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THE MULE AND THE SECRETARY

Screenplay by Amber Dawn Lee

EXT: DIVE BAR-DAY

A run down bar sits isolated in a crumbled parking lot. The paint is peeling. PIMPS, WHORES, and GAMBLERS hover the area vaguely. A woman, NANCY who looks oddly out of place, dressed like a tech secretary pulls up in an old 70's car. She looks around, just as the GAMBLER shoots off a pop-rocket. She jumps, frightened. She unwraps her tight seat-belt, and holds her purse closely as she walks across the lot.

Shots of: Her pantyhose are snagged, her outfit is conservative, her hair is piled in a bun, as she peeks out from behind her glasses.

V/O

Shit happens, but sometimes things fall  
in your lap, not often, but enough times  
to drop a rock on despair.

Credits roll

INT: DIVE DAY-BAR

Nancy sits at the bar drinking. An ALCOHOLIC slouches at the other end of the bar, and a TRASHY COUPLE sit at a small table making out. Old rock music plays and the SKINNY BARTENDER wipes down the bar for the hundredth time. The bartender watches the lovebirds kiss.

BARTENDER

Animals are better friends than humans, I  
never trust humans.

NANCY

I trust whiskey.

A MAN walks in. He looks carefully around the bar, he walks in the bathroom, walks out, as if he is looking for someone. Nancy looks at him.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Who's that, you know him?

Bartender shrugs. He sits at the bar a seat away from Nancy. He starts fidgeting with his phone. Nervous.

NANCY (CONT'D)

You know, Whiskey was first made in Ireland by missionary monks? They said the secret to distilling was given to them by the God's.

MAN

Whiskey, double.

NANCY

Me too. Bad day at the office. Bad, bad, bad, bad day.

MAN

Wanna talk about it?

NANCY

I'd rather have more papercuts.

Nancy gets cards from her purse and begins to play solitaire.

MAN

Sounds bad. (Beat) I started out muling. Way Back. Clean and clear every time. No trouble, ever. You know muling?

Nancy plays cards and smokes her MORE cigarette.

NANCY

You've been moving up?

MAN

Selling.

NANCY

For who?

MAN

The Martinez brothers.

NANCY

I'm impressed. Heard about them on the news.

bartender.

MAN

I took some of the money.

NANCY  
How much money did you take?

MAN  
A million bucks. Cash.

Nancy becomes enthusiastic.

NANCY  
Okay (Like wow, you're the man)

MAN  
And I kept the product too. Dudes up there are paranoid. They keep the coke and the cash in separate places. The way the roads are laid out now it's easier to get paid and deliver second. They trusted me to do that, after a time.

NANCY  
Sweet.

MAN.  
I told the Martinez boys I got robbed.

NANCY  
Did they believe you?

MAN  
Maybe not.

NANCY  
Problem.

MAN  
But I don't see why. Not really. Like, how much cash do you have in your purse right now.

Nancy looks around discreetly. She whispers.

NANCY  
Two hundred and some change. I was just at the ATM by my office cause they sometimes rip you off with credit cards.

MAN  
So how would you feel if you dropped a penny and it rolled down the storm drain. A single lousy cent?

NANCY  
I wouldn't really give a shit.

MAN

Exactly. This is like a guy with two hundred in his pocket who loses a penny. How uptight is anyone going to be?

NANCY

With those guys it's not about the money.

MAN

I know.

They sit, drinking silently.

MAN (CONT'D)

They've got this other guy. Dude called Octavian. He's their investigator. And their enforcer. He's going to come for me.

NANCY

People get robbed, shit happens.

MAN

Octavian is supposed to be real scary. I've heard insane things about what he does to people.

NANCY

People get robbed, what can he do?

MAN

He can make sure I'm telling the truth is what he can do. I've heard he has a way of asking questions.

NANCY

You stand firm, he can't get blood out of a rock.

MAN

He's the kind of guy that enjoys his job. It's like a cat and mouse game where he just tortures the mouse for hours.

NANCY

Who IS this Octavian guy?

MAN

I've never seen him, he's like a ghost. He does his job, and disappears.

NANCY

Is he another Columbian?

MAN

I don't know.

NANCY

You need a plan.

MAN

He could walk in here right now and I wouldn't know.

NANCY

Then you need a plan fast.

MAN

I could go to LA.

NANCY

Could you?

MAN

Not really. Octavian would find me. I don't want to be looking over my shoulder the whole rest of my life.

The PIMP from outside opens the bar door, sunlight from outside streams in with the street noise. The MAN watches the PIMP carefully and cautiously, but the PIMP is uninterested, he grabs a shot of liquor, throws down some cash, and slams the drink. Nancy whispers.

NANCY

People get robbed, right?

MAN

It happens. It's not unknown.

NANCY

Sou you could pin it on the Boston People. Start a war up there. Take the heat yourself. YOU could come out of this like an innocent victim. The first casualty. Nearly a hero.

MAN

If I can convince this guy Octavian.

NANCY

There are ways.

MAN

Like what?

The HOOKER from outside the bar walks in pouty faced, the PIMP quickly escorts her back outside, much to the disappointment of the girl.

NANCY

Just stick to the script, you know nothing. It was those guys in Boston. Tell the Octavian guy he's goin down a blind alley with you, and stand firm. He'll move on if you stick to a story.

MAN

Maybe.

NANCY

Do like my husband does.

MAN

You're married, you don't have a ring.

NANCY

X-husband. Just learn a story and stick to it. Be the story, you'll be okay.

MAN

Yeah maybe.

NANCY

But Octavian will search your house.

MAN

That's for damn sure. He's probably tearing it apart right now.

NANCY

He's gonna find the stuff.

MAN

It's not there.

NANCY

Where is it then?

MAN

I'm not going to tell a complete stranger where it is, no offense.

NANCY

Totally fine, I don't really want to know. Why would I want to know all this stuff your telling me anyway?

MAN

You looked lonely, like you needed a good story.

NANCY

The problem is that you need to not know the story or where the stuff is either.

MAN

How do I not know where it is?

NANCY

Octavian's gonna see it in your eyes, he's gonna know you know where the stuff is. He's gonna be beating up on you or whatever and he needs to see a blankness in your eyes. Like you really have no clue what is goin on.

MAN

Octavian will know I'm lying, what's he gonna see in me?

NANCY

Blankness. Like that guy at the end of the bar. Clueless about everything going on around him no matter what. Octavian needs to see that from you.

MAN

He's gonna see that I'm holding out on him, he's gonna see it in my eyes, and hear it in my voice.

NANCY

He's going to know.

MAN

So what should I do?

NANCY

Maybe go to LA.

MAN

No.

NANCY

Well, you should let me hold the stuff for you. Then you genuinely don't know where it is. You're going to need that edge.



MAN

Look, I like talking to you lady cause you don't know me, and I don't know you, and it would be nuts to trust you with my stuff. Why would I do that?

NANCY

You shouldn't. You don't have to.

MAN

You could disappear with my two million.

NANCY

I could. But I won't. Because if I did, you'd call Octavian and tell him that a face just came back to you. You'd describe me, and then your problem would be my problem. And if this Octavian is as bad as you say, that's a problem I don't want.

MAN

You better believe it.

NANCY

I do believe it.

MAN

Where would I find you afterward?

NANCY

I'll be right here every night while he moves his stuff out of our home.

MAN

It would be like Method acting if I did it.

NANCY

There would be a fee.

MAN

How much.

NANCY

Fifty grand.

MAN

Okay.

NANCY

Like a penny under a cushion.

MAN

You got that right.

NANCY

You know him?

A large burly man enters the bar. He has a scar and looks like a bad guy. He sits on a stool, nothing to worry about.

MAN

We should do this right now.

NANCY

Where's the stuff?

MAN

In an old trailer in the woods.

NANCY

Is it big? I'm not used to doing this sort of thing.

MAN

Ten kilos is twenty two pounds, about the same for the money. Two duffles is all.

NANCY

So let's go.

EXT: BAR-DAY

The man gets in Nancy's station wagon. They leave the parking lot, using a blinker.

EXT: COUNTRY ROADS-DAY

The station wagon is driving on a freeway.

On a dirt road.

To a clearing. Use scenery to describe the mood of the ugly side of drugs.

The car pulls up to a clearing where a trailer sits.

EXT: SCUM TRAILER-DAY

The beat down trailer looks like it hasn't had a life in years. Nancy gets out of the car and stands as the man gets out of the car.

NANCY

Are you sure no one is going to see us out here?

MAN

Stop worrying and trust me.

She stood watching the man enter the trailer after yanking on the door before entrance. She looks around, and opens the trunk lid. The man comes out of the trailer with two duffle bags.

NANCY

Which is which?

He opens the bags proudly. One is stuffed with COCAINE bricks and the other is stuffed with MONEY. He laughs, and heaves the bags up to the trunk to put them in.

BAM BAM

There are two gun shots as the MAN falls to the ground, blood oozing from his brain. Birds shriek and caw from everywhere before settling back into their trees. His smirk is stuck, corpsed.

Nancy puts her gun back in her purse. She takes out her cell phone and dials a number.

During phone call:

She takes off her conservative coat, puts on lipstick, takes down her ponytail, shaking it out, looking like the FEMME FATALE she really is. Even her voice changes and becomes bold, and attractive.

VOICE

Hello what's your code please?

NANCY ON SPEAKER PHONE

Put the Martinez brothers on the phone.

VOICE

Code please.

NANCY ON SPEAKER PHONE

It's Octavian.

There is a click, and then anxiously.

MARTINEZ BROTHERS V/O

Yes?

NANCY ON SPEAKER PHONE

This is Octavian. Both of you there?

MARTINEZ BROTHERS

Yes, both on the line, it's safe.

NANCY ON SPEAKER PHONE.

I'm through here. I got the money back  
and I took care of the guy.

MARTINEZ BROTHERS V/O

Already?

NANCY ON SPEAKER PHONE

I got lucky. Shit happens, but sometimes  
things fall in your lap, not often, but  
enough times to drop a rock on despair.

MARTINEZ BROTHERS V/O

What about the ten keys?

NANCY ON SPEAKER PHONE

I'm afraid those are gone. Long long  
gone.

A (crane shot) birds eye view from above pulls back  
slowly showing Nancy in the clearing with the two bags,  
the dead corpse, and an abandoned trailer. She puts the  
bags in the trunk, gets in the car and drives away,  
leaving the MAN.