeah, let me just get my things.

She does so.

CUT TO.

INT. THE STRIP JOINT - EARLY MORNING - NEXT.

As STEVE and ERIE CANAL HEAD for the door, they are STOPPED by RICK.

RICK  
(To Jessica.)

Where the hell you going?

STEVE.  
Damien! What's up? How you been man?

RICK  
(To Steve)

Good!

(To Jessica)

Now, I said, where are you going?

JESSICA.  
Rick, I'm off. I get off at twelve.

STEVE looks confused.

STEVE.  
I thought your name was Damien. You got it changed or something?

RICK.  
Don't worry about it! I'm the owner, and I'm this bitches pimp! I've been seeing y'all hanging out a little too much lately. What's going on?

STEVE.  
Look man. I'm just going to pay her for her time, does that work?

RICK  
(Looks around.)

I guess so. How much we talkin?

STEVE  
(Thinks for a minute.)

I'll pay her \$200.

RICK.  
Okay, that sounds good.

(To Jessica.)

Now look, you do whatever he says. And when you're done,  
come back!

STEVE and JESSICA EXIT the club and head to the car.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

INT. DENNY'S RESTAURANT - EARLY MORNING - NEXT.

STEVE AND ERIE CANAL are SITTING, TALKING, and EATING.

STEVE.  
So Erie, can you tell me you're real name?

JESSICA.  
My name's Jessica. Now let me ask you a question,  
(Takes a bite of her food.)

Why do you find so much interest in me?

STEVE.  
I don't know.

(Takes a bite of his food.)

Like I said before, you just look like you deserve more in  
life.

JESSICA

(Smiles.)

You think so?

Music starts.

For the next couple of minutes, the two just BOND and EAT, getting to know one another.

Music ends.

A group of thugs WALK into the restaurant.

JOSHUA, RICKY, and SAY.

JOSHUA

(To the waitress at the booth.)  
Yeah, we need a table for three.

WAITRESS

(Grabs three menus, and directs them to their seats.)

Okay, follow me.

As they are going to their seats, JOSHUA NOTICES JESSICA and he APPROACHES her.

JOSHUA.

Isn't that? Erie Canal?

STEVE

(To Joshua)  
No! Go ahead with all that!

JOSHUA.

I thought it was. What's up? Isn't it time for stripping?

(Looks at watch.)

Better get your ass back to the club! Before Rick finds out!

STEVE STANDS up and APPROACHES JOSHUA.

STEVE.

Hey man, aren't we eating here? Can you go ahead?

JOSHUA

(Snaps his finger for his posse to come.)

What you say?

SAY.

RICKY.

(Quickly come to Joshua)

What's the problem boss?

JOSHUA.

This guy right here is talking bad to me. Kind of hurting my feelings.

(Takes a step toward Steve.)

Please don't tell me I have to show you what happens to guys who hurt my feelings.

STEVE.

Look, we're just eating, we'd like to be left alone!

JOSHUA.

Well, I'd like if this *bitch* was back at the strip joint,

(Points towards Jessica,)

Making Rick that money.

STEVE.

Why are you so worried about it? Are you related to that guy or something?

JOSHUA.

As a matter of fact, I am. That's my brother. And I know  
he wouldn't like her,

(Points to Jessica)

out with a stranger!

STEVE.

I already cleared it with him, so he knows. And he would  
probably be mad about you interfering with his money. You  
understand?

JOSHUA.

Okay, that's cool.

(To Steve)

I'll be back.

THE POSSE WALKS to their table.

STEVE.

(Sits quietly for about 10 seconds.)

And you like this line of work? You got people outside of  
the club, who want you inside of the club at all times!

What makes that a dream job to you?

JESSICA.

The money, that's all I do it for. My daughter needs to get  
taken care of somehow right?

STEVE.

I guess so.

(He thinks.)

Oh, and uh, what was Rick talking about when he said he was  
your pimp?

JESSICA

(Not interested)

Steve, I really don't want to talk about it!

STEVE.

(Says with disappointment)

Okay.

Let's change the topic than. Tell me about your  
daughter?

As STEVE and JESSICA are talking, JOSHUA and his posse are  
STARING at both of them.

JOSHUA.

I don't know man! I'm not so sure about them two just  
eating. Let me call Rick and see what's up.

He DIALS the number, only to get a voice mail.

JOSHUA.

Damn. No answer. It's Okay. If I know Rick, he'll get  
to the bottom of this!

CUT TO.

INT. STEVE AND PETES APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING - LATER.

STEVE ENTERS his apartment, LOCKING the door behind him.

PETE

(From bedroom)

Long night pal? How'd it go?

STEVE.

It went pretty well.

STEVE takes a seat on the living room couch.

PETE WALKS out of his bedroom, and SITS beside STEVE.

STEVE.

I think we hit it off. But, damn, can you believe that the owners brother was there, and we were about to start fighting? I told him that his brother said it was okay though. He backed off.

PETE.

So, what did you have to do to get the boss's permission?

STEVE

(He realizes he forgot to give Jessica the money)

Oh fuck!!

CUT TO.

INT. THE STRIP JOINT - EARLY MORNING - CONTINUED.

Nobody's there except for RICK, two BODYGUARDS, and JESSICA.

The BODYGUARDS BRING JESSICA to RICK'S office.

RICK.

You got her?

Bodyguard #1.

Yeah, we got her.

The BODYGUARDS BRING JESSICA in the office and then they EXIT.

JESSICA

(Smiles.)

Hey boss.

RICK.  
Don't hey boss me! You got my money?

JESSICA.  
What money?

RICK  
(Laughs.)  
No, no, no. What money means you don't have my money.  
(Stands up from his chair.)  
And we both know you do!

RICK GETS in her face.

JESSICA.  
Sorry boss. I forgot.

RICK.  
You forgot?  
(Backhands her.)

Bitch, you're going to stop trying to play me as if I'm dumb! Why do you constantly fuck with me? Do you like me putting my hands on you? Is that it? Or do you just like trying to FUCK me over, because that's what you keep doing for some unapparent reason.

(Calms down.)

Look, just find that bastard. And you bring that money to me. Nobody gets a freebie in my world. Dismissed!

RICK SITS back down in his chair and JESSICA EXITS.

CUT TO.

EXT. HIGHWAY - EARLY MORNING - CONTINUED.

JESSICA DRIVES on the highway, she CALLS STEVE.

The phone rings for a little, until STEVE ANSWERS.

STEVE.  
Hello?

JESSICA  
(In a panic)  
Steve?

STEVE.  
Hey, what's up Jessica??

JESSICA.  
Where are you?

STEVE.  
At my apartment. Why?

JESSICA.  
I need to come and see you, pronto. What's your address?

STEVE.  
215 Stolp apartments.

JESSICA.  
Okay, I'm on my way.

CUT TO.

INT/EXT. STEVE AND PETE'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING - NEXT.

STEVE SITS by his door. A couple of minutes pass, and JESSICA BUZZEZ up to his place.

STEVE

(To buzzer)

I accept.

JESSICA WALKS to his apartment.

STEVE is at the door, he has the door open, while he LOOKS for Jessica.

JESSICA.

Hey Steve. I need you to give me that money.

STEVE.

All right. Just wait right here.

(Walks to his bedroom and then back out.)

Here you go.

While HANDING her the money, he NOTICES something wrong with her eye. He REACHES for it.

STEVE.

What happened?

JESSICA.

Oh, um, I bumped into the wall...

STEVE.

Come here.

(He pulls her close to him.)

You bumped into the wall? You sure? I done bumped into walls before and I ain't never look like that.

JESSICA

(Chuckles)

Yeah.

STEVE.

No, hold on.

(Turns to Pete's room.)

Yo, Pete! Come here man.

PETE WAKES UP.

PETE.

What man? Shit! I'm sleeping.

(Comes from room, sees Jessica.)

Oh, hey what's up Erie?

STEVE.

Her name is Jessica! But, come here and look at her eye.  
Tell me what you think that is.

PETE

(Examines her eye closely.)

Looks like you got into a fight. A little cat brawl.

PETE LAUGHS.

STEVE

(To Jessica.)

It was a cat brawl right? Nothing else?

JESSICA

(She steps back to the door.)

Yeah. Just a cat fight. I'll see you guys later.

She EXITS.

STEVE.

I don't know bro. You think her boss could've did that?

PETE.

Shit, maybe. I don't think girls as small as those

strippers are, have that much power to blacken her eye as bad as it was.

STEVE

(Thinks.)

And at first, she said she bumped into the wall. I don't understand that. First, she bumps into the wall, and then she gets into a fight? To be honest, I think her boss did it. I don't know. But look man, I'm sorry I woke you.

STEVE WALKS to his bedroom.

PETE.

Yeah man, you should be! I was having a good dream too. Them strippers had me tied up, and guess what they was doing?

STEVE

(Continues to walk to his room.)

I don't think I want to know man.

(Laughs.)

Good night.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

INT. THE STRIP JOINT - AFTERNOON.

The strippers are WORKING the poles. There's no customers, so they decide to SIT it OUT and TALK.

CANDY.

So Jessica, I heard what happened last night. Are you Okay?

JESSICA.

Yeah girl, I'm all right. I just hope that Steve is.

BUBBLES.  
Who's Steve?

JESSICA  
(Giggles)  
This guy I met.

BUBBLES.  
What would be wrong with him?

JESSICA.  
Last night, he was supposed to give me \$200, and I forgot to get it from him. So, that's why the boss hit me. And I think Steve knows.

BUBBLES  
(Sighs.)  
Why do we do this job if we are always getting mistreated?

RICK  
(Walks out from his office.)  
Because y'all want my money!  
(Walks to Bubbles and grabs her hair.)  
isn't that right Bubbles?

BUBBLES  
(Scared)  
Yes boss. We... we do.

RICK  
(Throws her hair away.)  
Now, what you ladies talking about out here?  
(Gets in Jessica's face.)  
Nothing that I wouldn't like, right?

JESSICA

(Scared)  
No boss, never.

RICK.  
I didn't think so. Get back to work. You never know when  
the next big time will come.

RICK TURNS to WALK to his office.

CANDY.  
But boss, it's dead. Ain't nobody coming.

RICK  
(Walks to Candy and backhands her.)

(At a high tone.)

Bitch, You watch your tone!

(To all strippers)

Now look, for some reason, you bitches seem to be losing  
your mind! Y'all seem like y'all forgot who the fuck I am.  
So, let me remind you, I'm the man who pays your checks.  
If you bitches didn't have me, you would be flat broke!  
So, I don't know what the fuck is wrong with all of you,  
but get it together! Now get to work!

The girls are SHOCKED at the boss's outburst.

BUBBLES WALKS OVER to CANDY to make sure she is okay.

BUBBLES  
(As she is approaching Candy.)

You see girl. That man is crazy.

(Rubs Candy's back.)

You've been seeming like you're on his side, but, let this  
show you, that he is a mad man! And if you're too dumb to  
realize that, this will keep happening.

The girls then begin to do their job.

CUT TO.

INT. STEVE AND PETES APARTMENT - NIGHT.

STEVE is SITTING on his living room couch.

STEVE  
(To himself)

Man, I'm bored. I wonder what Jessica's doing. Probably  
working for that damn man still.

(Grunts.)

I'm sure she won't mind if I come for a visit.

STEVE GETS UP and EXITS.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

INT. THE STRIP JOINT - NIGHT - CONTINUED.

Everything's still slow, but, the girls are DANCING.

STEVE ENTERS.

BUBBLES quickly COMES to the register.

BUBBLES  
(Holds hand out.)  
Hey daddy. \$20 to get in.

STEVE.  
Slow night?

STEVE HANDS her the money.

BUBBLES.

Yeah. Your are first to come.

STEVE

(Laughs.)

Where's Jessica? She working tonight?

BUBBLES.

Yeah, hold on.

(Calls to the strip floor)

Jessica? Somebody's asking for you!

JESSICA WALKS to the bar. Still a little slow from her encounter with RICK the other night, but, she is not letting that get in her way.

JESSICA

(When she notices Steve.)

Steve, what are you doing here? You have to leave!

STEVE.

I just came to see what's going on at the spot tonight.

He LAUGHS.

JESSICA.

Steve, you got to go. If Rick sees you're here, he'll kill me.

STEVE.

Why would he do that? I paid you the other night. He should be grateful for that.

JESSICA.

Yes. I know. But don't forget, I forgot to get the money

from you the first time, and knowing him, he probably thinks something is going on. And I don't want anything bad to happen.

STEVE

(Steve looks around.)

You're probably right. I don't want to stir up nothing, let me just get out of here, but, I'll see you later.

RICK

(From office.)

Hey Erie!

(Walks out of his office.)

I need...

He NOTICES STEVE and he THINKS to himself, "that's that guy."

RICK

(Yells to Steve)

Hold on you!

JESSICA

(Looks to Rick's office as Rick comes out.)

(In a whisper)

Shit.

(To Steve as she places a hand on his chest.)

Steve, just keep going. I don't want anything to happen.

STEVE

(Walks in, moving Jessica's hand out of his way.)

No, it's Okay. I've wanted to speak with him for a long time.

(To Rick.)

Yeah man? What's up?

RICK WALKS to the entrance of the club where STEVE is.

RICK.

Aren't you the guy who's been seeing my stripper?

(Nods his head)

Yeah it's you. You know you forgot to pay her the other night right? You cost her a promotion.

(To Jessica.)

Thank him Jessica!

JESSICA LOOKS at STEVE, then LOOKS at RICK, and then COVERS her face with her hands.

JESSICA

(In shame.)

Please don't Steve.

STEVE takes a QUICK GLANCE at JESSICA.

STEVE.

Please don't what beautiful.

(Turns attention to Rick.)

Tell this mother fucker that I don't like what he's doing?  
No, he needs to know. You-

STEVE gets CUT off by RICK.

RICK

(Looks at Steve as if he is stupid.)

Hold on man. If I really gave a fuck about what you thought or you liked, we wouldn't be here right now mother fucker. But this is my club, so get the fuck out!

RICK POINTS to the entrance.

STEVE is shocked by RICK'S remark. He comes with a quick response.

STEVE.

Hold on man. Who the hell are you talking too? You're a fucking coward; I know what you did the other night to Jessica.

(Turns to Jessica.)

I know beautiful.

(To Rick.)

Why don't you keep your hands to yourself? Or shit, if you must hit somebody, hit me!

STEVE STEPS up to Rick.

RICK.

What you say to me? Hit you? You better watch your mouth man!

STEVE

(Looks away and then punches Rick.)

Yeah punk, keep your hands to yourself, bitch!

RICK TACKLES STEVE.

FIGHT SCENE.

Soon as they begin to fight, the cops are called.

JESSICA.

Yes, we have a fight going on at the strip joint! It's two men. The boss and a customer.

okay.

(Hangs up phone.)

(To Bouncy)

They're on their way.

CUT TO.

INT. THE STRIP JOINT - NIGHT - CONTINUED.

The COPS ARRIVE and BREAK UP the fight.

POLICE OFFICER ONE.  
Break it up! Now what's going on?

STEVE.  
This dude is hitting on these girls. I'm not for it!

STEVE LOOKS at RICK and SPITS toward him.

POLICE OFFICER TWO.  
He likes hitting on girls?

(To Rick.)

We got a place for dogs like you.

(To officer one.)

Let's get out of here.

The COPS LEAVE taking RICK to the cop car.

STEVE

(To all the girls.)

Why do you ladies put up with this shit?

JESSICA.  
He's the one who signs the checks.

STEVE.  
Well, his show is over. Let's hope that's the end.

CANDY.  
I doubt it. Do you know who his brother is? You better watch your back.

STEVE.  
I'm not worried about it.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

INT. STEVE AND PETES APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING.

STEVE is SLEEPING on his living room couch. JOSHUA and his posse pull up in a SUV outside of STEVE and PETE'S apartment.

JOSHUA.  
Yeah, this is where it's at.  
(To Say.)  
You got that gun? Give it to me.

SAY HANDS him the gun.

JOSHUA  
(To himself.)  
Yeah mother fucker! You fucked with the wrong one this time. I got something for you though.

JOSHUA COCKS the gun back.

He STICKS it out of the window and starts to SHOOT. Bullets clash through the window waking STEVE. He ROLLS off of the couch.

STEVE  
(To himself)  
Oh shit!  
(He yells)

Pete! Pete!

PETE COMES TO THE LIVING ROOM.

PETE.

What the hell was that?

STEVE

(Breathes for three seconds.)  
Someone shot through the window!

(He takes a deep breath.)

Who the fuck would do that?

CUT TO.

INT. THE STRIP JOINT - NIGHT.

STEVE.

Where's that guy live? Your boss's brother?

JESSICA.

Joshua? I don't know. Why, what happened?

STEVE

(Pulls her aside.)

That mother fucker shot through my window last night. I  
got to find that bastard!

JESSICA.

I think I know where he hangs out though. You remember  
where we went to eat the other night?

STEVE.

Yeah.

JESSICA.

That's where he and his friends hang out. That's their

chill spot.

STEVE.

Thanks Jess, I'm a talk to you later.

CUT TO.

EXT. DENNYS RESTARAUNT - NIGHT - LATER.

STEVE is in his car, and the POSSE is in the restaurant.

STEVE.

Hmm...

(Looks at watch.)

I wish these motha fuckas would hurry up.

About twenty minutes later, the POSSE COMES OUT and GOES to their car.

JOSHUA

(On the way to his car.)

Man, that food was delicious. Y'all should of got what I got!

JOSHUA PUTS his food in the backseat.

STEVE RUNS up on JOSHUA, GRABBING his shirt, and JACKING him up. The other two are scared out of their minds; they keep their hands on the roof of the truck.

JOSHUA.

Oh shit!

STEVE

(To Joshua)

Shut the fuck up! I know what you mother fuckers did.

STEVE PUTS the gun to JOSHUA'S head and SHOOTS.

JOSHUA'S body drops, and RICKY and SAY are scared to do anything. STEVE LOOKS at RICKY and SAY, and he SHOOTS them both twice in the upper body. He then makes a RUN for his car.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

INT. JAIL - DINING AREA - MORNING.

RICK is SITTING down EATING his breakfast. He's WATCHING the news, when a NEWS ANCHOR is presented.

NEWS ANCHOR.

Last night, around 10:30, there were reported to be gunshots at Denny's. Three people were reported of being shot. Their names were Joshua, Ricky, and Sabatino, or otherwise known as Say.

RICK TURNS AWAY from the TV in anger.

RICK.

Damn!

(He throws his plate across the room.)

Who the fuck could've did this?

CUT TO.

INT. STEVE AND PETES APARTMENT - DAY.

A KNOCK comes on the door.

STEVE OPENS the door.

POLICE OFFICER 3.

Is there a...

(Takes a look at his paper.)

Steve Birmingo here?

STEVE.

Yeah, that's me. Any problems officer?

POLICE OFFICER 3.

You're going to have to come downtown with me. We have a few questions we need to ask you.

STEVE.

Do you have a warrant? I don't think you do. So, as far as me coming downtown with you. No, I'd rather not.

STEVE CLOSES the door.

STEVE WALKS to PETES room.

STEVE.

Man, that was the cops.

PETE.

What the hell they want?

STEVE.

I don't know. But, can I tell you something? Last night, I killed a man. And I might have killed two others too.

PETE.

What the fuck? That's why they came? Why'd you do that?

STEVE.

Man, they the ones who shot at the house the other night. I ain't' letting that shit slide. So they had to go.

PETE RISES from his bed.

PETE.

You lucky I love you man. We got to figure out what the hell we're going to do now. When you and Rick had that fight the other night, was there anybody there?

STEVE.

Not anybody beside the girls.

(Thinks.)

The cops showed up too as a matter of fact.

PETE.

Damn!

(He walks around the room.)

That's how they know.

STEVE.

Know what?

PETE.

You probably are a suspect of someone they think could of did it because of that fight.

STEVE.

How the hell would they know I killed his brother though?

PETE.

Everybody knows them two are brothers' man.

STEVE.

Damn, I hope they don't find out. Let me just think..

(Sits on bed.)

How about this; how about we leave the town for a while, until shit cools down, just you, me, and Jessica.

PETE.

I guess we could do that. I'm tired of this town any way.

Mine as well.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

HAWAII.

**MUSIC PLAYS**

STEVE, PETE, and JESSICA are having a good time for the next 5 months. They're traveling Hawaii, learning the area. Scenes of that

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

EXT. DRIVING ON THE ROAD - MORNING.

They finally arrive back at home.

STEVE

(In the car.)

Did y'all enjoy the trip?

PETE.

Hell yeah. We should do that more often.

(To Jessica)

You had a good time Jess?

JESSICA.

Yeah, I did. But to be honest, I'm worried.

STEVE.

About what?

JESSICA.  
You killed Rick's brother.

STEVE  
(Laughs.)

Don't worry about it, he's dead. He's not harming anybody.

JESSICA.  
You realize they have no evidence that Rick hit us right?  
Soon, Rick will put all the pieces together and he'll  
realize who killed his brother. And that's saying he  
doesn't know already.

STEVE  
(Thinks for four seconds.)  
Damn, you're right.

(Turns to Pete.)  
What do you think man?

PETE.  
I think she's right.  
(Turns to Jessica.)  
Is Rick dangerous?

JESSICA.  
Yeah. When he gets mad, it's the worst.

CUT TO.

EXT. JESSICA'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - MORNING - NEXT.

JESSICA.  
Thanks guys. I had fun.  
(To Steve)  
Steve, I'll call you if I hear anything.

She EXITS the vehicle, and STEVE PULLS off..

CUT TO.

INT. STEVE AND PETES APARTMENT - MORNING.

STEVE gets a call.

It's JESSICA.

STEVE.  
What's up Jessica?

JESSICA.  
(In a panic)

Steve, I got a call from Rick. He's out of jail, and he knows what happened. Say told him it was you.

(Starts to cry.)

I don't know what he'll do. I'm sorry, Steve. You should have never got involved. All of this could've been avoided.

STEVE.  
Calm down Jess! I'm on my way. We can talk more about it when I get there. Okay?

JESSICA  
(Calming down.)

Okay.

STEVE HANGS up the phone.

STEVE  
(To Pete)

That mother fuckers out of jail. He knows it was me. Say told him. I thought I killed all those guys.

PETE.

He survived? Shit Steve, let me think. You can... No that  
won't work.

(Puts hands on head.)

You should have never of got involved man.

STEVE gets in PETES face.

STEVE.

I should have never of got involve? You could of made me  
realize that it was a bad idea! You didn't even try.

PETE

(Pushes him away.)

(Laughs.)

Calm down Steve. Watch yourself.

STEVE HITS PETE and they start FIGHTING.

FIGHT SCENE.

For about five minutes they FIGHT, but, PETE comes out on  
top.

PETE

(Yelling.)

I told you bro! Watch yourself! I understand you're mad  
but you got to control yourself. You fucked up! You  
shouldn't be ready to take it out on me. Now what you want  
to do?

STEVE.

Fuck you Pete!

STEVE EXITS.

PETE SITS DOWN and SIGHS.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

EXT/INT. JESSICAS APARTMENT - MORNING - CONTINUED.

STEVE ARRIVES.

STEVE KNOCKS on JESSICA'S door, and she opens it.

JESSICA.

Oh, hey! What's up Steve? Come in.

STEVE ENTERS her apartment, and takes a SEAT on her couch.

STEVE.

So Jess, what's up?

JESSICA.

Nothing. I'm just really worried about this thing with Rick. Because Steve, when he's mad, he wants the whole world to know it, and that's not good. And I just don't know what to do. I care about you Steve.

(Puts her hand on his chin and comes closer)

I really care about you.

STEVE.

I care about you too beautiful. And you don't have to worry about Rick. If I say I'm going to handle things, just know, I'm gunna handle things. I got you. Don't worry about it.

JESSICA BLUSHES. Then they KISS. Then they WALK to the bedroom

CUT TO.

INT. JESSICA'S HOUSE - JESSICA'S BEDROOM - MORNING -  
CONTINUED.

STEVE KISSES JESSICA while he LAYS her on the bed. They continuously kiss, while STEVE TAKES JESSICA'S shirt off and JESSICA UNBUTTONG STEVE'S pants. HE KISSES her again.

CUT TO.

INT. JESSICA'S APARTMENT - JESSICA'S BEDROOM - DAY - NEXT.

STEVE and JESSICA are MAKING LOVE.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

INT. JESSICA'S APARTMENT - JESSICA'S BEDROOM - DAY - NEXT.

In JESSICA'S bed. STEVE and JESSICA CUDDLE.

STEVE.

So, Jessica, you never told me how you started to work for Rick. And why is he on you like he is?

JESSICA.

It's a long story.

STEVE.

Well beautiful, I'm not going anywhere. I've got some time.

JESSICA.

Okay. Well, when I was a girl, Rick and my father were best friends. Rick would always look out for my dad. If it was money problems, people problems, or anything, Rick was always there. And then one day my dad had an accident with some gang members from Philadelphia...

STEVE.

Your dad was a gangster?

JESSICA.

Yeah, he was. And Being Rick was his best friend, Rick had to find out who did it. When he did, they disappeared off the earth. And like I recall, at my dad's funeral, Rick told him that he would always look out for me. And then, things started off good. Rick was always a positive father figure.

STEVE.

So, why is he acting like this now?

JESSICA.

Well, Rick started to get into the drug game hard. And he went crazy. He would always want things his way. It was his way or the highway. And he started to take control of me.

(A tear shows.)

He would tell me I wasn't good enough. He would hurt my feelings all the time. Then, when I was about 17, he first put me on the corner. He told me that I'm not good enough for anything, and if I wanted anything I'd have to beg for it. Then, one day, he gave me a promotion to work at the strip joint. He said that it would get me a lot more money, and that was all I was good enough to do, It was all I was good enough for. And, I didn't have time to question what he said.

STEVE.

Wow. That's a real dick move. Don't believe any of that b s. You can do whatever you want to do. And you already know that's what I'm trying to show you. So, tell me, what's the plan now? What are we going to do?

Jessica.

Honestly Steve, I don't know. I mean, I know he's not going to forget, and I know he wants your head. And, I don't want anything to happen because of me. I will feel so damn guilty.

STEVE.

(Puts index finger in front of her mouth.)

Shh... Stop talking beautiful. Nothing is going to happen. Trust me. I'll figure out something.

CUT TO.

EXT. PHONE BOOTH ON STREET - NIGHT - LATER.

STEVE MAKES A CALL.

STEVE.

Hello. Is this,

(Looks both ways.)

Jim the silencer?

Yes, this is Steve Birmingo.

I'm having a problem with this guy, and I need some assistance getting rid of him.

Uh huh.

yeah.

His last name?

No, I don't know his last name.

Okay. I can do that for you.

STEVE HANGS up the phone.

STEVE.

But, how the hell do I find out his last name?

CUT TO.

INT. STEVE AND PETES APARTMENT - NIGHT - NEXT.

PETE is on the couch SLEEP.

STEVE

(Unlocks the front door and walks in.)

Hey Pete! wake up!

(Sits down next to Pete.)

Listen, I have to talk to you. About earlier. I'm sorry man. I was just frustrated.

PETE.

I know man, but you got to control your feelings. You know I love you, I'm your brother and I will always have your back.

(Puts hand on Steve's shoulder.)

No matter what.

STEVE.

Well, that's good to know man, for-real. So listen, I talked to somebody earlier about Rick and paying them to take him out, and they said they need his last name. I don't know how the hell I'm going to find his last name though.

PETE.

Shit, call Jessica and ask her.

STEVE.

You're right.

(Pulls out his phone and Calls Jessica.)

Hey Jessica?

What's Rick's last name?

Damn!

All right, I'm going to call you back.

(Turns to Pete.)

She said she doesn't know. Apparently he changed it once he got the stripping business, to avoid direct contact or something.

PETE.

Direct contact?

(Raises eyebrow)

What the hell?

STEVE.

I know man. That's what I said. So now what?

PETE.

Damn man, that's hard. What about the other girls who strip for him. Go to them and see if they know his last name?

STEVE.

Okay, Okay. But, the only thing is, the strip joint is closed now, and I think it will be for a minute.

PETE.

Come on man! You should know what to do. Just ask Jessica where they live. She should know that much. They're probably friends.

STEVE.

Right! Okay, so, I'm going to get going and I'm going to call her and see what's up. And I'm going to talk to you later.

STEVE SHAKES PETE'S hand.

CUT TO.

INT. STEVE'S CAR - NIGHT - CONTINUED.

STEVE is on the phone with JESSICA.

STEVE.  
Yo, Jess?

JESSICA.  
What's up Steve?

STEVE.  
I'm on my way. I need you to help me with something.

JESSICA.  
Okay. I'll be outside.

CUT TO.

EXT. JESSICAS HOUSE - NIGHT - NEXT.

JESSICA.  
(As she is getting in the car)  
Hey Steve! So, what you got on Rick?

STEVE.  
Nothing yet. But, we're going to all your friends' houses  
to see if they know something. I need his last name.  
Without that, I've got nothing.

JESSICA.  
Okay. Well, I'll tell you the addresses.

CUT TO.

EXT. CAR - CHOCOLATE'S STREET - NIGHT - CONTINUED.

STEVE DRIVES to CHOCALATE'S house.

CUT TO.

EXT. CHOCOLATE'S HOUSE - CHOCOLATES DOORSTEP - NIGHT - NEXT.

CHOCOLATE SHAKES her head no to STEVE and JESSICA.

CUT TO.

EXT. FLASH GIRL'S HOUSE - FLASH GIRL'S DOOR STEP - NIGHT - NEXT.

FLASH GIRL SHAKES her head No.

CUT TO.

EXT. CANDY'S HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUED.

CANDY.

(Opens front door.)

(To Jessica)

Oh, what's up Jessica?

(To Steve)

Hey Steve.

(To both)

What are you guys doing here?

JESSICA.

Margaret, do you know Rick's last name?

MARGARET.

Yeah. It's Lastine. Why? What's going on?

JESSICA.

Oh, nothing girl. I was just wondering. Thank you though.

I'll see you later.

She WALKS away with STEVE.

CUT TO.

INT. CAR - NIGHT - LATER.

JESSICA.

Okay, So now, we know his last name. Now what?

STEVE.

Now, I'm going to tell my man what it is, and then, it's  
all in his hands.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

EXT. TELEPHONE BOOTH - MIDNIGHT - CONTINUED.

STEVE.

Hello?

Yeah I got that guy's last name.

It's Rick Lastine.

What does he look like?

Oh, he's a big white guy. He looks a little rough. And I  
could tell he's strong.

Oh yeah, I already know that.

All right. And thanks a lot.

CUT TO.

INT. STEVE AND PETES APARTMENT - NIGHT.

STEVE is waiting and waiting by the house phone. As time goes on, he doesn't receive a call, and he starts to believe that something went wrong. He doesn't know what to do.

He imagines that RICK didn't get killed, and he COMES AFTER STEVE. He starts to WONDER, what if? What if he is killed? One night, he has a nightmare.

DISSOLVE TO.

INT. STEVE AND PETES APARTMENT - TWO MONTHS LATER - AFTERNOON.

STEVE is SLEEP on the couch. He WAKES up by a BUST in, and then, someone WALKS to him. And STEVE gets SHOT.

BACK TO.

INT. STEVE AND PETE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - CONTINUED.

STEVE

(He wakes up in fear.)

(Looks at telephone.)

I wonder why he hasn't called me yet. I hope everything's  
Okay.

The phone rings.

It's MARGARET.

MARGARET.

Steve!

(In a panic.)

Ricks' got Jessica! He kidnapped her, and he says he wants \$25000, What are we going to do?

STEVE

(Puts hands on his head.)

Damn! Why the fuck is this always happening?

MARGARET.

I don't know Steve, but you have to find her.

(Says off the line)

Oh, oh, oh, no! please no!

MARGARET'S phone goes silent.

STEVE gets off of his bed, and WALKS BACK and FORTH.

STEVE

(To himself)

I can't believe this mother fucker!

(Breathes.)

This mother fuckers got to be dealt with.

He CALLS PETE'S phone.

The phone rings.

PETE.

Yo! What's up bro?

STEVE

(Rushing his words)

Man, Rick's got her, he's got Jessica.

PETE.

Slow down man. Ya talking too fast. Now, who's got Jessica?

STEVE.

Rick. Now I'm ready to find out where he is, and take matters into my own hands.

PETE.

Chill bro, you don't need to do all that. Does he have any requests for her return? Bonds or anything?

STEVE.

Yeah, he wants 25 grand. I ain't got no where near that much. So, what the hell am I going to do?

As PETE is TALKING, STEVE gets a call from an unknown number on his other line.

STEVE.

Hold on Pete, someone's calling me

(Clicks over)

Hello?

RICK

(Evil laughs.)

What's up bitch? You know who this is. I got your bitch right here. I think she wants to say hello.

(To Jessica)

Here bitch, say hi.

RICK puts the phone to JESSICA'S ear.

JESSICA is tied up.

JESSICA.

Steve, Steve, Steve, you've got to find me. I - I don't know -

RICK CUTS her off, and TAKES the phone.

RICK

(To Jessica)

That's enough said.

(Turns to phone)

So yeah Steve, I got her. And she's mine until you could pay up, and that's if I'm feeling nice. But, just know, I got your bitch, so if I want to kill this bitch, I can do that.

(Laughs.)

So make me proud.

RICK HANGS up the phone.

STEVE SITS back on the couch and takes a deep breath. Then clicks back to the other line.

STEVE.

He has her man. And he's talking about he's not letting her go until he gets his money. What am I going to do?

PETE

(Thinks for a second.)

Have you ever considered calling the cops?

STEVE.

If I do that, she'll get killed.

PETE

(Thinks for a little longer.)

Damn. I - I don't know man.

STEVE.

Look, I'll call you back. I got to figure something out.

STEVE HANGS up the phone, then he RISES off of the couch and EXITS.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

INT. BANK OF AMERICA - LATE AFTERNOON - LATER.

STEVE has a ski mask on and a gun that is locked and loaded.

STEVE BUSTS IN the bank.

STEVE.

Yo, yo, yo, yo, yo, yo!

(Throws the bag on the counter in front of the clerk.)

Fill it with 25 grand, and make that shit fast!

The CLERK RUNS to the back of the bank to get the money.  
STEVE LOOKS at everybody in the bank, and NOTICES a guy on  
the phone.

STEVE.

Yo, what the hell are you doing?

(Walks toward the guy.)

Give me your phone!

STEVE TAKES the guys phone, then TURNS back to the CLERK.

STEVE

(Yells to clerk)

Yo, hurry up with that money!

She finally COMES with the money. She THROWS it on the  
counter.

CLERK

(Scared.)

Here you go. 25000 in the bag!

STEVE SNATCHES the bag off of the counter, then TURNS his attention to the customers.

STEVE.

Now, I want everybody to run they pockets. All of y'all strip! I want every fucking thing!

Everybody STRIPS themselves of their belongings. Phones, wallets, anything of value.

STEVE quickly COLLECTS everything and makes a run for the door.

CUT TO.

EXT. PARKING LOT DOWN THE STREET - LATE AFNTERNOON - NEXT.

STEVE MAKES a CALL to JESSICA'S phone.

RICK ANSWERS.

STEVE.

Yo Rick, I got your money man. Where do you want me to meet you?

RICK.

Slow your roll. You got the whole twenty five?

STEVE.

Yeah, I got it.

RICK  
(Chuckles)

Well, congrats. I'll meet you at the corner store around the corner from Bank of America. And Steve? Have all the money!

RICK HANGS up the phone.

CUT TO.

EXT. CORNER STORE - LATE AFTERNOON - NEXT.

STEVE is WAITING for RICK. An hour goes by, still WAITING. Another hour goes by, still WAITING.

STEVE

(To himself)

This mother fucker got me.

(His phone rings. Steve answers it quickly)

Hello?

RICK.

Hey, what's up Steve? You waiting for me?

STEVE

(Furious)

Yeah bitch! Where the fuck are you?

RICK.

Hold on. Who the fuck are you talking to? Did you forget, I got your bitch? Talking to me like that is going to get this bitch killed. Now, I was thinking, and I want more money.

STEVE.

How much man? I'll get you whatever you need.

RICK.

You like the bitch that much?.

(Laughs.)

Well, we'll see. I want a million dollars in cash. If I can see that amount of money. Not one dollar short, then, you'll get your bitch. But, until then, guess what? This

bitch is staying right here. And if you take too long, well then, you're last vision of her will be in a casket.

STEVE.

How the hell am I going to get that much?

RICK.

I don't know. That's for you to find out. You got ten days.

RICK HANGS up the phone.

STEVE hangs up his phone and WALKS back and forth in frustration.

STEVE

(To himself)

How am I going to get that much? I only have ten days.

CUT TO.

EXT/INT. STEVE AND PETES APARTMENT - NIGHT - LATER.

BUBBLES is WAITING outside for him.

When BUBBLES SEE'S STEVE, she quickly APPROACHES him.

BUBBLES.

Steve, did you hear about Jessica?

STEVE

(Walking through the front door and up the stairs, followed by Bubbles.)

Yeah, I did, that shit got me feeling some type of way. I'm stressing about it, and I have no idea on what to do.

BUBBLES.

Well, I have something that might help. Rumor has it that, that chick Margaret, I don't know if you met her...

STEVE.

Yeah, I did, she was the one who told me about it.

BUBBLES.

Well, she's the one who is working with Rick..

STEVE.

Hold on. What you saying?

BUBBLES.

I'm saying that, that bitch knows about Rick and Jessica and she is helping him.

STEVE.

But, she was the one who told me Jessica was kidnapped in the first place.

(Gets angry.)

Man, this shit ain't making no sense!

(To Bubbles)

Didn't Rick take her too?

BUBBLES.

That's what she wants you to believe. That bitch is on the same shit Rick is on. That bitch is helping him out.

STEVE is very surprised and stays quiet for a while.

After 10 seconds.

STEVE.

Well, now I know something that could help me out. Peep this, you give me Margaret's address, and I go and kidnap her, and hold her for a trade. Rick gives me Jessica, and I'll give him Margaret. How you think that sounds?

BUBBLES.

Honestly, he isn't going to give a fuck. He could give two  
damns about any of us. He is a damn dog who doesn't care  
about anyone but his self.

STEVE.

Well, shit, I won't know until I try. What's her address?

BUBBLES.

Here.

(Pulls out a paper and pen from her pocket, and writes it  
down.)

Best time to go is early morning.

STEVE.

Thanks Bubbles!

BUBBLES gives STEVE the address.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

INT. MARGARET'S HOUSE - NIGHT - LATER.

STEVE BREAKS IN through the back door.

MARGARET

(Hears door getting busted into, rises out of bed, and  
looks toward the kitchen.)

Whose there?

MARGARET GET'S out of bed, and WALKS into the kitchen  
slowly. She ARRIVES at the back door, to NOTICE that her  
door is shut, but the lock is broke. When she NOTICES

nobody's there, she quickly GRABS a knife and RUNS to her bedroom, CLOSING the door and LOCKING it.

STEVE

(Walks to Margaret's bedroom and slowly knocks on the door.)

Margaret. Margaret! I know you're in there. Open this fucking door!

MARGARET

(Scared.)

I don't have nothing for you! Please leave!

STEVE.

Did I say I wanted anything? Just open this fucking door!

STEVE BASHES her door open.

MARGARET

(Scared uncontrollably)

I don't have nothing you want!

STEVE WALKS nearer to MARGARET, TAKING SLOW STEPS.  
MARGARET SHOWS STEVE her knife.

MARGARET

(Terrified)

I am not afraid to use this!

STEVE

(Comes to a stand still, raising his arms in defense)

Relax. I'm not here to hurt you.

STEVE takes a STEP closer.

MARGARET

(Points knife at him, and uses a guttural volume)

I'm not fucking around!

STEVE STOPS and STARES at MARGARET for six seconds, and then DASHES toward her. They begin to FIGHT. She LOSES grip of her knife, as STEVE GRABS her arms and PUTS them on the wall. She KNEES STEVE in the groin, GRABS her knife, and SLASHES STEVE in the collar bone area. Then, STEVE GRABS MARGARET and CARRIES her to his car.

STEVE PUTS her in the backseat of his car.

CUT TO.

INT. STEVE'S CAR - NIGHT - CONTINUED.

STEVE is DRIVING, and MARGARET is in the back seat with her hands and ankles tied up.

STEVE.

I'm sorry Margaret. But, I know you working with Rick to keep Jessica hostage. That's your friend isn't it? That's real fucked up that you would do that. It's all good though. You aren't going free until I get Jessica back.

MARGARET.

That's a waste of time. He isn't going to give you Jessica for me. He wants that million dollars, and when he sets his eyes on something, that's what he'll wait for. Don't you get it yet? He doesn't give a fuck about none of us.

STEVE.

Well, we'll find out.

STEVE TAKES his phone out, and CALLS JESSICA'S phone.

RICK ANSWERS.

RICK.  
Hello?

STEVE.  
Hey yo Rick? I got Margaret.

RICK.  
You got Margaret? What's your point?

STEVE.  
If you want her back, you got to give me Jessica.

RICK  
(Laughs.)  
What makes you think I care about that bitch? You could have her. Kill her if you'd like, it doesn't matter to me. But, I'll tell you one thing, if you keep wasting my time with this bullshit! And not getting me that money, Jessica is going to die! So hurry THE FUCK UP!

RICK HANGS up the phone.

STEVE.  
Damn.

MARGARET.  
What happened?

STEVE.  
You were right. Why the fuck is that guy like that?

MARGARET.  
He doesn't care about us! No matter what.

STEVE  
(Thinks for a while.)

Well, you know what? Just give me his whereabouts. And you could go.

MARGARET.

It won't matter. Now that you have me, he'll change where he's keeping her. So, you mine as well just let me go. I'm no help to you.

STEVE

(Pulls over.)

You're lucky I'm a nice man.

(Gets out and unties her.)

Get the fuck out!

MARGARET GETS OUT and TAKES OFF.

STEVE

(Sits back in the driver seat paranoid.)

(To himself)

This guy is really bugged out.

CUT TO.

EXT. STEVE AND PETES APARTMENT - NIGHT - NEXT.

STEVE ARRIVES to his apartment and PARKS in front of the building. When he EXITS the vehicle, he NOTICES a car DRIVING slowly. He STOPS and WONDERS, *What the hell are they doing?* On his WAY to the door, the car SPEEDS up. STEVE TURNS to realize the guy in the passenger seat has a gun aiming directly at him.

As bullets fly toward him, he DIVES for the ground, but, it's too late; he gets hit in the ribs. STEVE FALLS on the pavement.

STEVE

(Coughs)

Pete...

(Coughs)

Pete... Where... Where...

STEVE LIES his head down completely.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

INT. RICK'S HIDE OUT - NIGHT - NEXT.

RICK is upset.

RICK

(Gets in Jessica's face.)

Why the hell is he taking so long?

(Walks away from Jessica.)

This man must not know that I mean business.

(Pulls out phone.)

Let me call this bastard.

No one answers. RICK gets mad and THROWS the phone.

RICK.

What the fuck is he doing?

(To Jessica)

Jessica, it seems like your boyfriend doesn't care if you die! Only thing keeping you alive is that money. You're in luck bitch!

CUT TO.

EXT. STEVE AND PETES APARTMENT - NIGHT - NEXT.

PETE ARRIVES to his house.

PETE

(When he notices Steve, he runs toward him)

Steve!

(Worried, he kneels beside Steve and shakes him gently)

Steve! Get up!

(He looks at his ribs and notices the wound.)

Damn.

(He pulls out his phone and gives the ambulance a call.)

Yes, my brother has been shot, and I need an ambulance here  
as soon as possible.

VOICE ON THE OTHER END.

What is the address?

PETE.

215 Stolp Avenue. And please hurry.

PETE HANGS up his phone.

CUT TO.

EXT. STEVE AND PETE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - NEXT.

The ambulance ARRIVES quickly. Two DOCTORS in the back of  
the truck HELP GET Steve aboard. They take off.

POLICE OFFICER FOUR ARRIVES shortly after the ambulance.

POLICE OFFICER FOUR approaches PETE.

POLICE OFFICER FOUR.

Hello sir. Can you tell me what happened tonight?

PETE.

(Hands on head)

I don't even know, when I got here, I found him on the pavement. I noticed he had a wound on his ribs though.

POLICE OFFICER FOUR

(Pulls out a notebook and a pen.)

Can you tell me what the wound looked like?

PETE.

It was a gun shot for sure. But look, I know somebody did it, and all I know is you have to find whoever it was.

POLICE OFFICER FOUR.

Do you know of anybody that he might have had problems with?

PETE

(Voice over)

*You don't snitch. That's the code. It doesn't matter what happens, you don't snitch. But, my own brother? fuck the code.*

(To police officer four.)

Yeah. With this guy named Rick.

POLICE OFFICER FOUR.

Do you know Ricks last name?

PETE.

No clue. But, he owns the strip joint. You know where that's at?

POLICE OFFICER FOUR.

Yeah, me and my buddies go down there sometimes. And you sure it's him?

PETE.

Of course I am man. That's my brother. If I didn't know, trust me, I wouldn't tell you.

POLICE OFFICER FOUR.

Okay sir, we'll contact you when we know something.

POLICE OFFICER FOUR WALKS away. PETE GOES in his house.

PETE.

This mother fucking guy has got to be dealt with. I can't take this shit. He's shooting at my house now? This mother fucker's insane. There's got to be something I can do.

(Gets laptop.)

I'm going to find something out.

(He goes on the internet, and searches the Strip Joint. He sees a picture of Rick and he clicks on it.)

Let's see what I can find out.

There's nothing beneficial to him.

PETE.

(Disappointed)

Nothing!

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

INT. STEVE AND PETES APARTMENT - DAY.

PETE is caught TRYING to figure out how to get a hold of RICK. He's CHECKING internet sites, and LOOKING through phone books. Everything he can do. But, he can't find anything.

After another week goes by, he goes to the Strip Joint and ASKS people who come.

CUT TO.

EXT. THE STRIP JOINT - NIGHT.

Two guys, SEAN and JACK LOOKING through the window of the Strip Joint.

SEAN.  
What the hell?

(To Jack)

How long you think this place is going to be closed man?

JACK.  
I don't know. It needs to hurry up and open though. I got all these Benjamin's that I'm trying to give to these chicks.

PETE PULLS UP and EXITS his car and WALKS UP to them.

PETE.  
Hey! This place is closed bro!

JACK.  
I know. I'm trying to figure out when the hell it's going to open back up. Any idea?

PETE.  
Nah, man. I need to find that out too though. But, speaking of the strip joint, you know anything about the owner? What's his name? Rick, or something like that.

SEAN.  
Yeah, that's him. Ain't nobody seen dude in a minute though.

(Laughs.)

Probably got lost or something.

PETE.

Yeah. That's probably it. But, do you guys know anything about him? Where he's from? Or who he associates with?

JACK.

Nah, man. What's up with all the questions though? 5 o?

PETE

(Laughs.)

Nah, ain't nothing like that. Keep it real, I need to find that man. He did something he's got to pay for.

JACK.

Oh. Well look, we don't know nothing.

SEAN and JACK TURN and WALK AWAY.

JACK

(To Sean)

Hey bro? Why you think that guy was asking all those questions?

SEAN.

I don't know. But, it's a good thing we left; we don't need any drama on our conscience, keep it real.

SEAN LAUGHS.

CUT TO.

EXT. THE STRIP JOINT - NIGHT - CONTINUED.

PETE

(To himself)

I'm lost man. I don't know what to do. This is crazy.  
Brothers been shot, Jessica's been kidnapped. I don't get  
this shit!

(walks around confused and then.)

No, I do know what to do!

CUT TO.

INT. STEVE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY.

PETE comes to pay a visit.

When PETE GETS to STEVE'S room, he is APPROACHED by a  
doctor.

DOCTOR SEYMOUR.

Oh, hello sir, you are?

PETE.

Pete. Steve's brother. How's he doing?

DOCTOR SEYMOUR.

He's making it through. The bullet didn't really do much  
damage. It just grazed his ribs a little, but, he'll get  
through. You can go and see him if you'd like.

PETE.

Thank you doc.

DOCTOR SEYMOUR LEAVES the room to give PETE and STEVE a  
little privacy.

PETE PULLS UP a chair to the bed.

PETE.

Hey Steve, how you doing man?

STEVE.

(Hard getting the words out)

I'm... I'm okay. What's up with you?

PETE.

Nothing, just worried about you. How you feeling? You making it through?

STEVE.

Yeah. Still a little messed up, but I'm a get through.

PETE goes to CLOSE the door and then WALKS back to STEVE'S bed side.

PETE.

So look man, who you think did this?

STEVE.

(Shrugs.)

I don't know man; I don't think it was Rick though. I don't think he'll be leaving Jessica's side for nothing!

(Sits up in bed.)

It was probably Say. He survived the shooting, and I'm sure that he wants payback.

PETE THINKS.

PETE.

Don't they hang out at Denny's?

STEVE.

Who? Say? Yeah, that's where he hangs out. But, since his two friends died, I don't know if he still does.

PETE.

He probably goes there when he's hungry. I'll be going there tonight to see if I could find him there. I'm a get going. But, I'm a keep you posted on what's happening.

PETE GIVES STEVE a HUG and SHAKES his hand. Then PETE EXITS.

CUT TO.

EXT. DENNYS - MIDNIGHT - LATER.

PETE WAITS in his car for SAY to come. He waits a while.

PETE

(To himself)

I'll wait as long as I have to. That mother fucker shot my brother, I have no problem waiting.

SAY finally ARRIVES. He WALKS inside of Dennys, and is SEATED at a table by the door. The window in front of the table helps PETE SEE him.

About forty five minutes later, SAY COMES OUT. When he gets to his car, PETE RUNS to him with a gun.

SAY.

What the?

PETE

(Looks around.)

Shut up bitch! You're coming with me. Let's go.

PETE TAKES SAY to his car, PUTS him in the passenger seat, and then he GETS in the driver seat and TAKES OFF.

CUT TO. INT - PETE'S CAR - MIDNIGHT - CONTINUED.

PETE is DRIVING on the highway.

PETE.

(To Say.)

Hey yo! keep your hands on the dash! I know you were the one who shot my brother. You're going to pay motha fucka! But first, tell me where Rick is.

SAY  
(Panicking)

I don't know man... I - I - I don't know.

PETE.  
Oh, you don't know?  
(Punches him in his face.)

Think about it.

Ten minutes later, SAY is hurt real bad; PETE has just been TORTMENTING HIM. But SAY finally cracks.

SAY.  
All right... Okay. I know where he is. You know where the strip joint is? Well, right down the street, there's a vacant building. That's where he's at.

PETE PULLS OVER.

PETE.  
Okay. Good job, that's what I needed to know. But, you're staying with me still. I can't trust you; you'll run to Rick and let him know, that I know where he's at. So, you're coming with me.

CUT TO.

INT. STEVE AND PETES APARTMENT - NIGHT.

PETE TAKES SAY to the basement, and LOCKS him down there.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN. INT - STEVE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY.

PETE ENTERS into STEVE'S hospital room.

PETE.

Hey, what's up Steve? I got some news.

STEVE.

What's the news?

PETE

(Closes the door.)

I know where Rick is. You know that vacant building that's down the street from the strip joint? That's where he's holding Jessica.

STEVE.

Oh, Okay, well look Pete, don't go down there yet. Wait for me to get out of the hospital. I need to go and see him.

PETE.

All right. I'll be waiting.

Three weeks go by and STEVE is finally released from the hospital.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

EXT. VACANT BUILDING - DAY.

PETE and STEVE SIT in PETE'S car.

STEVE.

Okay man, now look, I'm gunna knock on the door, and then, I'm going to let him know that I got the million in the car. He probably will want to see it. So, I'm going to come get you and the money. When we get in there, I'm a show him the money-

PETE

(Cuts Steve off)

We don't even have all the money.

STEVE.

I know, but, that's for us to know and him to find out.

PETE.

Okay, but look, I'm a tell you now, I doubt it's just him and her in there. He probably has some bodyguards watching his back. But, we got this. You ready?

STEVE

(Opens the car door.)

Yeah, I'm ready. I'll be right back.

STEVE WALKS to the door and when he gets there he KNOCKS.

STEVE

(As he's knocking)

Hey yo, it's Steve! Let me in! I got the money.

RICK GOES to the door.

RICK.

How the hell you get this address?

STEVE.

Ya boy Say. I guess you can't trust him as far as you could throw him. Now, I got the money for you. We going to do this or not?

RICK.

You got it all?

STEVE.

Yeah, I got it all. If you don't believe me, open the door and you can find out.

RICK BACKS AWAY from the door, and SITS on the couch. He DIRECTS CHIVES to OPEN the door. When he OPENS the door, RICK SEES STEVE.

RICK.

Where the fuck is the money?

STEVE.

It's in the car. Let me just go grab it.

RICK.

Be quick about it!

(Turns attention to Chives.)

Chives? Stay by the door and make sure he's doing what he's told.

CHIVES NODS his head.

STEVE GOES BACK to the car and he OPENS the back door to GET the money.

STEVE.

All right Pete. You were right. He's got bodyguards in there. You got the pistol?

PETE.

Yeah man. Way ahead of you.

PETE GETS out of the car.

They HEAD to the door.

RICK

(When he notices Pete)  
Wait a minute. Who the fuck is this?

STEVE.  
This is my brother. He's cool.

RICK LOOKS at CHIVES.

RICK.  
Fuck that.  
(Gives Chives a hand gesture)  
Search him.

As CHIVES SEARCHES PETE, STEVE and PETE begin to WORRY.  
CHIVES FINDS the gun, which is to the right of PETE'S torso.

CHIVES.  
Hey boss!

CHIVES GRABS the gun.

STEVE GRABS his gun from the right of his torso.

STEVE  
(Aims pistol at Chives.)  
Hey boss what?

RICK is in disbelief.

RICK.  
You brought heat? You mother fucking coward. What you  
going to do with that, you bitch!

STEVE.  
(Gives a glance to Rick, then back to Chives.)  
Well, if this mother fucker doesn't put the gun down, I'm  
letting off shots. And I mean business!

CHIVES.

Boss, fuck that. He kills me; his mother fucking brother dies too. That's all to it.

STEVE.

But, if you die, what about Rick? He won't have anybody protecting his ass. So, what you want to do?

CHIVES THINKS, then he decides to PUT the gun on the floor.

STEVE.

Yeah, drop that gun.

After CHIVES DROPS the gun, he COMES back to a STANDING position, only to get SHOT by STEVE.

STEVE.

(To Chives)

Yeah mother fucker!

(To Rick)

Where's Jessica?

RICK

(Laughs.)

You just made a terrible mistake. JIM! Chives has been shot!

Both PETE and STEVE LOOK for JIM, but they cannot find him.

When STEVE TURNS his head to the right, he notices he has a gun ramming him in the face by JIM.

JIM.

Drop your gun bitch!

STEVE DROPS his gun, and RAISES his hands to the ceiling.

RICK

(Laughs.)

You thought I'd be dumb enough to have only one body guard?  
How foolish of you. Jim, hand me that bag!

JIM KICKS the bag over to RICK.

RICK

(Searches the bag.)

No, no, no! There's no where near anything close to a  
million dollars.

(Gets in Steve's face.)

Did you try to fuck me over Steve? Is that what you  
thought you would do? Fuck me over?

While RICK is TALKING to STEVE, there comes a KNOCK at the  
door.

RICK

(Goes to the door, while opening it)

Who the fuck is it?

When the door gets opened completely, SAMMY HITS RICK in  
the face with a bat. RICK instantly DROPS. JIM TURNS to  
see what is going on, but, while he is doing that, he gets  
SHOT by PETE.

STEVE.

Oh shit!

(To Sammy and John)

Where did you guys come from?

JOHN.

Pete called us and told us what was going on. Y'all all  
right?

STEVE PICKS RICK up.

STEVE.

Yeah, we're straight.

(He gets Rick up, He gives him a look of hate)  
You mother fucker.

STEVE SHOOTS RICK.

RICK instantly DROPS.

STEVE  
(To Rick)

That'll teach him.

(To John, Sammy, and Pete)

Help me find Jessica.

For some minutes they MOVE over furniture, LOOK under tables, but they cannot find her.

STEVE.  
I don't know where she could be.

(To everybody)

Did any of y'all find her yet?

SAMMY.  
Nah! I don't know where she's at.  
(Notices a set of stairs and points to them.)

Go look up there!

STEVE sees the stairs and he is happy that SAMMY found them.

STEVE  
(Points at Sammy)

Good job man. I'll be right back.

When STEVE gets up stairs, he LOOKS around. He NOTICES two rooms and he LOOKS in both of them. The first room is destroyed. Old picture frames on the floor, pieces of the wall ripped, the works. He SEARCHES the room to see if

JESSICA is there. He MOVES things, PICKS things up, CHECKS little cubbies that are in the wall, but, he can not find her. He assumes she must be in the other room. He GOES to check. The other room is small and very narrow but at least it's clean. When he WALKS in, he sees JESSICA with her hands and ankles tied up. He quickly GOES to her to HELP her get free.

STEVE.

Oh my goodness! Jessica! Are you Okay?

(He rubs her hair back and then goes to untie the ties.)

There you go. Come here.

He PICKS her up.

As they HEAD down the stairs, STEVE hears a gunshot being fired. He assumes it must be another one of RICK'S boys, but, when he gets downstairs, he sees a horrific sight. JOHN and SAMMY STANDING OVER PETE.

STEVE

(Bewildered)

What the fuck?

(Runs to Pete's side.)

Why the hell did you shoot him?

SAMMY GRABS THE BAG OF MONEY.

SAMMY.

Well, because, we want the money in the bag. And, if you two are living.

(Spots Jessica)

well, three are living, than that will cause for a hassle. So we got to take you guys out.

(Aims his gun at Steve.)

Now stand the fuck up! Do you have any last words before you meet death?

JESSICA STANDS where CHIVES was shot and she NOTICES the gun that is at CHIVE'S side. She quickly CROUCHES down to GET it. Hands shaking, but when she gets CONTROL of her hands, she AIMS it at SAMMY.

JESSICA  
(To Sammy.)

I do!

SAMMY TURNS her way, and he is SHOT three times in his chest. When he FALLS, the gun comes out of his hand, which STEVE GRABS. When STEVE SEES JOHN turning to SHOOT JESSICA, he SHOOTS JOHN before he has an opportunity to shoot. The two PANIC and make a quick EXIT.

STEVE.

Wait! We can't go yet. I have to get my brother. Help me get him up.

They successfully GET him up and into the car.

CUT TO.

INT. PETE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING.

PETE OPENS his eyes from the short period that he was out of it. STEVE is by his bedside. When STEVE sees the miracle occurring, he quickly comes to his brother's attention.

STEVE  
(Yelling to the door)

Jessica!

JESSICA COMES inside the room.

JESSICA.  
Yeah, honey? What's...?

(Notices Pete's eyes are open)

Oh, thank goodness. He's up.

(Walks to Pete's bedside.)

How are you feeling?

PETE is slow to get the words out.

PETE.

I'm. I'm okay. When you guy's got here?

STEVE.

We were here all night.

(Puts hand on Pete's shoulder.)

Got to make sure you get through this.

PETE.

And what about Rick and all them?

JESSICA PUTS her finger in front of his mouth.

JESSICA.

Shh. We don't know, and they don't know. It's just  
between us.

STEVE.

Yeah, man. Just relax. Look at it this way; we got Jessica  
out of the business. So now, my baby knows,

(Smiles and looks at Jessica.)

that strippers are people too.

FADE OUT.

THE END