

CASINO
Nicholas Pileggi/Martin Scorsese

REN
ORIGINAL

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DRAFT 14

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C A S I N O

NICHOLAS PILEGGI/MARTIN SCORSESE

TITLE: LAS VEGAS, 1980

1 EXT. RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - DAY 1
The Vegas casino skyline of gaudy casinos and signs behind him, HARRY "ACE" ROTHSTEIN, a tall, lean, immaculately dressed man approaches his car, opens the door and leans inside to turn on the ignition.

ACE (V.O.)

When you love someone, you've got to trust them. There's no other way. You've got to give them the key to everything that's yours. Otherwise, what's the point? And, for a while, I believed that's the kind of love I had.

Suddenly, the car explodes throwing Ace back about 30 feet as the flame and smoke and metal rise into the sky covering up the view of the Las Vegas casinos and their signs.

CUT TO:

ACE'S BODY comes FLYING in from frame right against Las Vegas blue sky -- EXTREME SLOW MOTION -- FLAMES appear on bottom of the screen -- MUSIC IN -- "The Animals: House of the Rising Sun." -- His body twists and turns through the frame like a soul about to tumble into the flames of damnation.

SUPER TITLES: OPENING TITLES

FADE OUT -- MUSIC OUT

FADE IN

2A OVAL VIGNETTE WITH DARKENED BORDERS OF ACE ROTHSTEIN 2A
immaculately dressed and overseeing the casino.

(THE FOLLOWING VIGNETTES ARE FROM SCENES THAT WILL BE IN THE MOVIE)

NICKY (V.O.)

Before he tookover the casinos and got himself blown up, Ace Rothstein was a hell of a handicapper. He was so good that whenever he bet, he could change the odds for every bookmaker in the country. I'm serious. He had it down so good, that he was given paradise on earth. He was given four of the biggest casinos in Las Vegas to run...

DISSOLVE TO:

2B OVAL VIGNETTE OF REMO GAGGI, AMERICO CAPELLI, VINCENT BORELLI, ARTIE PISCANO, AND VINNY FORLANO. (HEADS OF THE MOB at a table surrounded by food and wine like the Gods of Olympus) 2B

NICKY (V.O.)

...by the only kinds of guys who could give you \$200 million dollars worth of casinos.

DISSOLVE TO:

2C OVAL VIGNETTE OF NICKY SANTORO 2C

NICKY (V.O.)

It should have been perfect. He had me, Nicky Santoro, his best friend, watching his ass...

DISSOLVE TO:

2D OVAL VIGNETTE OF GINGER MCKENNA 2D

NICKY (V.O.)

...and he had Ginger, the woman he loved, on his arm.

DISSOLVE TO:

2E OVAL VIGNETTE OF ACE looking out over the casino he ruled and CAMERA moves in on his face. 2E

NICKY (V.O.)

But, in the end, we fucked it all up. It should have been so sweet, but it turned out to be the last time street guys like us were ever given anything that valuable again.

CUT TO:

TITLE: 1970

3

INT. CHICAGO ILLEGAL CASINO - NITE

A dapper, adult Ace presides over busy craps games and black jack tables. NICKY arrives with a brown paper bag. Ace and Nicky go to a corner of the room.

3

NICKY (V.O.)

Ace made his first bet at fifteen when he picked up a parlay card on Rush Street and hit seven out of nine games. He made twenty-five bucks that day and it was the last time he bet a hunch. He'd find out the kind of stuff nobody else knew and bet on that. He checked everything ten times. The weather. Crowds. Coked up quarterbacks. He read a hundred college newspapers. He even figured out the bounce you got off the different kinds of wood they used on basketball court floors. For Ace, there was no room for luck. Luck didn't exist, for him.

CUT TO:

The bag is filled with cash. Nicky's hand is wrapped in a bloodied handkerchief. Ace give some cash to Nicky.

ACE (V.O.)

If I began as the youngest outfit bookie in Chicago, my pal, Nicky Santoro, was right there with me. He started as a teenage nickel and dime, and became one of the city's biggest juice collectors. How did Nicky collect? Don't ask.

NICKY

He didn't have it, but I got it from him anyway.

CUT TO:

4

INT. ILLEGAL CASINO BACK ROOM - NITE

Mob boss, REMO GAGGI, and a mob COURIER, in their hats and coats, have dropped by to get the money bag from Ace and Nicky. Gaggi nods for the Courier to take the paperbag and leave. Ace follows the Courier out to resume running the casino leaving Gaggi and Nicky alone.

4

NICKY (V.O.)

As far as gambling was concerned, Ace was the Golden Goose.

GAGGI

(to Nicky, quietly, as he
leaves)

This Jew bastard makes a lot of
money for us. You keep an eye on
him. He's got more brains than most
of these guys around here.

CUT TO:

5 INT. ILLEGAL GAMBLING CASINO - DAY 5
Nicky, Ace with two GAMBLERS watching a basketball game
on the bar TV. A couple of guys casually playing cards
in BG. Black Jack and Craps tables empty.

ACE (V.O.)

Over the years we got it down to a
science. We raked in the money and
Nicky kept things calm.

GAMBLER #1

(to Nicky)

Nicky, what favorites? They were
never the favorites.

NICKY

You sure?

GAMBLER #1

Yeah. Absolutely.

ACE

They were 8 to 5 favorites in the
midwest conference...

GAMBLER #1

(snarls at Ace)

Hey, mind your own fucking business,
you Jew bastard.

CUT TO:

Before Ace can react, Nicky grabs Gambler #1 and
instantly starts punching him in the head and Nicky
keeps punching and kicking until the Gambler's mouth is
filled with blood and he starts to apologize in a high
pitched voice. Ace looks on stunned.

ACE (V.O.)

That's Nicky. While I was trying to
figure out why the guy was saying
what he was saying, Nicky just hit
him. No matter how big a guy might

(MORE)

ACE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

be, Nicky would take him on. You beat Nicky with fists, he comes back with a bat. You beat him with a knife, he comes back with a gun. And, if you beat him with a gun, you better kill him, because he'll keep coming back until one of you is dead.

CUT TO:

NICKY

Do you hear a little girl crying? That's what I hear. What happened to the tough guy? What happened to the guy who called my friend a Jew bastard? Where's that tough guy?

NICKY LOOKS RIGHT INTO THE LENS -- A COLD DEAD STARE.

CUT TO:

6 PLAINCLOTHES COPS SUDDENLY RAID THE ILLEGAL CASINO 6
THROWING GAMBLERS, INCLUDING ACE, NICKY AND GAMBLER #1, AGAINST
THE WALL. TWO COPS EMPTY THE CASH DRAWER WHILE ANOTHER TAKES A
BOTTLE OF RYE OFF THE SHELF AND PUTS IT IN HIS POCKET.

CUT TO:

7 INT. ILLEGAL CASINO HALLWAY - DAY 7
Two other plainclothes COPS shove Ace down the flight of
stairs. The cops go down, help Ace up the stairs and
throw him down, again. The two Cops repeat the exercise
three times, or, until Ace lies at the foot of the steps
in a heap.

ACE (V.O.)

There were some occupational hazards related to the work, such as a game the cops called "up-the-stairs-down-the-stairs". Once you've seen it or had it done to you, it needs very little explaining.

CUT TO:

Same Cops frisk Ace, who is shoved against the wall. One of the cops takes Ace's wallet. Takes out the cash and returns the wallet.

ACE (V.O.) (O.S.)

When you're on the wrong side of the law, the law can do anything it wants with you and that's the truth. But, I had no real beef. I wasn't in a legitimate business. I always knew that.

NICKY (V.O.)

But Ace was in for a big surprise. His life was about to change. Ace was about to become legitimate.

CLOSE UP OF ACE BEING FRISKED. MOVE IN ON HIS FACE.

8 EXT. TEAMSTERS PENSION FUND OFFICE BUILDING - DAY 8
Massive building in Chicago where the union's \$8 billion-dollar pension fund investments are decided.

STONE (V.O.)

...We're tying up loose ends right now. It's a done deal.

CUT TO:

9 INT. ANDY STONE'S OFFICE - DAY 9
Ace is talking to ANDY STONE, the Teamsters pension advisor in a large office. Photos of presidents on the wall. A Teamster and an American flag are behind Stone's desk.

STONE

We've got our \$200 million dollar loan from the teamsters pension fund, we've got four casinos all lined up and they want you. In a couple of weeks you'll be running the places.

ACE

Andy, I've got two dozen gambling pinches. How do I get around that? How do I get a license?

STONE

In Nevada, you don't have to get a license. All you've gotta do is apply for one. The state law says you can work while they process your application, and they've got a ten-year backlog.

ACE

And when they find out I took all those arrests, then what?

STONE

They'll never find out. All you've gotta do is change your job title from executive assistant to Food and Beverage man and your application goes right back to the bottom of the pile. If you do it right, you can work in Vegas for 30 years and never get licensed.

CUT TO:

10 EXT. AIRLINE TERMINAL ENTRANCE - DAY 10
Nicky's car zooms into the airport and screeches to a halt as porters, passengers and cabbies scatter in shock. A hundred yards behind him we see the police cars with their lights and sirens blazing.

ACE (V.O.)

Nicky was nice enough to take me to the airport.

Ace and SAL FUSCO jump from the car and run inside the terminal, FRANK MARINO grabs Ace's suitcases out of the trunk and follows them in.

ACE

Jeezus Christ!

NICKY

What are you complaining about? I got you here, didn't I?

CUT TO:

11 INT. AIRLINE CHECK-IN COUNTER - DAY 11
Marino tosses a passenger's suitcases off the scale and replaces them with Ace's bags. Marino's glare quiets any protest.

CUT TO:

12 INT. AIRLINE GATE - DAY 12
Ace is being shoved by Sal Fusco through the closing gate while Fusco snarls at Airline clerk.

FUSCO

He's gotta get on. The guy's sick. He's going for an operation. You want his blood on your hands?

CUT TO:

Ace running down gangway to plane.

ACE (V.O.)

If anybody ever asks me, to this day, I tell them I don't know who put the casino thing together. But, here's what I can say -- at the time I went out to Vegas, there was a clear understanding that nobody could interfere with me.

CUT TO:

13 STOCK FOOTAGE of 1970's plane taking off. 13

DISSOLVE TO:

14 AERIAL SHOT COMING UP THE BRIGHTLY LIT VEGAS STRIP and off into the blackness of the desert night. 14

ACE (V.O.)

At the time, Vegas was a place where thirty million suckers flew in every year on their own nickel and left behind about a billion dollars. But at night, you couldn't see the desert that surrounds Las Vegas... Though it's in the desert where lots of the town's problems are solved.

DISSOLVE TO:

14A ANOTHER AERIAL SHOT OF DESERT. DAWN BEGINS TO RISE and the desert is everywhere. 14A

NICKY (V.O.)

Lots of holes in the desert. Yeah. And a lot of problems are buried in those holes. Except, you've gotta do it right. I mean, you've gotta have the hole already dug before you show up with a stiff in the trunk. Otherwise, you're talking about a half hour or 45 minutes of digging, and who knows who's going to be coming along in that time? Before you know it, you've gotta dig a few more holes. You could be there all night.

CUT TO:

15 EXT. THE TANGIERS HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT 15
The dazzling Tangiers Casino, a huge, block-long structure with its 300-foot star-bursting sign and the glitter of thousands upon thousands of people, cabs and limos, stacked up along the strip waiting to get inside.

ACE (V.O.)
 Who could resist? Running a casino
 is like robbing a bank with no cops
 around.

CUT TO:

16 INT. TANGIERS CASINO - NIGHT

16

We see Ace enter and being greeted by top EXECUTIVES in suits and ties. Ace is joined by BILLY SHERBERT, as they walk through the casino, past crowded and noisy craps tables, spinning roulette wheels, blackjack tables, poker-faced players at poker tables and elegant, cordoned-off, black tie, baccarat tables.

ACE (V.O.)
 I hired an old casino pal, Billy Sherbert, as my manager and I went to work. For guys like me, Las Vegas washes away your sins. It's like a morality carwash. It does for us what Lourdes does for humpbacks and cripples.

CUT TO:

17 FLASH BULB BURST - IMAGE APPEARS

17

INT. GREEN'S TANGIERS EXECUTIVE OFFICE PRESS CONFERENCE - DAY
 TITLE: 1972 DAY

PHILIP GREEN, a young corporate type, is standing at a podium surrounded by 25 casino executives and 12 reporters. ARTHUR CAPP, the corporation's new lawyer, is standing just behind Green. Ace and Sherbert are watching Green. Their backs to the wall to the side of the podium.

GREEN
 As President of the Tangiers
 Corporation I want to

HIS VOICE FADES DOWN AS VOICE OVER FADES UP

ACE (V.O.)
 Upstairs, they had Philip Green, a real estate guy with friends in the union. He was smart. He was a lawyer. He was legitimate. He was perfect.

NICKY (V.O.)

He was a perfect front man. What else could he be? He didn't know too much. He didn't wanna know too much, especially that the bosses made the teamsters lend him the money. They had to do it that way. I mean, the bosses were notorious. Buy a casino? They couldn't even walk into one.

A PR WOMAN holds up a six-foot blowup of the cover of Business Week where Green is smiling out under the headline: "Green, Vegas Wunderkind!" PHOTOGRAPHERS snap away.

FLASH BULB BURSTS

18 INT. REGISTRATION AREA - NIGHT

18

CAMERA MOVES IN ON ACE as he looks out over casino where dealers deftly stacks chips, scoop up losses and pay off winners. Chips and money are everywhere. Sherbert hands Ace a small clipboard with a player's credit report. Ace glances up and signs the player's credit slip and Sherbert takes it away.

NICKY (V.O.)

But Ace was the real boss of the place and there was no question about that. Within a couple of months he doubled the drop. They never made so much money.

CUT TO:

19-21 EXT./INT. COUNT ROOM - DAY

19-21

CAMERA TRACKS JOHN NANCE WALKING INTO COUNT ROOM -

CAMERA STOPS AT EXT. OF UNMARKED COUNT ROOM DOOR. See GUARD open it. We see inside from NANCE POV.

ACE (V.O.)

But, in the end, it all came to us. Everybody's money becomes ours.

An electronic paper money counting machine whirring through stacks of \$100 bills and spilling them out in bundles of \$10,000 each while the totals are displayed on digital counter: \$140,000.... \$175,000... \$190,000... \$128,000...

ACE (V.O.)

Money just flowed to the heart of the casino.

CAMERA REVEALS WIDE SHOT OF ROOM

It looks like area behind tellers' cage in bank. A large room windowless, decor-free.

ACE (V.O.)

The most sacred room in the casino. The place where they add up all the money. The Holy of holies. The Count Room.

CAMERA REVEALS - DOORWAY

NANCE enters room. GUARD closes and locks door. He exits frame.

ACE (V.O.)

And John Nance, the guy in charge of all this, was the casino's high priest.

CAMERA REVEALS - NANCE POV

Clerks work feverishly to keep up with cash. Thousands of bills whir through cash counters. CLERKS STACK BANDED \$100 BILLS LIKE BRICKS HALFWAY UP ONE WALL.

ACE (V.O.)

There's so much money, you could build a house out of the stacks of hundred dollar bills.

Long narrow room with heavy metal shelves holding endless racks of silver dollars and quarters. Machines weigh change and band bills.

ACE (V.O.)

There's a million dollars in quarters right there. It weighs twenty three and a third tons.

Scale company MECHANIC closes the back of the coin weighing scale and Nance notes the scale calibration. Nance nods to workers who pour buckets of coins onto the scale from an hydraulic jack.

Nance makes note of the coin weight total as coins are moved on a conveyor belt to a machine that turns them into \$10 rolls.

CLERKS put cash in boxes and sacks. We have never seen so much money.

Nance checks figures. Puts stacks of \$100 bills in sacks. Then TAKES A LARGE STACK OF HUNDRED DOLLAR BILLS AND PUTS THEM IN A MEDIUM-SIZED VALISE, which he then places under the counter.

NANCE takes a small valise from beneath the counter.

ACE (V.O.)

At this point nobody really knows how much money has come into the Count Room. Only John Nance, the treasurer, who is in charge of everything, knows the full count.

NANCE starts out the door with the valise. As he does this, the workers studiously look in other directions.

NANCE exits Count Room past the armed guard. The Guard salutes NANCE "good night". NANCE politely returns the salute, and proceeds through casino, past Ace, whom pays him no mind, and out through a doorway, to the outside of the Tangiers entrance. NANCE leaves the hotel, hops into a cab off the cab line.

CUT TO:

22 EXT. LAS VEGAS AIRPORT - DAY 22
NANCE, still carrying his bag, boards a private twin-engine plane.

CUT TO:

23 EXT. KANSAS CITY AIRPORT - DAY 23
NANCE arrives. He is greeted by ARTIE PISCANO. NANCE smiles and hops in the car.

ACE (V.O.)

He came from an old Nevada family and the bosses had made Green hire him. John Nance knew more ways to skim a casino than anyone in the country and he always changed the time, days and routes of his weekly trips so he could never get stuckup.

CUT TO:

24 EXT. ITALIAN PRODUCE MARKET KANSAS CITY - DAY 24
Nance, with suitcase, and Piscano leave car and enter market.

25 INT. ITALIAN PRODUCE MARKET KANSAS CITY - DAY 25
Nance and Piscano walk through the market into the back room where they are greeted by five older men seated around a large wooden table with bowls of macaroni and old jelly glasses filled with red wine. Nance opens the valise and neatly piles packets of \$100 bills on the table as three of them (Piscano, Borelli, and Cappelli) start counting the money.

ACE (V.O.)

Nance didn't have to count the money. He knew how much it was just by the weight and this was a crew that would kill you for two ounces.

CUT TO:

AMERICO CAPPELLI, 68, a grey-haired affable businessman and ARTHUR CAPP, a 30-year-old yuppie lawyer.

CUT TO:

ACE (V.O.)

Americo Cappelli, the boss of Milwaukee and, Arthur Capp, his college boy son.

PAN TO:

VINCENT BORELLI, 70, white-haired and ascetic.

ACE (V.O.)

Vincent Borelli was the boss of Kansas City and had a lot of clout with the union guys...

PAN TO:

ARTIE PISCANO, Borelli's menacing looking, white-haired, 60-year-old underboss.

ACE (V.O.)

Artie Piscano was Borelli's underboss, and, like every body in Kansas City, he took orders, too.

PAN TO:

VINNY FORLANO, a dapper 75-year-old businessman.

ACE (V.O.)

Vinny Forlano, the Outfit's underboss, went so far back he used to drive Capone.

PAN TO:

REMO GAGGI, seated at the table.

ACE (V.O.)

And, Remo, you know. Remo Gaggi was now the top boss in Chicago and definitely the most important guy in the room.

GAGGI

You got a round figure?

NANCE

(weighing the almost empty
valise in his hand)

Uhmmm...it was around twenty pounds.
That's around seven hundred
thousand.

CUT TO:

Empty dishes and wine glasses strew the table amid
Coffee cups and stacks of cash in front of each boss.
We see them all discussing the skim problem.

ACE (V.O.)

But, there was a problem, because
nobody knew for sure how much was
really being skimmed before the
suitcases even got to Kansas City.

NANCE

Nobody can do it alone. I've gotta
rely on my people and they've been
with me twenty years.

CUT TO:

26 INT. COUNT ROOM - DAY FLASH BACK

The earlier scene of Nance and the Mechanic turning some
dials in the back of the scale. The Clerks counting
money and the Guard watching the door suddenly look
suspicious.

26

NANCE (V.O.)

I've got my scale man... He's got
the scales fixed to only weigh two
thirds of the take...

CUT TO:

Clerk slips two \$100 bills into his palm.

NANCE (V.O.)

... I've got my clerks who make the
first count... even my security
guards help. I can't be there all
the time. If they're gonna help me,
I've got to expect them to help
themselves... At least a little bit.

ACE (V.O.)

No matter how dangerous it is to
screw around with these old
greaseballs, that much loose cash
made for sticky fingers. The old
bosses weren't happy about having to
rely on guys like Nance for the
skim, but they had no choice.

CUT TO:

ACE (V.O.)

The guy they put in charge of keeping everybody in line was Artie Piscano, the Underboss of Kansas City. The only problem was that Borelli, the Boss, always treated Piscano like an errand boy.

BORELLI

Did you talk to him about it that last trip out there?

PISCANO

I was there last month.

BORELLI

You better go back and straighten this out.

PISCANO

Go back? I never got paid my expenses for the last trip.

BORELLI

What expenses?

PISCANO

I'm goin' all over laying money out of my own pocket and I never get anything back. What about getting reimbursed.

BORELLI

Just go talk to the guy, okay?

PISCANO

From now on I'm going to start keeping records.

BORELLI

Records? What are you gonna do with your records? You gonna start paying taxes?

PISCANO

I don't care. I keep laying out my own money for these trips and nothing ever comes back.

CUT TO:

27 INT. TANGIERS CASINO - NIGHT
 Ace is walking down the casino aisle to slot machines as Dealers immediately snap to attention at his approach. Sherbert is with him.

27

ACE (V.O.)

As far as I was concerned, all I had to do was keep the money coming in the front door, so the suitcases could keep going out the back.

CAMERA PANS PAST Ace to see Nance in the BG carrying a suitcase out of the casino through a employee's rear exit behind Ace's back.

CUT TO:

28 INT. CASINO SLOT MACHINE AREA - NIGHT
 Ace points at the debris of silver dollar wrappings on the floor. Two cleaners and casino executive DON WARD, in western garb, immediately start picking up the bits of paper. Ace looks at Ward sternly. Sherbert smiles as if to commiserate.

28

ACE

(to Ward)

Ward, you've gotta keep a better station here.

WARD

Won't happen again, Mr. Rothstein.

As Ace and Billy Sherbert are about to walk on.

ACE

Keep an eye on this kid, will'ya? He's killing us.

SHERBERT

Oh sure, and what good's that gonna do us? He's the County Commissioner's cousin or somebody's.

ACE

Well put him someplace where he does the least damage, okay?

ACE (V.O.)

It didn't matter how bad these cowboy managers were, the house percentage was so strong we still couldn't lose money.

CUT TO:

29 INT. CHECK-IN COUNTER - DAY 29
 Lines of GUESTS checking in while ACE greets a white-haired man at VIP counter.

ACE (V.O.)
 I took care of everything from
 legitimate suckers to crooked
 politicians.

ACE
 Hello Senator. You're all set up.

Ace motions for one of the perpetually smiling, micro-skirt, HOSTESSES working at the VIP check-in desk to take the Senator to his suite.

CUT TO:

30 INT. SENATOR'S SUITE - DAY 30
 The Senator opens a bureau drawer and pulls out a small velvet pouch. He closes the bedroom door so the half undressed Hostess drawing a bath cannot see him, and he pours some \$100 chips from sack into his palm.

CUT TO:

ACE (V.O.)
 Why not? In Las Vegas, smearing a
 politician was like saluting the
 flag. But everybody else, watch out!

CUT TO:

31 INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY 31
 Where a crooked casino Dealer, his bow tie loosened and ID badge still pinned to his shirt, is dealing cards on table in front of a three-way mirror. He is extremely deft as his fingers deal out cards, draw them back in, shuffle and reshuffle and deal them out again with mechanical precision. EXTREME SLOW MOTION of bottom card being dealt.

ACE (V.O.)
 You have to understand, there are
 guys who'll spend a year and a half
 dealing bottom cards in front of a
 three-way mirror for six hours a
 day, until they can't see themselves
 cheating from the side. And, once
 they've got their move, they can
 knock you dead...

CUT TO:

32 INT. TANGIERS CASINO FLOOR - NIGHT 32
 Ace looking out on thousands of desperately intent players are rolling dice, pulling levers, watching roulette balls spin and betting their poker hands. Standing next to them are the grim-faced DEALERS.

ACE (V.O.)

... for a while. Eventually, you can spot them all. I could spot side-readers, slot cheats, card counters, chip hustlers, bottom dealers, and late bettors. I could spot baloney dice, hollowed chips, a weighted wheel, and crooked Black Jack shoe.

CUT TO:

33 INT. BLACK JACK TABLE - NIGHT
Black Jack WINNER, who looks like a school teacher, with over \$100,000 in chips before him, has gathered a crowd, including Ace.

33

ACE (V.O.)

Crossroaders, that's what they call professional casino cheats. Even after we catch them, some of them have balls enough to come back in wearing fake beards, wigs, and noses.

CUT TO:

Ace walks behind the Winner who is playing all six hands at the Black Jack table. He is playing \$500 a hand as he racks up the chips in front of him. He is also "cutting his checks" or playing with his chips, juggling them between his fingers and moving them from the bottom to top and back with just one hand.

ACE (V.O.)

I can spot them by watching the way they bet. This guy was betting longshots that came in, and turning down sure things that didn't. He always took insurance when the house sat pat. He just wasn't making enough normal mistakes to be on the up and up. If he gave back a little, he would have been harder to spot. But he was greedy. They're all greedy. Also, this guy was cutting his checks, or chips. He was beating us, and showing off for the crowd.

CUT TO:

Ace walks around the table where the Winner is raking in chips and the crowd has gathered to the black jack table on the other side of the Pit that backed up on the Winner's table. Ace bends down and ties his shoelace.

ACE (V.O.)

I saw that the dealer wasn't in on it, but he was weak. He was raising his hole card too high when he had to stand pat.

CUT TO:

Dealer raising his hole card a half an inch to determine the casino's hand against the Winner.

SLOW MOTION CLOSE UP OF THE SLIGHTLY EXPOSED HOLE CARD.

ACE (V.O.)

And that's just what they look for. They prowl up and down the aisles looking for weak dealers the way lions look for weak antelope.

CUT TO:

Ace's face and he pans from the card to a Player in front of him slumped down in his seat and playing \$5 a hand.

CUT TO:

OVERHEAD DIAGRAM PAN TO PLAYER SLUMPED IN SEAT.

ACE (V.O.)

And here's this guy reading the dealer's bottom cards...

PAN to the Winner taking in another large pot

ACE (V.O.)

And signalling his buddy at the other table.

PAN back to Player who appears to be nervously tapping his thigh.

DISSOLVE TO:

Through the Player's trouser to his tapping a copper transmitter with battery pack attached.

CUT TO:

The Winner's thigh receiving the impulse signal -- buzz -- buzz -- buzz - from his compatriot.

CUT TO:

Ace walks to the side and nods to uniformed security GUARDS and a plainclothes security DETECTIVE, who is

wearing a loose sport jacket, and mingling with the crowd.

On Ace's signal the SECURITY GUARDS and WAITRESSES start singing "Happy Birthday" attracting the crowd's attention.

Ace nods again and the plain clothes Detective takes a round metal object out of his pocket and moves in close behind the Signaller, as though looking at the game, and presses the object, which is a stun gun, under the Signaller's arm and near his heart. The Detective leaves it there for about 10 seconds as the Signaller instantly goes into convulsions and two more Security Guards immediately appear.

SECURITY GUARD #1
(into walkie talkie)
Get medical! We have a cardiac seizure! You'll be okay, pal.

SECURITY GUARD #2
(to players)
Give him room. He'll be okay. Let's get him to the infirmary. Make room.

The crowd watches briefly as the stunned Signaller is helped away from the table and play is immediately resumed.

ACE (V.O.)
They never know what hit them and when they find out that they just got zapped by a stun gun they wish they'd really had a heart attack instead.

CUT TO:

34 INT. CASINO BASEMENT SECURITY OFFICE - NIGHT 34
A detention area where the Signaller is roughly shoved against the wall as a Security Guard rips his trousers revealing the signalling device. He is quickly thrown over a table and two huge Guards spread his hand out on the table. Another guard starts up a power saw and approaches the Signaller who is now pinned to the table. The Signaller starts to scream. The Guards all look up toward the door, where Ace nods for the Guards to stop.

ACE
You got any ID?

SIGNALLER
No.

ACE

Where are you staying.

SIGNALLER

Nowhere. I'm passing through. Let me outta...

ACE

You right handed or left handed?

SIGNALLER

Right handed.

Instantly a large rubber mallet smashes onto the man's right hand three times to the sound of his screams. Ace watches.

ACE

Now you're left handed.

CUT TO:

35 INT. CASINO CASHIER'S CAGE AREA - NIGHT 35
The Winner has been standing outside the cashier's cage waiting for his \$110,000 in cash, instead Ace shows up.

ACE

Your friend just left with a broken hand. You've got a choice. Do you want the hammer and the money, or do you want to walk out of here? You can't have both.

WINNER

All I want is out of here.

ACE

And don't forget to tell your friends what happens if they fuck around here.

WINNER

I'm sorry. I made a bad mistake.

ACE

Go somewhere else.

CUT TO:

36 INT. ICHIKAWA LUXURY SUITE - DAY 36
Ichikawa stuffing soap and towels into the Vuitton luggage.

ACE (V.O.)

But a whale like K. K. Ichikawa, who plays \$100,000 a hand in baccarat, can be a lot more dangerous than a hundred cheats, and you can't scare him off with a hammer. Downstairs he takes us for four million and upstairs he takes free soap, shampoo, and towels. Another billionaire cheapskate who loved his free rooms...

CUT TO:

37 EXT. TANGIER'S JET AT SMALL VEGAS AIRPORT - EVENING 37
The Tangiers Gulfstream with the Tangiers logo as two pilots help Sherbert and Ichikawa aboard.

ACE (V.O.)

... and free private jets.

CUT TO:

38 EXT. TANGIER JET - EVENING 38
Sherbert followed by Ichikawa and entourage get off jet.

ACE (V.O.)

But, we got him back. We had our pilot tell him the plane was on the fritz...

39 INT. SMALL LAS VEGAS AIRPORT - NIGHT 39
Sherbert arguing with Commercial CLERK as Ichikawa and entourage look glum.

ACE (V.O.)

...that he missed the commercial flights connecting with Japan and that the hotels in LA would run him four or five grand just for the night...

CUT TO:

40 EXT. TANGIER'S CASINO - NIGHT 40
Sherbert and Ichikawa and entourage getting out of Tangier's limos greeted by Ace.

ACE (V.O.)

... We got him back with a whole floor of rooms to himself.

ICHIKAWA

(to Ace)

You want to get my money back. No!

Ace leads Ichikawa to Baccarat pit.

ACE

Come on, we'll pass the time. We'll catch the show.

CUT TO:

41 INT. BACCARAT TABLE - NIGHT 41
Ichikawa betting one \$5000 tile and winning. Ace nearby.

ACE (V.O.)

... and, once he was back, he played small. He bet five grand a hand instead of his usual hundred. But, I knew, the trick with Whales like Ichikawa was that they can't bet small for long. Especially if they win, because they consider winning small, losing!

CUT TO:

Ichikawa seated with stacks of large tiles before him betting five rows at a time.

ACE (V.O.)

So he upped his bets...

CUT TO:

41A INT. BACCARAT TABLE - NIGHT 41A
Ichikawa, hours later, his tiles depleted. Ace is watching from behind the barrier as millions in racks of red tiles are carted away by the casino.

ACE (V.O.)

... until he dropped his winnings back and gave up two million of his own cash. In a casino, the cardinal rule is keep them playing and keep them coming back. The longer they play, the more they lose. It's pure math. It's the reverse of compound interest. In the end, we get it all.

CUT TO:

42 INT. CASINO BIG WHEEL - NIGHT 42
Ace watching a DEALER at the Big Six Wheel collecting the losers' chips.

ACE

(to the dealer)

Show the Eye.

The Dealer holds his hands out palms-up in front of him to the Eye in the Sky. Ace reaches over and pries a black \$100 chip from beneath the Dealer's large nautical

wristwatch. The Dealers who had been smirking immediately turn away, stand up extra straight and start tending to their own tables.

CUT TO:

ACE
(to Sherbert)
Fire him and no more watches on the
floor wider than a chip.

43 INT. TANGIERS CASINO - NIGHT 43
Ace with grim-faced Pit Bosses next to him looks out over the huge casino where hundred of thousands of dollars are being pored into machines.

ACE (V.O.)
In Vegas everybody's gotta watch
everybody else.

CUT TO:

The craps DEALER, standing on one side of the craps table, wearing a green vest and bow tie, is taking bets and watching a woman's roll of the dice barely hit the back wall. She rolls a six.

ACE (V.O.)
Since the players are looking to
beat the casino, the dealers are
watching the players.

DEALER
Six is the number. Six. Hit the
wall, please. Both dice must hit the
wall.

PAN TO:

The BOXMAN, seated mid table passing out and collecting chips from the two dealers on his either side. The chips are moved about the table with dazzling speed.

ACE (V.O.)
The Boxmen are watching the
dealers...

PAN TO:

PIT BOSS watching Boxmen from pit behind craps tables.

ACE (V.O.)
...the Pit Bosses are watching the
Boxmen...

PAN TO:

SHIFT BOSS, in black tie, is watching the Pit Boss.

ACE (V.O.)
 ...the Shift Bosses are watching he
 Pit bosses...

PAN TO:

FLOOR MANAGER is watching the Shift Boss.

ACE (V.O.)
 ...the Floor Manager is watching the
 Shift Boss...

PAN TO:

Video camera in ceiling.

ACE (V.O.)
 ...And, the Eye in the Sky is
 watching them all.

CUT TO:

44 INT. EYE IN THE SKY CAMERA VIDEO ROOM - NIGHT 44
 TV monitor focused on a fanned row of \$100 bills. PAN TO
 Ace and Sherbert looking.

PAN TO:

Surveillance Catwalkers adjusting cameras and spying on
 players below with binoculars.

ACE (V.O.)
 Plus, we had a dozen guys up there,
 most of them ex-cheats, who knew
 every trick in the house.

CUT TO:

Ace and Billy Sherbert still looking at the screen.

CUT TO

TV screen where we see a hot craps table with a large
 crowd gathered around and a Waitress with a tray comes
 over to the table with a cognac snifter.

PAN OVER to reveal GINGER MCKENNA, a 31-year-old
 dazzling blond, who takes the full snifter and hands the
 waitress an empty one.

TV Zoom in on Ginger who is rolling the dice for a High
 Roller. After every win, while the High Roller is
 gathering in his chips, Ace sees Ginger take a couple of
 \$100 black chips and drop them into her bag.

CUT TO:

45 OMIT SCENE 45

46 INT. TANGIERS CASINO CRAPS TABLE - NIGHT 46

Ace is now on the floor watching as Ginger rolls again, only this time she craps out and the table loses, except she has made so much money for the table that the winners toss chips in her direction for her roll.

Ginger turns to the High Roller raking in his chips.

GINGER

I want my end.

HIGH ROLLER

What end? We didn't have any deal.

GINGER

I won all that for you. What am I getting? I want a rack.

HIGH ROLLER

I saw you put enough in your purse. You've got enough.

Ginger grabs the racks with his \$100,000 in chips and tosses them into the air. Chips fly all over the casino. Everyone starts diving for chips. Dealers. Players. Security guards. Waitresses. Bellmen. Pit Bosses. Bedlam.

Ace is the only person not diving for chips. He looks at Ginger. She looks at him.

GINGER

What do you think of that?

Ginger laughs and walks off.

ACE (V.O.)

I fell in love right there. She was beautiful and made everything around her alive. But in Vegas, for a girl like Ginger, love costs money.

CUT TO:

47 INT. NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT 47

Ginger and Ace are seated in a banquette. CLOSE UP of Ace's hand pinning DIAMOND and RUBY PIN to Ginger's dress. TILT UP to Ginger's smiling face beaming at Ace. They kiss. Ginger gets up to go to the Ladies room.

GINGER

Let me have something for the girl?

Ace hands her a \$100 bill.

ACE (V.O.)
 Ginger's mission in life was money.
 No matter what I gave her, even
 \$100, I never saw any change.

TIME CUT TO:

47A Ginger comes back.

47A

ACE
 Ginger, where's my change?

GINGER
 Oh, I hit a few games on the way
 back.

ACE (V.O.)
 But that was all bullshit. She
 pocketed the cash

CUT TO:

48 EXT. VALET PARKING DESK - NIGHT FLASHBACK
 Ginger is happily greeted by VALET PARKERS, two casino
 SECURITY GUARDS and PIT BOSSES. She gets a bottle of
 pills from Valet Parker and slips him some cash. They
 all greet Ginger in a friendly manner.

48

ACE (V.O.)
 She was a Queen around the casinos.
 She brought in high rollers and
 helped them spread around a lot of
 money. Who didn't want Ginger? She
 was one of the best known, best
 liked and most respected hustlers in
 town.

CUT TO:

49 INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT FLASH BACK
 Ginger handing the pills over to a HIGH ROLLER in his a
 hotel suite where he is washing his face and trying to
 energize himself.

49

ACE (V.O.)
 Smart hustlers like Ginger could
 keep a guy awake for two or three
 days before sending him home broke
 to the little woman and his bank
 examiners.

CUT TO:

50 INT. CASHIERS CAGE - NIGHT FLASH BACK
 Ginger converts her chips into a pile of \$100 bills.

50

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP of \$100 bill she folds over.

ACE (V.O.)

She had the hustler's code. She knew how to take care of people. Vegas is Kickback City.

Ginger slips folded \$100 bill deftly into palms of a Pit Boss and Floor Manager as she shakes hands goodnight.

ACE (V.O.)

She took care of the dealers, Pit Bosses, and Floor managers. She even took parkers, who took care of the security guards, who took care of the outside cops.

Ginger, on the way out door, passes a folded \$100 bill to the smiling Valet Parker. A smiling Security Guard, in blazer and crest, stands nearby.

CUT TO:

51-52 INT. GINGER'S APARTMENT - DAY FLASH BACK
Ginger in robe handing cash to LESTER DIAMOND, who we see hastily kiss Ginger and slip out the door.

51-52

ACE (V.O.)

She had it all under control, except for her old pimp boyfriend Lester Diamond. Lester was a card cheat, a golf hustler and always broke.

CUT TO:

Ginger looks out window and sees Lester get into flashy car and drives off. CAMERA MOVES IN ON GINGER.

ACE (V.O.)

But the way Ginger saw it, Lester was just an unlucky guy. Somebody had to take care of him.

CUT TO:

53 TITLE: O'HARE AIRPORT, CHICAGO

53

INT. CUSTOMS CHICAGO AIRPORT - DAY
NICKY SANTORO, his wife, JENNIFER, with a large beehive, and their 8-year-old son, NICKY BOY, detained while luggage searched by customs agents.

ACE (V.O.)

A lot of people thought Chicago sent Nicky out to watch my back, but that's not true. Nicky came out because he was hot back home and he knew that Vegas was ripe. But, typical Nicky, a couple of days before he arrives, there'd been a huge diamond burglary in Antwerp and, as usual, the bulls always suspected Nicky.

CUT TO:

54 INT. NICKY'S CHICAGO HOUSE - DAY 54
Nicky and Jennifer at the kitchen table. The suitcases have been dumped on the floor. Jennifer leans over, tugs at her hair, and diamonds begin to call out onto the table.

ACE (V.O.)

And, they were usually right.

CUT TO:

55 INT. ACE'S TANGIERS PENTHOUSE - DAY 55
Nicky and Jennifer arrive. Ace opens the door. They embrace in Ace's spectacular Vegas-style penthouse.

ACE (V.O.)

Nicky and Jennifer came over right away.

NICKY

So this is it! Look at this joint.

JENNIFER

It's incredible.

ACE

Welcome to Las Vegas.

NICKY

Are we gonna have a good time here!

ACE

I want to show you around,
(looks toward bedroom door
as Ginger comes out)
Oh, by the way -- this is Ginger.

A stunning Ginger walks toward Nicky and Jennifer, who are both stunned at her beauty.

NICKY
 (staring at Ginger)
 Oh my god, what have you been doing
 out here?

GINGER
 Hi.

NICKY
 I'll tell you right now. He lucked
 out. I love this guy like a brother,
 but he doesn't deserve you.

GINGER
 (on her best behavior,
 putting her arm through
 Ace's)
 Oh no. I don't deserve him. I've
 never had it better in my life.

All laugh.

CUT TO:

56 EXT. CAR ON DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT
 Car heading back to Vegas.

56

ACE (V.O.)
 After we ate, we left Jennifer and
 Ginger alone and Nicky and I took a
 ride.

CUT TO:

57 INT. ACE'S CAR - NIGHT
 Ace and Nicky are driving into town.

57

NICKY
 What do you think of me moving out
 here? You think I got a chance out
 here?

ACE
 Sure, except, it's a little
 different out here. You gotta be
 careful. The Sheriff's a real
 cowboy. They bury you in
 the desert out here.

NICKY
 Would you have any objections?

ACE
 I don't have any objections.

NICKY

Because, I wanna get away from Chicago. You know how things can get hot back there...

ACE

Sure.

NICKY

(surveying Vegas from darkness of desert to lights of town)

I mean, look at this place. It's made outta money.

(conspiratorially)

And do you know the best thing?

ACE

What?

NICKY

Nobody'll know what we're doing.

ACE

I know. But, I'm running a licensed premise. I'm (laughs) a legitimate guy out here.

NICKY

Yeah. Of course. So am I. We're regular civilians.

See Ace driving back to city.

ACE (V.O.)

I hope he means it, because he'll never get a shot like this again.

PAN to Nicky.

NICKY (V.O.)

There hadn't been a real wise guy out here since Bugsy Siegel for Chrissake. This place is ripe. And, there's nobody around.

CUT TO:

58

INT. CATHOLIC SCHOOL - DAY

Nicky and Jennifer seated with other parents on the small classroom seats behind small children's desks listening to a teacher NUN. Nicky Jr. and other youngsters are standing behind the Nun facing the parents.

58

ACE (V.O.)
 Ginger and I presented Nicky and
 Jennifer all over town...
 like regular Ozzie and Harriets...
 Like supermarkets, banks, schools
 ...we helped them get all set up.

CUT TO:

59 EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD - DAY 59
 Nicky and Det. BOB JOHNSON are coaching their sons and
 other young players who they pat on the back with
 encouraging words and send running onto the field.

NICKY (V.O.)
 Ace got Little Nicky involved with
 Little League and it was great. It
 turned out one of the other coaches
 was a Metro Intelligence cop. But it
 didn't matter. It was all about our
 kids.

CUT TO:

60 INT. DENTIST'S OFFICE - DUSK 60
 Nicky and Ace in dentist's outer office where Nicky is
 showing the dentist his tooth.

ACE (V.O.)
 I even got him a dentist, but Nicky
 was funny about taking anything.

NICKY
 I think I need a filling back here.
 The only thing, though, no
 anesthetic.

DENTIST
 Okay, let me look at it.

CUT TO:

Nicky seated in dentist's chair stops dentist who
 approaches with the novocaine needle. Ace watches.

NICKY
 I said, before. No drugs. I don't
 want any drugs.

DENTISTS
 No. No. You don't understand. I'm
 going to have to drill into a live
 nerve. You'll have to take a local.
 (MORE)

DENTISTS (CONT'D)

(to Ace)

Harry, Mr. Santoro doesn't understand...

NICKY

(interrupting)

No. You don't understand. The way we do it is this. When I point to my tooth, you drill.

(points to tooth)

When I raise my hand, like this, you stop. Then, when I lower my hand, you start to drill again.

CUT TO:

Nicky being drilled and raising his hand. The dentist stops immediately amazed at his patient. Nicky lifts himself a bit, wipes away his tears with the bib, leans back and points to his tooth for the ashen-faced dentist to resume.

CUT TO:

61 INT. TANGIERS CASINO - CREDIT WINDOW - NIGHT 61
EDDY and JERRY, two well-dressed hoods are signing papers at the cashier's credit window near Ace as Nicky approaches.

ACE (V.O.)

Nicky made himself at home, and, at the casino, he made his presence known immediately. He didn't even have to do much. It was just that he was there. Nicky represented the Outfit and that was it.

CUT TO:

Nicky walking toward Ace and Eddy and Jerry.

NICKY (V.O.)

I had to make sure that there were no more shakedowns. No more wildcat strikes. No more hijacked deliveries. No more cars getting boosted in the parking lot. No more trouble from bullshit lounge acts. And, nobody banging out the joint on phony credit scams, like these two balloons over here.

NICKY

Hey, Eddy. Jerry. How're ya.

EDDY & JERRY

Hi Nicky. Hiya Nicky. What are you doing here?

NICKY

I'm over here.

EDDY

You're over here now?

NICKY

Yeah. I'm over here.
(pointing to Ace)
I'm with him.

EDDY

I was looking for Carmine to come in.

JERRY

He was supposed to meet us here.

NICKY

Carmine? (long pause) He was here and he left.

EDDY

Carmine left? (pause)

NICKY

Yeah. He never even checked in. He busted out before he got to his room. He was walking around shooting craps with one hand and holding his suitcase in the other.

EDDY

So Carmine left.

JERRY

Carmine left.

CLERK

(shoving papers at Eddy and Jerry)

Here are the papers. Sorry it took so long. Just sign here, please.

EDDY

No. It's okay.

JERRY

Yeah, we'll look at it later.
Thanks.

Jerry and Eddy say their goodbyes and leave as Nicky gives Ace a look and Ace smiles.

CUT TO:

62 INT. ACE'S TANGIERS PENTHOUSE - NIGHT
Ace and Ginger are alone. The apartment looks out on the glittering neon signs of the Strip.

62

ACE (V.O.)

I was in a great spot, but it was time to take a chance. For a guy who liked sure things, I was about to bet the rest of my life on a longshot.

GINGER

You're taking on a lot you know... I haven't had to answer to anybody for years and I like it that way. I like to have a good time. I like to party.

ACE

I know... And sometimes that's a problem. Hey, I've had my own problems. I haven't always had all this. But, I struggled. I made...

GINGER

(interrupts)

I don't think a party is a problem.

ACE

I understand, but Ginger... We're not kids. We've both been around. There's no room left for bullshit. I've got an arrangement for you. It may not be that romantic, but it is practical.

GINGER

Are you trying to handicap me?

ACE

Better than that. I'm gonna marry you.

GINGER

Oh yeah. Sure. You know... I'm sorry... I enjoy being with you... We have a good time... But... I just don't feel that way. You know. I mean... I'm not in love with you. I'm sorry.

ACE

I know that. But, what is love? Respect. Admiration. A certain affection. Think of it this way: What can I mean to you? I can give you security. Look, we're both getting older. You can hustle the rest of your life and not be as rich as I can make you.

GINGER

And if it doesn't work?

ACE

I could be a good father. I know you'll be a good mother.

GINGER

(interrupting)

Oh no, you've got the wrong girl there.

ACE

Baby, I'll make sure that you'll never be broke. I'll set aside enough money to cover you for life. It'll be your insurance.

GINGER

What are we talking about?

ACE

You're talking about being afraid to take a chance and I'm talking about putting aside a million dollars for you. That's as simple as I can make it.

Ginger looks at him.

CUT TO:

63

INT. CAESAR'S PALACE BALLROOM MARRIAGE - NIGHT
The ballroom has been turned into a chapel for the elaborate wedding. David, the 6-month old child is in a pram. Nicky and Jennifer are hovering around the baby

63

with little Nicky and are blissfully happy. It is an elegant affair. City officials, politicians and gaming officials are there, plus Sherbert and Ace's boss, Green. The SHERIFF and uniformed CHIEF OF POLICE are present to shake Ace's hand and toast the bride.

ACE (V.O.)

When I married Ginger, I knew all the stories, but I didn't give a fuck. "I'm Harry Rothstein," I said. "I can change her."

CUT TO:

64 INT. BALLROOM AND CORRIDOR - NIGHT 64
An hour or two later, during dancing and festivities, Ace watches Ginger go to make a telephone call.

Ginger on wall phone. She's crying.

GINGER

I'm sorry. I love you... I know Lester... but this is the best thing I can do. I love you.

CUT TO:

65 INT. LOS ANGELES APARTMENT - NIGHT 65
Lester Diamond is talking on the phone softly. There is a beautiful GIRL in the apartment with Diamond.

CUT TO:

66 INT. WEDDING CORRIDOR - NIGHT 66
Ace is standing in the corridor watching Ginger. He hears her. Ginger hangs up and sees Ace. She is holding a drink.

ACE

You all right?

Ginger swigs the rest of the drink.

ACE

(gently takes the drink)
You had enough of this?

GINGER

I had to say goodbye to people.

ACE

(embracing her)

That's okay. Look that part of your life is over with. Do what you have to do to close the door on all that.

67 EXT. ACE'S HOUSE - DAY 67
Ace and Ginger arrive at expensive house which backs onto Country Club golf course.

CUT TO:

68 INT. ACE'S HOUSE - DAY 68
Ace takes Ginger inside. It is fancy and lush.

CUT TO:

69 INT. ACE'S BEDROOM CLOSET - DAY 69
Ace presents her with a sable coat and then opens a leather suitcase filled with red Cartier's jewelry pouches and ring boxes. Ace watches as a transfixed Ginger tries on diamond and gold necklaces, rings, bracelets and earrings.

ACE

Do I keep my promises, or what?

GINGER

(awed)

Oh God! I've never seen...

Ginger starts running her fingers through the jewels.

ACE

Not bad uh? This is your insurance. But, we shouldn't keep them in the house. I'll put 'em in the bank for you.

After a moment, Ace takes Ginger's hands in his own and gathers her total attention.

ACE

Here, pay attention to me. What I'm going to tell you is very more important.

GINGER

(looking up)

What?

CUT TO:

70 EXT. BURBANK PRIVATE AIRPORT - DAY 70
 Ace and Ginger getting off Tangiers jet carrying suitcases.

ACE (V.O.)

Now that I was married with a kid I had to make sure they were secure.

CUT TO:

71 EXT. BEVERLY HILLS BANK - DAY 71
 As Ace and Ginger walk in the bank they are greeted by the bank PRESIDENT, who embraces Ace, an old friend.

ACE (V.O.)

Remember, gambling's a cash business and guys like me have gotta hide it from the IRS, the FBI or some wiseguys who're looking to rip you off.

CUT TO:

72 INT. BEVELY HILLS BANK SAFE DEPOSIT - DAY 72
 Ace and Ginger alone closing a large box so crammed with cash that Ace has to lean on it for the clasp to lock. He then slides it into wall and the Bank President joins Ace and Ginger at the box and he and Ace simultaneously double-lock the outer safety box door with two separate keys, after which, Ace gives Ginger his key.

CUT TO:

73 INT. BANK PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - DAY 73
 Ginger is on the other side of the room signing papers.

ACE (V.O.)

So, I put about two million dollars away under the name of "Mr. and Mrs. Tom Collins", because I wanted Ginger to move the money whenever I needed her to. I didn't want the money traced back to me.

BANKER

(quietly)

Harry, let me ask you something.

ACE

Sure, what?

BANKER

We know each other a long time. Do you trust your wife?

ACE

Yes. Sure. Why?

BANKER

Nothing. That's good, because...
Most of my clients don't.

CUT TO:

74 INT. TANGIERS - NIGHT

74

Nicky looks at Marino who then peels cash off a thick wad of bills and hands it to a Dealer who nervously smiles and runs off.

ACE (V.O.)

Vegas was like a dream for me. I could walk down the street with a scratch sheet and not get hassled. I could make a bet from home and not worry about my phones. Trouble was, Nicky was living his own kind of dream.

NICKY (V.O.)

It was better than a dream. I made most of my money shylocking the dealers. They were degenerate gamblers. In no time, I had half the dealers in Vegas owing me money.

CUT TO:

75 INT. TANGIERS POKER TABLE - NIGHT

75

Nicky at table with three card sharks: SLIM, ROCKY, MOOSH, and the same Dealer from previous scene, who deals a winning hand to Nicky.

NICKY (V.O.)

Then, I started sandbagging high stakes poker players.

The LOSER gets up in disgust as Sharks say "Come on. Stick around. Maybe your luck will change." "I've have enough," Loser says leaving.

CUT TO:

Nicky leans forward to rake in the chips as two UNDERCOVER AGENTS looking like tourists watch him.

ACE (V.O.)

Nicky thought nobody was watching him. But he was wrong.

CUT TO:

Ace leaning over Nicky's shoulder and whispering in his ear. 41.

ACE
Be careful. The Gaming Commission is all over the place.

NICKY
We're lucky. We're not allowed to be lucky in this place?

ACE
You've been lucky all week. They're gonna notice.

Ace walks away.

CUT TO:

76 EXT. JOCKEY SPORTS BOOK - NIGHT 76
Nicky and Marino pull up in the new Lincoln and get out.

NICKY (V.O.)
The problem with Ace was he was such a worrier about his fuckin' casinos. On some things, even I couldn't talk to him. To Ace, the casinos came first. He ran them strict. He closed down a lot of outside scamsters and even made a few enemies, but as long as he kept making money he knew he was safe. I saw Vegas different. I saw it as untouched. There were bookies to shakedown, pimps, drug dealers, torch artists, loansharks and bogus wiseguy skulls. Little shakedowns, but it was a beginning. The best was, I had a fool-proof scheme on how I could bet and never lose.

CUT TO:

77 INT. JOCKEY SPORTS BOOK - NIGHT 77
Nicky getting paid by a grim-faced BOOKIE.

ACE (V.O.)
It wasn't very scientific, but it worked. When he won, he collected. When he lost, he told the bookies to go fuck themselves. What were they gonna do, muscle Nicky? Nicky was the muscle.

CUT TO:

78 INT. TANGIERS CASINO - NIGHT
At a craps table when suddenly a woman slaps her husband. She continues to slap him.

78

WOMAN
You miserable bastard!
(slap)
You sonofabitch
(slap)
All the money we had?

The Dealers at the table start shouting "Security!"

Ace is talking to Don Ward on another matter.

ACE
You've got to stay on top of that.
There's too much
slippage in your area.

WARD
Absolutely, but I assumed...

ACE
Aha! That's your big mistake. Don't
assume anything, ever.
Not when you work for me.

WARD
Yes. I'm sorry. I got it.

ACE
Look how you've got your machines
arranged. Where are your loose
machines?

WARD
(pointing to dark corner in
back)
Over there!

ACE
What are they doing back there? Get
them up front. Winning machines
attract players. The bells go off!
You can't hide those machines. No
wonder your numbers are behind.

WARD
I'll get on it. Thanks.

ACE
And don't thank me. just do it.

Ward walks away as Nicky walks up to Ace.

ACE

(to Nicky)

I can't believe these cowboys out here. They inherited a gold mine and if it wasn't for us they'd piss it away.

NICKY

What do you expect. They're farmers. They're not like us.. Listen...

ACE

What?

NICKY

For Joe DiNapoli. His nephew. The kid wants to be a dealer.

ACE

Does he have any experience?

NICKY

No! He's just a kid. He knocked up some broad and they want him to go on the lam for a little while. He's okay. I'll vouch for him.

ACE

What are you vouching for him for? I know the kid. He's a fucking troublemaker. He'll make trouble for everybody.

NICKY

If he does, I'll personally bury the fuck.

ACE

That's what I mean. You gotta watch yourself Nicky. There are complaints out on you already.

NICKY

Who's fucking complaining?

ACE

I'm telling you what I pick up from security. The Sheriff's looking to bust your balls. They wanna put you in the Black Book.

NICKY

Ahh! It's all bullshit. They only got twelve people in that book for the whole state.

ACE

They do that and you won't be able to walk into a casino.

NICKY

What am I doing? I'm just trying to make a living here for Chrissake.

ACE

I'm telling you... Just watch yourself, okay?

NICKY

Okay! Okay! So, what are we gonna do with him?

ACE

Nicky, I can't put him on the floor without experience. He'll drown. You go back and tell them to send him to dealer's school for about six weeks and I'll start him out at the Sirocco.

Nicky walks away and we pull back with him to see Security people are pulling the husband and wife apart as the games go on. CAMERA MOVES to Ace into a BIG CLOSE UP of his face.

ACE (V.O.)

Doing favors is a part of doing business. If I ran a toothbrush factory, I'd still have to do favors for people. Still, there are favors, and, there are favors, and there are some things that should just not be tolerated.

CUT TO:

79 INT. TANGIERS CASINO POKER TABLE - NIGHT
CLOSE UP of socks on the poker table. DOLLY OUT and see lanky COWBOY.

79

CUT TO:

Ace leans over and whispers to Shift Manager.

ACE

Tell that guy to put his shoes on and get his feet off the table.

MANAGER

He's a regular. He's well thought of.

ACE

I don't care who he's with. That's not right.

Ace approaches Cowboy.

ACE

I'd like to ask you a favor. Would you please take your feet off the table and put on your shoes.

COWBOY

Why don't you get a fucking job?

ACE

I'm going to ask you nice, again. Put your shoes on and put your feet on the floor, or leave.

COWBOY

(to Ace)

Fuck you, faggot!

ACE

(to nearby security)

That's it. I want you to exit this guy from the premises, and I want you to exit him off his feet.

The Guards grab Cowboy by the arms and forcefully shove him toward the exit launching him high into the air.

ACE (V.O.)

Sure enough, an hour later, I get the call.

CUT TO:

80 INT. VEGAS BAR - NIGHT
Nicky is on a public wall phone.

80

NICKY

Ace, what happened over there? I got a piece of that guy you just threw out.

ACE (O.S.)

What? Do you know what he did?

NICKY

No. What?

ACE (O.S.)

I'll tell you what he did. He called me a faggot.

NICKY

(to Cowboy)

You called my friend a faggot?
What's the matter with you? Are you stupid?

And Nicky turns around and slaps Cowboy.

CUT TO:

81 INT. TANGIER CASINO - NIGHT 81
Ace is startled by the noise of Nicky slapping Cowboy.

CUT TO:

82 INT. VEGAS BAR - NIGHT 82

NICKY

Now you go over there right now and apologize and you'll be lucky if he lets you back in.

The chastened Cowboy follows orders and leaves.

CUT TO:

83 INT. TANGIERS CASINO - NIGHT 83
Ace on the phone.

NICKY (O.S.)

That fuck'n moron jerk. I understand if you don't want him there, but if you do let him in, I promise you, he'll never do anything out of line again.

CUT TO:

84 INT. POKER TABLE - NIGHT 84
Nicky's sandbaggers, Moosh, Rocky, Slim and Cowboy are sandbagging another mark. Cowboy has on his socks and shoes and is on his best behavior.

Ace watches as we see facial signals, coughs, blinks, touching of ears, hair and brow as cards are turned up and we see Cowboy rake in a large pot.

ACE (V.O.)

When the guy came back he behaved himself, but he was still no bargain, Like all of the rest of Nicky's "friends". I could do without him.

CUT TO:

85 INT. LAS VEGAS COUNTRY CLUB "ACE NIGHT" - TITLE: 1974
A banner reading: "MAN OF THE YEAR!" and TV news crews and still photographers taking pictures of Ace and Ginger surrounded by clusters of celebrities and the Vegas power elite at a grand cocktail party. Phil Green is at the mic.

85

GREEN

As the head of the Tangiers Corporation I welcome Harry Rothstein to the Club and Las Vegas. Ace Rothstein has made himself an indispensable member of the gaming community.

Green hands Ace a silver placque and they embrace.

CUT TO:

85A INT. LAS VEGAS COUNTRY CLUB - NIGHT LATER
A dazzling Ginger moves effortlessly about the room chatting up top executives, lawyers, judges, bankers and their wives. Ginger joins Ace who has been watching her work the room.

85A

ACE (V.O.)

Back home they would have put me in jail for what I'm doing. But, out here, they're giving me silver plaques, but my greatest pleasures was watching Ginger -- my wife -- work the room. They all loved her. How could you not love her? She could be the most charming woman you ever saw. People loved to be around her. She made everybody feel good.

TIME CUT TO:

Young handsome casino EXEC comes over to Ace and Ginger.

EXEC

Congratulations, Harry.

ACE

Yes. Thanks.

EXEC

And hello, Mrs. Rothstein. How are you?

Ace watches Ginger flash one of her dazzling smiles, but he is not sure whether she is flirting.

EXEC

You're one of the most gorgeous women I've ever seen.

Ace looks at the young man and back at his wife.

ACE (V.O.)

He was a young kid from the casino. Bright boy. What balls on that guy. I fired him.

CUT TO:

86 INT. VEGAS BANK VAULT - DAY

86

Ginger, with two-year-old David in a stroller, opens a large bank vault box with her jewels. She tries on rings, earrings and necklaces. She holds up jewelry to the light. Smiling, she dangles a necklace before the child. She presses the jewels to her face.

ACE (V.O.)

Ginger had that effect on people. I think she even encouraged them, but as much as they loved her, they didn't know what really moved her.

CUT TO:

87 INT. BANK HALLWAY - DAY

87

GUARD looks at his watch and sits down. He knows it's going to be a long afternoon.

ACE (V.O.)

And, with Ginger happy, I was able to concentrate on what I knew best.

CUT TO:

88 INT. TANGIERS CASINO SPORTSBOOK - NIGHT

88

Ace standing in a large theater surrounded by giant TV screens showing sports events. Below, long lines of bettors are lined up at windows. It is like NASA Control on launch day.

NICKY (V.O.)

And, Ace at his best was murder.
Just get outta the way. All alone,
he changed the way they did business
out here. He loosened the slots, he
raised the odds on craps and gave
away steak dinners for two bucks.
And, he did the most obvious thing,
he took bookie joints off the street
and opened them up inside a casino.
I mean, this is the only town in the
country where a bookie joint is
legit, so why not take advantage of
it. Within a few years, by doing all
this, he had every casino on the
Strip copying him.

CUT TO:

89 EXT. TANGIERS CASINO - DAY

Ace turning the keys to a silver Rolls Royce over to
Siegfried and Roy in front of the Tangiers signs with
their names emblazoned on it. Two white tigers are
draped over the car fenders.

89

NICKY (V.O.)

He hired the greatest acts on the
Strip. He got Siegfried and Roy and
their white tigers
away from the Grand by building them
a new stage and giving them a silver
Rolls Royce.

CUT TO:

90 INT. BACKSTAGE TANGIERS THEATER - DAY
Ace is weighing Lido girls in costumes.

90

NICKY (V.O.)

He brought over the whole Lido show
from Paris, but he forgot how lazy
those European dancers could be. He
had to weigh them once a week to
make sure they weren't getting fat.

ACE

(looking at scale with stage
designer)

Look what they send us! You're ten
pounds over. That's it. Go back to
Paris.

(MORE)

ACE (CONT'D)

(to Sherbert)

Cancel the contracts with Madame La Belle. She's been sending these Heifers over here for twenty years. Tell her the whole deal's over. Billy, who's she kicking back to to get away with this shit?

CUT TO:

91 EXT. DIRTY BACK ALLEY - NIGHT 91
Nicky and Marino are kicking a MAN on the ground next to the open door of the man's luxury car.

ACE (V.O.)

Between my innovations, and Nicky's dedication to his job, I soon had the best operation on the Strip.

CUT TO:

92 INT. CLASSY RESTAURANT - NIGHT 92
Jennifer seated near kitchen door sees Ginger arrive and whisper to snooty Maitre d' who leaps to attention and respectfully shows Ginger to the best banquette in the place. Jennifer gets up and follows along.

ACE (V.O.)

But, Ginger was the one who was able to enjoy the best of it, because I wound up working 16 and 18-hour days.

JENNIFER

(when seated and alone)

What did you tell that jerk?

GINGER

I told him I was "Mrs. Harry Rothstein."

CUT TO:

93 EXT. CASINO REAR LOADING PLATFORM - DAY 93
Nance, dumping two large suitcases in the trunk of a car.

NICKY (V.O.)

And, the more money he made the more suitcases went back home and, believe me, that was what it was all about.

CUT TO:

94 EXT. DESERT DINER - DAY 94
A desert tourist family oasis with a sign out front that says "60 Miles to Vegas".

ACE (V.O.)

It wasn't too long before what I was afraid was going to happen, happened. Nicky got himself into a little jam and it was easier to talk as far away from town and the cops as we could.

CUT TO:

95 INT. DESERT DINER - DAY 95
Ace and Nicky are in a rear booth tucked out of sight.

NICKY

(reading)

"His presence in a casino is detrimental to gaming and he will be ejected from any fucking casino in Las Vegas and the casinos can be fined as much as \$100,000 every time he shows up. I can't believe this. What does this bullshit mean?"

ACE

You got yourself banned! That's what it means.

NICKY

I told those scumbags to be careful.

ACE

It's not them. It's you. I told you to be careful.

NICKY

I can't believe this bullshit. You know I've got stuff to do in there. What the hell am I gonna do?

ACE

You send Marino. Any messages you've got for me -- just send Marino.

NICKY

Marino? Sonofabitch. They ban me and they let that thieving miserable piece of shit into the joint?

ACE

We had a great thing going out here. And now, this is really going to complicate everything.

NICKY

And there's no way around this?

ACE

NO! There's no way.

NICKY

What about ... like the restaurant in the casino? What if I want one of those sandwiches?

ACE

Forget it! No!

NICKY

So, in other words you're telling me I'm screwed?

ACE

Yes!

NICKY

I'm the only fucking guy living in Las Vegas who can't walk into a casino. Can you believe this bullshit? They pick on me.

ACE (V.O.)

It didn't sink into his head about the Black Book and what it meant. Not being able to go into casinos is just one thing. But being in this book etched your name into the brains of every cop and FBI agent in the state. I mean, you're listed in there with Al Capone! It's not just casinos! You can't go anywhere or do anything without them knowing. But, Nicky didn't care.

CUT TO:

96 EXT. THE GOLD RUSH JEWELERS - DAY

The Gold Rush Jewelry Shop, with "JUST OPENED" bunting across the front, designed to replicate an old fashioned western town with peaked roofs, wooden planked sidewalks and hitching posts.

96

ACE (V.O.)

He still had Marino working inside the casinos and then he began doing things in Vegas nobody had ever done before. He brought in his desperado

(MORE)

ACE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 burglary crew from back home and
 started knocking over high rollers,
 casino bosses and bookmakers right
 here in town. And, though he denied
 it, I even heard he started
 recruiting crews in San Diego and
 LA.

Nicky, Marino, and BERIE BLUE, SAL FUSCO, and JACK HARDY
 are on bench. CAMERA TRACKS by each one as introduced.

NICKY (V.O.)
 I got Bernie Blue, who could bypass
 any alarm. Sal Fusco, a terrific
 second story man. Jack Hardy, he
 worked for a safe company before he
 did a six-year bit. For me, it was
 like old times.

ACE (V.O.)
 Some company he was keeping. Pretty
 soon there wasn't a piece of jewelry
 stolen between Vegas, San Francisco
 and San Diego that didn't go through
 Nicky. He was the Bermuda Triangle
 of jewelry.

CUT TO:

97 INT. GOLD RUSH BACK ROOM - DAY 97
 Nicky is looking at diamonds with Blue and Marino.

NICKY
 Just make sure Pepe doesn't scratch
 anymore stones getting them out of
 their mounts.

phone rings, Nicky picks it up.

98 INT. TANGIERS RECEPTIONIST'S DESK - 98
 Receptionist cupping phone.

99 INT. GOLD RUSH BACK ROOM - DAY 99
 Blue, Marino, Fusco and Hardy are on phones at different
 times talking with Hotel BELLMAN: "This one's good, but
 ya gotta hurry." VALET PARKER: "They're just checking in
 now." PIT BOSS: "Room twelve thirty at the Colony."
 SECRETARY: "They're all in mint condition."

ACE (V.O.)
 He had tipsters all over town.
 Bellmen. Valet parkers. Pit Bosses.
 (MORE)

ACE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Secretaries. Even insurance brokers.
 And they all got a piece of the
 score.

CUT TO:

100 EXT. WAREHOUSE WALL - NIGHT 100
 A large empty carton is leaning against the warehouse
 wall. Hardy and Blue are hiding in a car nearby.

ACE (V.O.)
 They were very careful at first.
 They always drilled a small hole in
 the walls to see if the break-in had
 triggered any alarms.

DISSOLVE TO:

101 INT. INSIDE THE CARTON - NIGHT 101
 Sal Fusco is inside the carton drilling into the wall
 using a heavy-duty battery powered electric drill. He
 has the drill muffled with insulation material taped all
 around it. We see a semi-circle of holes he's drilled. A
 sledge hammer is next to him in the crate.

ACE (V.O.)
 If not, they'd drill enough holes to
 knock through the walls with a
 sledge hammer. Nicky was grabbing
 everything he could. Nobody out
 there was expecting a guy like him.
 To him, Las Vegas was the new
 Frontier.

CUT TO:

102 EXT. JEWELRY STORE WALL - DAY 102
 Cops and Detectives photographing and inspecting holes
 drilled in the wall of fancy jewelry shop that were
 knocked out to allow thieves to enter and leave.

NICKY (V.O.)
 I don't know what everybody was
 getting so excited about. I had to
 earn! I even put money in some
 legitimate deals with Charlie Clark,
 Ace's banker, but some of those
 deals didn't work out.

CUT TO:

103 INT. NICKY'S HOUSE - DAY 103
 A glum looking Nicky is being shown papers by CHARLEY
 CLARK, the banker. Jennifer brings coffee.

BANKER CLARK

You have to be prepared to take some kind of loss.

NICKY

But you will try to push it through? Won't you, Mr. Clark? That's fifty thousand dollars.

BANKER CLARK

Oh yes. We'll try and find a way to make it work for you.

CUT TO:

104 EXT. LEANING TOWER OF PIZZA - NIGHT

104

Two uniformed Vegas COPS are coming out restaurant with their arms filled with stacks of metal containers and pizza boxes.

COPS

(calling back over their shoulders)

Thank you. Thanks.

ACE (V.O.)

But, there was one thing -- Nicky was a real restaurant buff. He always made money in restaurants.

CAMERA TRACKS past the Cops into the restaurant, past LV types, dealers, lounge acts, showgirls, TV and movie celebrities, waitresses and barmen who started using the jammed place as their hangout. Pickup Nicky walks past Marino with two SHOWGIRLS.

ACE (V.O.)

He had top entertainers, show girls, coke dealers and every visiting wiseguy from home over. But, especially the showgirls. To a lot of these people, Nicky was the movie star.

104A EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT
Nicky with one of the Showgirls.

104A

NICKY

You can always tell a good kitchen by its veal. It's got to be milk fed and white. In most of the places out here you get a lot of pink veal.

(MORE)

NICKY (CONT'D)

It's not bad, but believe me you can be pounding that meat all day and all night and it'll never taste like the real thing.

Nicky and Showgirl get into car. Girl's head disappears.

CUT TO:

105 INT. BEDROOM OF LUXURY HOME - NIGHT 105
Nicky, Marino and Hardy opening a safe. Nicky goes over to family photos and turns them to the wall.

NICKY (V.O.)

Sometimes I used to go along on the heists just for the fun of it. But, I didn't like the people I was ripping off looking at me so I used to turn their pictures to the wall.

CUT TO:

106 INT. PALM SPRINGS JEWELRY STORE - DAY 106
Marino standing above two ARABS who are looking at gems.

NICKY (V.O.)

The merch went to Palm Springs. I had a couple of "Sand Niggers" out there. Arabs. We were all living good...

CUT TO:

107 INT. NICKY'S HOUSE - NIGHT 107
Nicky and Marino sneak in the house past Jennifer who is asleep on the sofa in front of softly playing TV set.

Nicky takes out a key and opens a heavy padlock and opens the metal door into his room.

108 INT. NICKY'S ROOM - NIGHT 108
Nicky's room has a bed, sofa, TV sets, exercise bike, and boxes and packages stacked along the walls.

NICKY (V.O.)

I turned my bedroom into a vault where I kept my choice stuff. I couldn't leave it at the Gold Rush in case we got raided or my guys got cute. I had the only key. Jennifer didn't care. She used to fall asleep on the couch watching television every night, anyway.

CUT TO:

109 INT. NICKY'S ROOM CLOSET - NIGHT 109
 Nicky and Marino are on the floor with boxes of jewels, wrist watches and stacks of cash. In a false bottomed trap in the closet floor, there are several handguns and silencers.

NICKY (V.O.)

This stuff was all mine. I didn't send any of this back to Chicago. I couldn't, because I wasn't even supposed to be doing it. The bosses were making so much money with the casinos, they didn't want anybody making waves. That's why there was no organized street stuff in Vegas before me.

CUT TO:

110 INT. NICKY'S KITCHEN - DAY 110
 Nicky, worn out from the night before, is making pancakes for Nicky Jr.

NICKY (V.O.)

But, around six thirty in the morning, when I finished my day, no matter where I was, or what I was doing, I always went home to make breakfast for Nicky Boy.

CUT TO:

A111 EXT. ALL AMERICAN GAS STATION CHICAGO - DAY A111
 Gas station with many phone booths inside and out.

CUT TO:

111 INT. BACK OFFICE OF ALL AMERICAN GAS STATION CHICAGO-DAY 111
 Marino slides packs of bound \$100 bills from belt worn under his shirt toward Gaggi who picks them up and carefully puts them in different pockets of his trousers and jacket.

NICKY (V.O.)

Still, I had to kick back a piece of my sandbagging and shylocking to Chicago. I sent them a piece. Not a big piece, but fuck'em, what the hell did they know. They were 1500 miles away and I knew how to keep them happy. When they gave me little jobs to do to send a message, I-would-carry-them-out-to-a-Tee.

CUT TO:

112 INT. CHICAGO BAR - NIGHT 112
Flash Cut of TONY DOGS and two MEN shooting up a bar with automatics hitting OWNER/BARTENDERS and WAITRESS.

NICKY (V.O.)

Like the time Tony Dogs and some guys shot up an outfit bar.

CUT TO:

112A INT. ALL AMERICAN GAS STATION BACK OFFICE - DAY 112A
Gaggi leans over and whispers in Marino's ear.

GAGGI

I don't care what you have to do to him. I want to know the names of the other people he had with him. If he won't say, tell Nicky to squeeze him. Put his fucking head in a vice.

CUT TO:

113 INT. SLOT MACHINE SHOP - NIGHT 113
Nicky is dragging Tony Dogs, who is beaten to a pulp, across the floor toward the workshop table and jams Tony Dogs' head into the vice. Marino and Blue are exhausted from beating Tony Dogs.

NICKY (V.O.)

I had to admire the guy. He was the toughest sonofabitch I ever met. We did everything to him. We even put ice picks in his prick. But he never talked. Finally I had to put his head in a vice.

Nicky begins to squeeze the vice.

TONY DOGS

(through squeezed mouth)
What the fuck are ya doing?

NICKY

What I'm told! Who were they, you fuck? Tell me.

And Nicky angrily spins the vise handle until suddenly one of Dogs' eyes pops out of the socket about three or four inches.

TONY DOGS

All right. All right!

Marino and Blue are horrified by the sight.

Everybody FREEZES

ACE (V.O.)

Finally, there was a real gangster in town and Nicky felt like he was the boss of Las Vegas.

CUT TO:

114 INT. TANGIERS CASINO - DAY

114

EXTREME CLOSE UP SLOT MACHINE

Three cherries jackpot! Suddenly, the power goes out. Lights die down. Machine "waaaooows" down to a dead stop.

CUT TO:

Ace is watching Security Guards, on their hands and knees, pulling the plugs on the giant BIG BUCKS machines, as he talks to DON WARD, the slots manager.

ACE

Why didn't you pull the machines?
Why didn't you call me?

WARD

It happened so quick! Just like that! Three guys won! I just didn't have the time to call.

ACE

Didn't you see the scam? Somehow these bastards got to the machines.

WARD

There's no way to determine that, Harry.

ACE

Yes there is. An infallible way. They won.

WARD

Somebody's gotta win sometimes.

ACE

Yes, but never three in a row for those kinds of numbers. And not all on the "Big Bucks" machines. Didn't you see you were being set up on the second win?

WARD

I think you're overreacting.

ACE

Listen you, I've been carrying your ass in this place since I got here and this is it. Get your things and get out. You're fired. Move!

WARD

You might regret this, Harry.

ACE

I'll regret it more if I keep you on.

WARD

This is not the way to treat people.

ACE

(interrupts)

Hey, if you didn't know you were being scammed, you're too dumb to keep this job. And, if you did know, then you were in on the play. Either way, get out. Now.

Ward Exits. Billy Sherbert turns to Ace.

SHERBERT

There's gonna be a problem with this kid.

ACE

I don't care. These places are one way streets. The money's supposed to come in, not go out. That's how they're set up. That's my job. To make sure the money comes in and stays.

CUT TO:

115 INT. TANGIERS COFFEE SHOP - DAY AN HOUR LATER 115
Ace and Green are seated in a booth having coffee and muffins.

GREEN

You can't fire him just like that. Webb's his brother-in-law. He's a County Commissioner.

ACE

So what? Everybody out here with cowboy boots is a County Commissioner.

GREEN

You gotta rehire him.

ACE

No! The casino operation is mine. Not yours and we've been carrying him for years. The sonofabitch is a crook.

GREEN

How can you say such a thing? Do you have proof?

ACE

I don't need proof. I know it.

GREEN

You're wrong on this one. He's a local. This is his state. His cousin's the Sheriff. His uncle's chief judge. His brother-in-law runs the County Commission. You've gotta take him back. Right or wrong, it's his state.

ACE

No. After what I've created here, I'm not going to tolerate guys like Ward anymore. If I take him back it's a signal that nobody's watching the store. Like everything else in this place, if you don't do it yourself it never gets done right.

GREEN

You don't know what you're taking on. Webb...

ACE

(interrupting)

For example. Not to change the subject, but look at what you're eating there. Look at your muffin. It's got so many blueberries it's falling apart and mine has hardly any blueberries at all.

CUT TO:

116 INT. TANGIERS KITCHEN - DAY
Ace, Green and a Baker are gathered around the baker's counter surrounded by muffin tins and batter.

116

ACE

Why do some muffins have twenty blueberries while others have three or four?

BAKER

They're hard to mix. They break in the batter.

Green looks on in amazement as Ace begins putting berries into muffin tins.

ACE

Okay, from now on I want at least nine or ten berries are placed in each muffin. You understand that?

CUT TO:

117

INT. ACE'S KITCHEN - DAY

Ace is getting himself a glass of milk from the refrigerator. His ulcer is acting up. The NANNY is feeding David in BG.

117

GINGER

I need some money.

ACE

(taking a pill)

What about your slush account. Take out whatever you need.

GINGER

It's not enough. I need \$25,000.

ACE

Twenty five thousand. For yourself? Why do you need twenty five thousand?

GINGER

I just need it... I feel an obligation... I need it...

ACE

Who are you obligated to? What are you talking about?

GINGER

It's not that important -- I don't want to make anything out of it. It's just some feeling -- I had to do --

ACE

Tell me, what's it for?

GINGER

Never mind.

ACE

No! I want to know. My wife comes to me and asks for \$25,000 -- you want a coat? Whatever you want -- You've got it. It's not the money -- it's why do you want it?

GINGER

Listen, I've been independent my whole life. I never had to ask anybody for anything and now you gotta try and make me feel bad.

ACE

I don't want you to feel bad. I've just gotta be able to trust you -- with my life. Can I trust you?
(pause) Can I trust you?

No answer.

ACE

Answer me! Can I trust you?

GINGER

(quietly)

You can trust me.

ACE

(quiet)

Good.

CUT TO:

118 INT. BANK VAULT - DAY 118
Ginger taking a small felt pouch out of a safety deposit box.

CUT TO:

119 EXT. PHONE BOOTH - DAY 119
Nicky on a phone watching Ginger leave the bank.

CUT TO:

120 INT. ACE'S OFFICE - DAY 120
Ace standing at desk on phone.

ACE

Let me know where.

CUT TO:

121

INT. GREEK DINER BOOTH - DAY

121

Ginger in a booth with Les Diamond talking as she slides the pouch across the table.

Ace sits down at the booth next to her.

Diamond says nothing, but gives Ginger a "how did you fuck this up look" and shoves the pouch back across the table toward her.

ACE

(taking the pouch)

Don't look at her like that. She's not earning for you anymore.

Diamond leaves, but annoyed at Ginger.

Ginger is upset

ACE

I thought we closed the door on that? Do you remember that day? When you said goodbye to him, he didn't tell you to stop. He didn't say, "Don't marry him. I'll be right over and we'll get married." He didn't say that to you, did he?

GINGER

No...

ACE

Instead, what did he say: "Fuck it. Take him for everything he's got."

GINGER

He didn't say that.

ACE

Come here.

By the arm, Ace takes Ginger to the rear door of the diner where they can see the parking area through a screen door.

CUT TO:

122

EXT. DINER PARKING LOT - DAY

122

Two GOONS, unknown to Ginger, punching Diamond in the stomach until he falls to the ground and then one of the goons kicks him in the ribs and they leave. Nicky watches from car out of Ginger's sight.

CUT TO:

123 INT. REAR OF DINER - DAY
 Ginger upset, ashamed, brings her hand to her mouth to cover a cry.

123

ACE

He doesn't have a hold on you anymore --- unless you want him to. You're not earning for him anymore. You're my wife. I don't understand. He never gives you anything back, so why do you do such a thing for him? What's going on? I trust you with my life. How am I gonna trust you anymore?

Ginger storms out. Ace follows.

CUT TO:

124 INT. ACE'S OFFICE - DAY
 Ace is working inside the office behind the desk. His secretary buzzes. Sign behind desk with a tiny "Yes" on top and a gigantic "No" on the bottom. Bottle of Mylanta on his desk.

124

SECRETARY

County Commissioner Pat Webb is here to see you.

ACE

One minute.

Ace gets up from his desk and we see he is in his boxer shorts. He carefully puts on his trouser he has had hanging in his closet. Webb walks in. He is big, tough and western, wearing a Stetson, tooled boots and a gabardine suit. He doesn't sit.

WEBB

I've come here personally to allay any confusion about certain matters.

ACE

Yes?

WEBB

I've got to believe there has been a misunderstanding over a very minor matter.

ACE

I don't deal in minor matters.

WEBB

Maybe you didn't know it, but Don Ward, is a very well liked man in this town. He has lots of friends here. His family goes back many many years. And, you'll forgive me for saying it, he did not deserve to be fired.

ACE

I don't care how well-liked he is, or how long his family's been here. The sonofabitch knew we were getting hit and he did nothing. He was either too dumb to see, or he was in on it.

WEBB

How can you say that? You can't prove any of those charges.

ACE

If I could prove them, he'd be under arrest.

WEBB

You're talking arrest? You? With your record and your gangster pals like Nicky Santoro?

ACE

Nobody interferes with the running of my casinos. That's libelous. Let's get that straight! Nobody. Not even jackass kids with more pull than brains.

WEBB

(outraged)

Do you know who I am?

ACE

Sure, and I don't give a shit. Ward stays fired.

WEBB

Mr. Rothstein, your people never did understand the way it works out here. You're all just guests and you act like you're at home. Well, let me tellya' ya'ain't home.

Buzzer goes off on Ace's desk.

ACE
 Uh, well, is that all or should I
 call security?

CUT TO:

125 INT. ACE'S BATHROOM - DAY

125

Ace, in pain from his ulcer, opens a bottle of pills in his bathroom and sees that it is almost empty.

He leaves the bathroom and walks into the bedroom where Ginger is stretched out on the bed.

ACE
 (waving the pill bottle)
 What happened to my pills?

GINGER
 Huh?

ACE
 Isn't it bad enough that you're
 drinking too much, but you're taking
 all my pills, too.

GINGER
 I have not.

ACE
 Don't lie to me. I've got enough
 aggravation on the outside. Look at
 me, for my ulcers I take a half a
 percadan and only, only, when I'm in
 tremendous pain.
 (rattling the bottle)
 Look at me! I had a three month
 supply in here and you've...

GINGER
 (interrupts)
 You didn't have to beat him up.

ACE
 What?

GINGER
 Les. You didn't have to do what you
 did. He's an old friend. I was just
 trying to help him. I'm not fucking
 the guy.

ACE
 That's worse.

GINGER

You can't make me stop caring about people.

ACE

(trying to calm her)

Hey... I'm trying to make the best of things. You're my wife, for Chrissake... People look up to you in this town. You know what I'm going through here...

GINGER

I don't give a fuck. I'm getting out of here.

She gets up and Ace grabs her arm.

ACE

Ginger, please, you've got to get yourself together. It's not for me. We've got a kid for godsake.

Ginger collapses in his arms in tears and he gently puts her down on the bed.

ACE

(gently)

Listen to me. Your drinking is out of hand. I'll get you into a program. They've got a lot of good ones.

GINGER

(interrupting)

No. I don't need it. I'm okay.

ACE

(interrupts)

They're very discreet. No names in the papers; don't worry. I want you to do it because I care about you. You're a beautiful woman. You don't need that stuff. And you don't need him leeching off of you.

GINGER

I'm not going to do it. I can't.

ACE

I know you better than you do. You're stronger than I am.

(pause)

You're a tiger. You can do it.

CUT TO:

INT. GOLD RUSH BACK ROOM - DAY

Ginger and Nicky are in the back room. Nicky is leaning against a table while Ginger opens pills and takes one with a drink.

GINGER

He's a bastard. He had some goons from the hotel beat him up. An old friend of mine -- just needed some help, that's all -- why did he have to?

NICKY

I know -- I know -- It's not a good thing to do -- But maybe he thought the guy was shaking you down.

GINGER

No. No. He knew about this guy before we got married. He's just a poor guy I used to know who needed some help.

NICKY

Ginger, I got to tell you, the first time I saw you guys together I never saw him so happy. The crazy Jew fuck that he is. I mean, I never saw him act like that with anyone else. He loves you, I know that.

GINGER

I went into this with my eyes open. I knew there was no limit with him. That one day it could all come down. But I respected that. I even admired it. You know he made a deal with me.

NICKY

What do you mean?

GINGER

Well, I wouldn't marry him unless I knew he could take care of me. So he put aside a million dollars in jewelry for me. He called it my insurance. But, you know him. He wouldn't marry me until six months after little Davey was born. He wanted to be sure.

NICKY

But, you see. A million dollars in jewels. The guy cares for you.

GINGER

I should've never married him. He's a triple Gemini, you know. A duality. Gemini's the snake. You gotta watch a snake.

NICKY

You gotta make the best of this now -- Go slow.

GINGER

(interrupts)

Why did he have to hit him? I'm not sleeping with the guy. He's a sickly guy. He could have killed him. Why did Ace make me sneak around like that just to help a friend!

NICKY

All right, let me see what the hell's going on with him. When I see him I'll talk to him...

Ginger embraces him.

GINGER

Oh thanks, Nicky.

NICKY

(feeling a little awkward with the hug)

... and take it easy with that stuff. It's only going to make matters worse.

GINGER

I can't help it. I gotta get loaded every night just to get to sleep.

CUT TO:

127

INT. GREEN'S OFFICE - DAY

Green is arguing with ANNA SCOTT, a 50 year old nonsense businesswoman.

127

GREEN

You're wrong.

SCOTT

We'll see.

ACE (V.O.)

On top of all this, it turned out
Phil Green had a partner nobody knew
about and she sued him in court.

CUT TO:

128 INT. COURT ROOM - DAY 128
Scott smiling at Judge. A grim Green is surrounded by
corporate lawyers.

JUDGE

The court will hear the matter of
the plaintiff, Anna Scott, against
the Tangiers Corporation and its
chairman, Philip Green.

CUT TO:

128A EXT. ALL AMERICAN GAS STATION - DAY 128A
Beeper hands Gaggi a public phone. Gaggi listens. Says
nothing. Not even hello.

CUT TO:

129 INT. COURT HOUSE PHONE BOOTH - DAY 129
Marino is talking while Scott holds impromptu press
conference in BG.

MARINO

It's a disaster! That judge says
Green's gotta open the books about
how he got the loan. He's gotta turn
over everything.

CUT TO:

130 EXT. ALL AMERICAN GAS STATION - DAY 130
Gaggi puts the phone down. Beeper watches in silence.

CUT TO:

131 INT. SCOTT KITCHEN - NIGHT 131
ANNA SCOTT, alone, is walking through her kitchen toward
the stove.

ACE (V.O.)

The trial was about to begin to see
if Anna Scott was a partner and...

Nicky swiftly enters the room, grabs Scott around the
neck, and fires three shots into her head.

ACE (V.O.)
 ...so Chicago had Nicky settle the
 case out of court.

CUT TO:

132 EXT. VEGAS PRIVATE AIRPORT - MORNING 132
 Green gets off his corporate jet and is assaulted by
 questions about the Scott murder. Green is stunned.

GREEN
 What? Oh my God! No!

REPORTER (O.S.)
 Was it only a real estate
 partnership?

REPORTER (O.S.)
 Scott's lawyer said she was your
 casino partner?

CUT TO:

133 INT. ACE'S OFFICE - DAY 133
 Ace is being interviewed by Business Week reporter. PR
 staff are listening to the interview. The reporter is
 seated. Ace is leaning against his desk.

ACE (V.O.)
 Because of Green's problems, I had
 to start giving interviews to keep
 up a good image, make sure everyone
 knew that the company was never
 stronger.

REPORTER
 But we know Mr. Green's attention is
 being diverted by at least two grand
 juries?

ACE
 There is still a chain of command at
 the company and
 when Mr. Green is away or
 preoccupied, I run the place. In the
 meantime ...

REPORTER
 (interrupts)
 So in Green's absence does that mean
 you're the boss?

ACE

Well... When he's not around... I run the place. I am the boss, so to speak...

CUT TO:

134 INT. GAMING CONTROL BOARD - DAY 134
Webb holds up copy of Business Week in Kafka-like gaming office for investigators RONNIE DUPREY and MATT AUSTIN.

CUT TO:

BUSINESS WEEK EDITION HEADLINE READS: "I'M THE BOSS"

WEBB

(reading)

"The Chicago bookmaker with mob ties says that he is the real boss of the \$200 million Tangiers Casino empire."

(to DuPrey and Austin)

Can you believe this? Has he filed for his license yet?

CUT TO:

135 INT. ACE'S HOUSE - NIGHT 135
Ace is watching television news which cuts to his photo and a police photo of Nicky Santoro.

TV NEWSMAN

"A Gaming Control Board investigation of Tangiers executive Harry Rothstein's application for a gaming license is underway. Rothstein, who heads the Tangiers's casino operation and is a boyhood friend of Las Vegas mob boss, Nicky Santoro, could lose his ability to work in the casino if the Control Board decides his mob connections make him unfit."

The phone rings. It's from Nicky.

NICKY (O.S.)

I've gotta play ball with Cleanface right away. How about the Chez Paree?

SUPER SUBTITLE: "I've gotta meet Charlie the Banker right away. How about your house?"

ACE
 You'll need a reservation. It's all
 booked up.

SUPER SUBTITLE: "I don't want a meeting at my house."

CUT TO:

136 EXT. MALL PHONE BCOTH - NIGHT 136

NICKY
 No. No. It's okay. I'll use the
 service entrance. See you at nine.

SUPER SUBTITLE: "It's okay. I'll use the golf course
 entrance to get in. See you at six."

CUT TO:

137 INT. ACE'S HOUSE - DAY 137

Ace, Ginger and banker, Charlie Clark, watching TV in
 patio with more news on licensing. Ace is taking ulcer
 medicine. Ace watches Ginger getting another drink at
 tray. Ace gets up.

ACE
 (in her ear)
 Why don't you lay off that stuff and
 get up to bed.

GINGER
 (giving Ace a nasty look)
 No

Ace takes her arm and leads her out of the room toward
 the stairs.

CUT TO:

The Banker, who sees what is going on, tries to diminish
 the tension as Ace watches Ginger go up the stairs.

CHARLIE
 (referring to TV)
 You can't concern yourself
 with that. Political witch-hunts.
 This is what counts out here. Your
 ability to generate business. Don't
 forget it.

CUT TO:

Nicky darts into the patio from the golf course smiling.

ACE
Nicky, Charlie's here.

NICKY
(smiling and extending his
hand)
Yeah. Charlie I've been trying to
reach you.
(shake hands)

CHARLIE
I've been busy.

NICKY
Busy? We've got a little problem
here.

CHARLIE
You going to strong arm me?

NICKY
No. No. Take it easy. Take it easy.
You've gotta understand, unless this
problem is resolved, I'm gonna have
to crack your head.

CHARLIE
You can't talk...

NICKY
Please. You don't understand. Unless
I get my money, I'm gonna hurt you.
This is what I do. I know you can
call people and maybe I'll go to
prison, but I don't care. I've been
there. It's part of my life. And,
anyway, when I get out I'll come
back, or I'll send somebody else,
and they'll crack your head all over
again.

CHARLIE
All right. Take it easy. You don't
have to get like that.
I'm working on it.

NICKY
See that you do.

A frightened Charlie walks out of Ace's house. The
minute the door slams, Nicky turns to Ace:

NICKY
(with a grin)
How was I?

ACE
You're crazy. He'll go to the FBI.

NICKY
Wadda I care? I've been trying to
find that prick for a week.

ACE
How does it look? My own banker in
my own house?

NICKY
Wadda you care? You didn't say
nothing. He's only alive because of
you, because he's your banker.

ACE
You're way out of line. Don't you
see that? Where's your head?

NICKY
Where's my head? Where's your
balls. Don't you realize I'm getting
ready to make some major moves out
here? And, when I do, I'm gonna need
you to come along with me.

ACE
What moves?

NICKY
Moves. Don't worry about that
yet. Just worry about what you're
gonna do with all the money you're
gonna make. When we got out here
this place was dying!

ACE
That's not exactly true.

NICKY
It was dying Ace, and you know it.
You and me put this place on the
map. We're the ones who turned this
into a gold mine. Who set everything
up out here? Me, that's who. It's
time I had my own flag out here?
Because of those cheap antique
(MORE)

NICKY (CONT'D)

bastards from Milwaukee and Kansas City? Bullshit! They've done nothing for us out here. I mean, after all, what's right is right.

ACE

Look, I'm responsible for 5000 people working here. There's a hundred million dollars a year going through those places. It's all over for me if I don't get that license.

NICKY

Your fuckin' license. Do you know what kind of money I'm talking about? How come lately everytime I come up with a proposition you don't want to hear about it.

ACE

Because, -- if I heard right - I didn't hear your proposition. You're suggesting something and I don't want to know about it. Do you understand? I'm running casinos. That's it. All I want is to keep everything quiet until I get my license.

NICKY

Quiet? (holds up Businessweek Magazine) Look at this bullshit! "I'm the Boss!" Do you know they're calling me from Chicago? They think you're out of your fucking mind.

ACE

It was all taken out of context. They sandbagged me, the bastards.

NICKY

They don't care if you got sandbagged. It looks bad.

ACE

That looks bad? I'll tell you what looks bad. Everytime you're mentioned, I'm mentioned. How the hell am I gonna get licensed like that? You're like an albatross around my neck.

NICKY

Between you and me, since I got out here... What the hell's happened to you? Is it that you've got so many people kissing your ass all day, you forget you can't treat everybody like shit -- including your wife.

ACE

My wife?

NICKY

Yeah. She came to me. For whatever reason, she's upset. I don't want to go into anything, but she got very upset with that whole situation with Diamond. You know.

ACE

All of a sudden you're the shoulder to cry on? Did you at least tell her about your little role in that matter.

NICKY

No! Of course not. What do you think? That's not the point. The point is she's not happy and I can understand how that could be... Let me tell you, you've got a problem.

ACE

(interrupts)

That's none of your business. I'd appreciate it if you stayed out of my personal life. You wouldn't like it if I did that to you. Don't do it to me.

NICKY

She came. I talked to her. What am I supposed to do, kick her out?

ACE

Just stay away from her. There are certain things you don't do.

NICKY

Oh! A week ago it was my business and now it's not my business no more? When you need me to take care of somebody, you need me.

ACE

That's right.

NICKY
I think your head's gettin' bigger
than your fucking casino.

Nicky slams the door and leaves Ace standing there.

CUT TO:

138 EXT. VEGAS STREET - NIGHT 138
Chalk marks on the ground where a body had been. Cops
and press milling around.

ACE (V.O.)
Next thing you know, Nicky started
making his moves. He stopped asking
Chicago's permission for every
little thing. And who was gonna
know?

CUT TO:

139 EXT. VEGAS APARTMENT - DAY 139
Police standing around the bodies of a casino executive
and his wife who were gunned down.

ACE (V.O.)
A casino boss and his wife were
killed.

CUT TO:

140 EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT 140
Police photographers taking pictures of a Dealer slumped
over the wheel of his car.

ACE (V.O.)
A dealer from Caesar's...

CUT TO:

141 INT. UNDER GROUND GARAGE - DAY 141
Police and press gathered around the opened trunk of a
car with a trussed up body.

ACE (V.O.)
A bunch of stool pigeons wound up in
the trunks of their cars.

CUT TO:

142 EXT. RESIDENTIAL PARKING AREA - NIGHT 142
We see a brand new car explode!

ACE (V.O.)
A lawyer.

CUT TO:

143 INT. APARTMENT DOORWAY - DAY
An apartment door with a pile of newspapers.

143

ACE (V.O.)
And, guys who didn't pay Nicky's
shylocks began disappearing.

CUT TO:

144 INT. VEGAS BAR - NIGHT
Nicky is holding court in a banquet.

144

ACE (V.O.)
Nicky was questioned in two dozen
murders, but they always had to let
him go. There were never any
witnesses.

NICKY (V.O.)
They blamed me for everything that
went wrong. I mean, if a guy fell
off a stoop, they'd bring me in for
it.

ACE (V.O.)
In just three years under Nicky,
there were more hits in Las Vegas
than there had been in the last
thirty years.

CUT TO:

145 INT. ALL AMERICAN GAS STATION BACK ROOM - DAY
Marino hands a shoebox filled with \$100 bills to Gaggi.

145

NICKY (V.O.)
I'm the one in the trenches. I'm the
one who has to keep everybody in
line. And Chicago wants everything
nice and quiet. Years ago, you did
that. Yes! I mean, Bugsy they
whacked in Beverly Hills. Greenbaum
they whacked in Phoenix. But, today?
Bull shit! I'm the one who has to
make lessons out of people. They
think it's a free lunch out here?

GAGGI
(putting the box down
without acknowledging he
even received it)

Frankie, they found a guy's head in
the desert. Did you know that? I
mean he's gotta be careful. Tell the
little guy to keep things quiet back
there. Okay?

NICKY (V.O.)

Hey, as long as I keep sending them the money, what do they care?

CUT TO:

146 EXT./INT. VEGAS STRIP BUS STOP BENCH - DAY
Nicky talking quietly at Marino's report from Chicago. 146

NICKY

Don't worry about it. As long as I keep giving them money -- like a jerk -- they're gonna take it. I should make my own move. Why not? I'm the one who's here. I do all the work. Somebody don't like it? If it comes to a war, I'm ready, because I know one thing, if I take care of four or five of those guys, the rest will come along. Believe me.

CUT TO:

147 INT. GOLD RUSH - DAY
Nicky watching a police surveillance car through binoculars. He is surrounded by police radio scanners. Walkie talkies. TV security monitors of the parking area in front and behind the Gold Rush. In BG a DEBUGGING EXPERT is going over the walls with a metal detector. 147

ACE (V.O.)

The problem was the murders brought down real heat and, instead of keeping things quiet, the feds were all over the place.

NICKY (V.O.)

They could have all the surveillance they wanted, I had the latest anti-bugging equipment, police radios, cameras that see in the dark, stuff I got from a place that used to sell to the CIA.

ACE (V.O.)

But he didn't know. They had eyes on him where none of us expected. Even when he was playing golf.

CUT TO:

148 EXT. ACE'S PATIO - DAY
Ace is with Control Board investigators Austin and DuPrey. They are all pouring over legal files and record books spread out on a table. 148

AUSTIN

(turning a page)

It's an administrative hearing, and you're entitled to that hearing. This is all well prepared. I can guarantee you a fair hearing on all this.

DUPREY

You've cooperated. You've let us review all of your books and papers. I can assure you that means something out here.

ACE (V.O.)

I felt I had a Jack, Deuce, and a Nine. Twenty One! How could I lose? I even hired Duprey, off the record, to protect my interests.

ACE

That's all I ask, gentlemen. A fair hearing.

Suddenly a sputtering airplane lands on the golf course. Two men in suits get out with photo equipment, and run across past Ace and the investigators Duprey and Austin, who look open-mouthed at the running men and then stare at Ace as if he has something to do with it.

ACE (V.O.)

The feds were watching Nicky play golf for so long they ran out of gas. He wasn't even supposed to be there, but who was gonna stop him? Just what I needed! Right in front of the Control Board.

CUT TO:

149 EXT. GOLD RUSH - DAY 149
Nicky and Marino talking, Nicky is covering his lips with his hand.

ACE (V.O.)

Then, the heat got so bad that Nicky and his gang had to cover their lips whenever they spoke, because the feds had brought in lip readers.

CUT TO:

150 EXT. STREET NEAR GOLD RUSH - DAY 150
Lip readers in surveillance car trying to read with binoculars.

LIP READER
They're covering up again.

CUT TO:

151 INT. ITALIAN PRODUCE MARKET KANSAS CITY - DAY
Piscano at counter of BROTHER-IN-LAW'S store. Every once
in a while Piscano stops talking to wait on elderly
women customers.

151

ACE (V.O.)

And, as if things weren't bad
enough, in comes Piscano, the Kansas
City underboss, griping to his
brother-in-law. And, what happens
next? If you put it in a movie, you
wouldn't believe it.

PISCANO

They're fighting over the suitcases
again and you know what that means.

GROCER

Whaa?

PISCANO

It means I gotta take another trip
out there and it's gonna cost me
another couple of grand.

GROCER

You're gotta lay down the fucking
law. Otherwise, they're gonna make a
fool outta you.

PISCANO

Not me! I write it all down in this
book. Every fucking nickel. It goes
down right here. Receipts. Here!
Bills. Here! Every thing. Here!

Piscano pulls a small notebook out of his pocket and
waves it in the Grocer's face.

PISCANO

Nance gives me trouble, and I tell
him, "Fuck around with those
suitcases and I'll take the eyes out
of your fucking head."

FREEZE FRAME

ACE (V.O.)

Now Angelo's Grocery store in Kansas City was about as far away from Las Vegas as you can get. It was an old greaseball place where Artie Piscano used to help his brother-in-law sell eggplants and tomatoes, but mostly all Piscano did was gripe about what a tough life he lived.

UNFREEZE and they keep talking.

PISCANO

Plus! Plus! What's to prevent him with the suitcases, that he can take what he wants. Fuck'in Nance! He brings us two suitcases from the Tangiers! And, what about three? We got nobody in the room to watch. That's the law! Do you know we can't even go into the count room to watch our money? Can you believe this cowboy bullshit?

As he speaks CAMERA PANS to ceiling light fixture and a tiny microphone and transmitter tucked at its base. PAN from the transmitter which is in direct sight of a window that looks out upon a US Post Office about a block away. Follow the sight line to second floor window in the Post Office.

DISSOLVE TO:

152 INT. POST OFFICE SMALL ROOM - DAY
Behind window two FBI AGENTS are listening to Piscano's conversation

152

ACE (V.O.)

Who the hell would ever believe that the FBI had a wire in the place looking for information about some old homicide they'd half forgotten about. And, the damn thing, they go and hear all this stuff about Las Vegas and casinos and suitcases, and that's it!

CUT TO:

153 INT. KANSAS CITY FBI OFFICE - DAY
The tape is now being transcribed by a bored FBI stenographer who writes down "Nance", "Piscano",

153

"Borelli", "Green", "Tangiers Casino", "Sirocco Casino" and "Vegas".

ACE (V.O.)

Would you believe that such a thing could happen? Every FBI man across the country had their ears opened now! I mean, Piscano, this guy, basically, sunk the whole world.

CUT TO:

TITLE: 1980

154 INT. GAMING CONTROL BOARD HEARING ROOM - DAY 154
Ace in court with OSCAR facing the Control Board's Chairman, six members, including investigators Austin and Duprey. The room is jammed with Green, Ginger, Sherbert, etc. Ace's secretaries wheel in a dolly piled high with legal papers, briefs and law books.

ACE (V.O.)

When the day finally came I was ready. I had given them every piece of paper they wanted. I felt so confident that I hired a law firm with ex-FBI agents to dig up everything they could about my past, no matter what, and I still came out clean. I couldn't ask for more. I felt good. All I had to do was present my case.

CUT TO:

The CHAIRMAN is the Senator we saw in the casino suite taking chips out of the bureau.

TIME CUT TO:

155 INT. GAMING CONTROL BOARD HEARING ROOM -DAY 155

OSCAR

(at podium)

Mr. Chairman, in preparation for this hearing, we have assembled documents, including an independent investigation by retired FBI agents, which totally absolves Mr. Rothstein of wrong-doing, and we will gladly turn over to the Commissioners...

CUT TO:

The Chairman/Senator bangs his gavel while Oscar is talking. In the back of the hearing room we see Webb looking.

CHAIRMAN/SENATOR
(as he and the other
commissioners rise to
leave)

The Commission has already decided.
The Rothstein application for
licensing is denied. The hearing is
adjourned.

Ace, enraged, approaches the board. Oscar tries to stop
him.

ACE

Adjourned!

OSCAR

Mr. Chairman, please!

ACE

Mr. Chairman! Senator! You
promised me a hearing. You won't
even allow me a hearing?

Commissioners pack their papers. TV cameras roll.

ACE

This is a Kangaroo court. You have
all proven yourselves to be
hypocrites! After promising we would
get one, you have denied me a fair
hearing. You didn't even read the
FBI report. Mr. Chairman, Senator,
did you not promise me a fair
hearing when you were my guest at
the Tangiers?

CHAIRMAN/SENATOR

I was never your guest at the
Tangiers.

ACE

Did we not have dinner with Barney
Greenstein and did you
not tell me that my case would get a
fair hearing?

CHAIRMAN/SENATOR

I did have dinner with Mr.
Greenstein.

ACE

Was I at that dinner? Just tell the
truth. Was I at the dinner?

CHAIRMAN/SENATOR

Well, you were wandering around.

ACE

We talked about this hearing, didn't we? And you swore that I'd get a fair hearing. Didn't you? Tell me, now, was I at that dinner? I deserve that much, at least.

CHAIRMAN/SENATOR

Yes, you were.

ACE

Thank you for not calling me a liar.

Ace spots Commissioner CARTER slipping out the door.

ACE

Hey, Bob, don't run away. Didn't you promise me a fair hearing when you were getting comped at my hotel and asking for copies of your bills so you could put them on your expense account? (Commissioner exits. No response.) Hypocrite!

Commissioner BALES starts to leave. Ace approaches.

ACE

Mr. Bales. Don't run away. Don't you remember you promised me a fair hearing when you asked me to help your brother in his recent race for Attorney General.

Bales leaves. Press follows, asking about contributions.

CUT TO:

156 EXT. COURT HOUSE STEPS - DAY
Ace is surrounded by the press.

156

ACE

This is outrageous. They've dredged up untruths and unsubstantiated rumors from my past. They've gone back thirty years. I was never charged with bribing a Miami police officer and I pleaded "no contest" in North Carolina, because the judge was going to send me to prison for two years even if I was found not guilty.

CUT TO:

Ginger, Oscar, Sherbert, Green, Webb, DuPrey and Austin are watching from the court steps.

CUT TO:

157 EXT. CHICAGO ALLEY - DAY 157
Gaggi in car driven by Beeper. Shows Stone, standing outside, issue of Las Vegas Sun. Headline reads: ROTHSTEIN OUT OF GAMING!

GAGGI
(to a shrugging Stone)
What's he gonna do now?

CUT TO:

158 INT. "ACES HIGH!" THE HARRY ROTHSTEIN SHOW - NIGHT 158
Ace is seated at a desk ala Johnny Carson with a long sofa filled with invited guests including TV stars, Singers, etc.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
And now, the first presentation of the brand new "Aces High", Harry Rothstein Show, starring Harry Rothstein and his special guest stars, Toni Dawn, and the Tangiers' own lead dancer, Kim.

The band starts playing and Ace waves at the applause.

CUT TO:

Webb standing with DuPrey and Austin at rear.

WEBB
Watch him.

CUT TO:

159 INT. GREEN'S OFFICE - NIGHT 159
Green and Arthur Capp are solemnly watching Ace's TV show with a JUGGLER. Ace gets up and begins to juggle.

GREEN
Look at him! He's juggling! I'm gonna fire him.

ARTHUR CAPP
You can't fire him.

GREEN
I'm gonna do it.

ARTHUR CAPP

(very quietly)

Phil, as an old friend, let me say you weren't put here for your own benefit. I represent to you, if you interfere with Ace in any way, chances are you will never leave this corporation alive.

CUT TO:

160 EXT. TANGIER PARKING LOT - NIGHT 160
Ace arrives wearing TV makeup with paper towel tucked into his collar. Nicky startles him. All during their conversation Nicky's head is on a perpetual swivel making sure they are not being observed. Nicky covers his mouth as he speaks.

NICKY

What the fuck are you doing?

ACE

I'm going to do my show.

NICKY

What are you doing on TV? I'm already getting calls. They think you've gone batshit.

ACE

I'm only on it because I've gotta somehow be in the casino. It's a scam so I can hang around. Don'tcha understand that?

NICKY

Bullshit. You could have taken the food and beverage job. You could have taken Tommy Del's job in supplies without going on TV! You wanted to go on television.

ACE

Of course I did. Are you thick? With a TV show at least I can fight back. With a TV show I'm known. People see me. They can't fuck around with me like they could if I was an unknown.

NICKY

You're making a spectacle.

ACE

Me? I wouldn't even be in this fix
if you didn't bring so much heat.
The first question they asked was if
I knew you.

NICKY

And now you're gonna blame
your license on me?

ACE

You didn't help. I had airplanes
falling out of the sky on my head.

NICKY

All I can see is you're the one on
TV. You wanna be the movie star.

ACE

(opening the stage door to
the casino)

I can't talk to you now.
You're hysterical.

NICKY

I'm hysterical! Look at you! You're
wearing your fucking makeup on the
street! You got
Kleenex sticking outta your shirt!

Ace walks in the door, where, of course, Nicky cannot follow.
CUT TO:

161 INT. "ACE'S HIGH" TV SHOW - NIGHT
Ace behind his desk.

161

ACE

Let's not take County Commissioner
Charles Webb too seriously. I
challenged him to a debate on this
program and he declined. He insisted
that I give him the questions first.
What are you worried about Charlie?
You can ask me anything you want.

CUT TO:

162 EXT. CHICAGO ALLEY - DAY
Vegas Sun Newspaper frontpage photo of Ace on
television.

162

headline reads: ROTHSTEIN CHALLENGES STATE ON TV!

Stone and Gaggi are leaning on their car fenders looking
at the headline and photograph.

STONE

He's taking on the whole state. Even our friends. He's gotta be nuts!

GAGGI

Go see him. Tell him maybe it's time he should quit.

STONE

I mean -- he's got no choice -- I don't see what else he could do.

CUT TO:

163 EXT. SEVEN-ELEVEN PARKING LOT/INT. STONE'S CAR - NIGHT 163
Sherbert pulls up. Ace gets out of his car in pajamas and gets into Stone's car. Stone is slumped behind the wheel to avoid being seen.

STONE

You've got to stop this law suit. People are very upset.

ACE

It looks worse than it is. First, what they did was totally unconstitutional. We are already on the list to be heard before the Supreme Court of the United States this year...

STONE (INTERRUPTING)

You can't take them on -- The Control Board's all in on it together...

ACE

I got so much on those guys -- They can't... They wouldn't dare...

STONE (INTERRUPTING)

It doesn't matter what you've got on them. They own the state.

ACE

But, they're dirty... You don't understand...

STONE

No! You don't understand! Your friends back home, and I mean not only Chicago, but Kansas City, Milwaukee, Cleveland, all of them, they don't give a fuck about the

(MORE)

STONE (CONT'D)

Supreme Court or any of that bullshit. They want everything to quiet down. They want you to walk away.

ACE

Philly, they don't see what's at stake here.

STONE

You know what the old man said? He said "Maybe, it was time you should give in." When he says "Maybe", it's like a "Papal Bull" -- not only should you quit, you should run.

ACE

Look. The Control Board is just starting with me. If they get me out, they'll get everybody who runs a casino. I'm protecting all of them. That's what's really going on.

STONE

I can't make it any clearer to you Harry.

ACE

Andy, my problem with the commission? Everytime they mention Nicky in the papers, those cocksuckers, they mention me. Nicky doesn't help. The heat he brought down is murder. When I first got here, I had the cops running errands for us. Now, he's pissed them off so much, there was an FBI spotter plane watching him play golf for so long it ran out of gas and landed in my fucking backyard. You can't even talk on the street. You have to cover your mouth because of lip readers. Why do you think I got my license checked so early?

STONE

And? What do you propose?

ACE

I don't know. He doesn't listen to
(MORE)

ACE (CONT'D)

me. Maybe he should take off for a while, take a vacation. Would that be so hard?

STONE

Forget it. They're not sending Nicky anywhere.

ACE

Look, if Nicky took a break, it'd give me some time to maneuver. That's all.

STONE

Forget the maneuvers. Just get out.

CUT TO:

164, INT. NICKY'S HOUSE/ INT. ACE'S HOUSE - DAY
164A Jennifer calls Ginger. (INTERCUT)

164,
164A

ACE (V.O.)

The minute Stone got back to Chicago, I got the call.

JENNIFER

Hi Ginger. I don't feel like tennis tomorrow.

GINGER

You feel okay?

JENNIFER

Well, maybe some

ACE (V.O.)

But just getting a call from Nicky wasn't easy anymore. Even the codes didn't work, so we figured out another act. You see, if a phone's tapped, the feds can only listen in on the stuff involving crimes. So, on routine calls, they have to click off after a few minutes. It's called "minimization" in court.

CUT TO:

164B INT. FBI PHONE TAP ROOM - DAY
A bored FBI man clicking off the tape.

164B

CUT TO:

164, INT. ACE'S HOUSE - DAY
 164A Ginger and Jennifer quickly hand the phones to their husbands.

164,
 164A

CUT TO:

NICKY
 (talking quickly)
 Make it at three.

SUPER SUBTITLE: "Meet me at Noon."

CUT TO:

ACE
 Blue Bell two?

SUPER SUBTITLE: "Second overpass on Highway 93 to Phoenix?"

NICKY
 Yeah. Yeah. But, only a hundred yards further down.

ACE
 Why?

NICKY
 I'll tell you when I see you. I'll explain. I'll tell ya later.

Nicky and Ace hand the phones back to their wives.

GINGER
 I saw some things in LeNobel's yesterday ...

JENNIFER
 Oh yeah...

CUT TO:

164C INT. FBI PHONE TAP ROOM - DAY
 Bored FBI agent clicks on again and he hears Ginger and Jennifer's inane conversation.

164C

CUT TO:

165 EXT. GOLD RUSH - DAY
 Nicky and Marino drive away. FBI car follows.

165

ACE (V.O.)
 Surveillance was so bad that Nicky had to change cars at least six times before he could shake all his tails, and because of the planes, he had to use underground garages.

CUT TO:

166, INT. UNDER GROUND GARAGES #1, #2, #3. - DAY 166
 166A Three Scenes just the same: NICKY JUMPS OUT OF ONE CAR 166A
 166B INTO ANOTHER in several underground garages. 166B

CUT TO:

167 INT. ACE'S CAR - DAY 167
 Ace driving through desolation of desert.

ACE (V.O.)

Meeting in the middle of the desert
 always made me nervous. It's a scary
 place.

CUT TO:

168 EXT. DESERT SCENE - DAY 168
 A solitary Ace waiting in the vast desert. Looking
 around. Ace looks at sage brush and sand and a few rocks
 on the desert floor. This could be a hiding hole meant
 for him. He steps away from it.

ACE (V.O.)

I knew about the holes in the desert
 and everyplace I looked could've
 been a hole.

CUT TO:

169 INT. NICKY'S CAR - DAY 169
 Nicky driving.

NICKY (V.O.)

Just when things are going good, he
 starts busting everybody's chops.
 He's like an old lady. Always
 putting his nose where it don't
 belong.

CUT TO:

170 EXT. DESERT - DAY 170
 Ace still standing in the desert.

ACE (V.O.)

Nicky was pissed off. I could tell
 on the phone. Normally, my prospects
 of coming back alive from a meeting
 with Nicky were 80-20, but this
 time, when I heard him say "a couple
 of hundred yards down the road", I
 gave myself 60-40.

CUT TO:

Nicky's car suddenly appears shaking Ace out of his
 desert induced reverie.

CUT TO:

NICKY

Where the fuck do you get off talking to people about me? Going over my head.

ACE

What people?

NICKY

You think I'm not gonna know?

ACE

What are you talking about?

NICKY

I'm bringing heat on you? I gotta listen to people because of your bullshit? You're gonna "order" me out? You better get your own fucking army.

ACE

I didn't "order" you or anybody. I only told Stone that you had a lot of heat...

NICKY (INTERRUPTING)

You're telling me to skip out of my own town.

ACE

Let this bullshit blow over so I can take care of the casinos. That's my job. Anything goes wrong with them, it's my neck, not yours.

NICKY

You only have your casinos, because I make that possible. Why do you fight me? We're from the same streets. You're closer to me than any of this shit out here. Country Clubs! TV shows! None of that's real. I'm real! Back home is real. None of this out here counts for shit.

ACE

That may be true, Nicky, but remember when you first asked me if you could come out and settle in out here. And we talked about how...

NICKY

(interrupts)

Wait... Wait a minute... I asked you? When the fuck did I ever ask you if I could settle out here. What is it with you? Ace, get this through your head, you only exist out here because of me. Without me, you, personally, you're up for grabs. And then where are you gonna go?

(getting in car)

You're warned. I don't want you going over my head ever again.

Nicky drives off leaving an angry and frustrated Ace to ponder the desert and the holes.

CUT TO:

172 INT. JUBILATION NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT 172
Nicky and Marino isolated alone at their table when Ace and crowd of Executives, Oscar, Kim and showgirls walk in and are escorted to their own table. Ace avoids looking at Nicky.

NICKY

(to Marino)

I've known him all my life and look at the way he acts. I know he has to avoid me, but there are ways to do it.

CUT TO:

173 INT. ACE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 173
Ace sleeping. Answers phone on a special box near bed.

CUT TO:

174 INT. TANGIERS CASINO - NIGHT 174
Sherbert is calling Ace with his hand cupped over the phone.

SHERBERT

Harry, I know it's late, but we've got something you ought to know.

CUT TO:

174A INT. ACE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 174A

ACE

What is it?

SHERBERT (V.O.)

You know who. The Little Guy. He's a little tight. Nobody wanted to say he's barred. We all pretended like we didn't know who he was.

ACE

Yeah.

CUT TO:

175 INT. TANGIER BLACK JACK TABLE - NIGHT 175
Nicky losing a stack of \$100 chips by furiously betting every spot on the black jack table. Marino is standing behind him. The Dealer is sweating.

SHERBERT (V.O.)

The little guy's out ten grand. I saw him pull it out of his own kick. He's really pissed. He wants a fifty thousand line of credit.

CUT TO:

175A INT. ACE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 175A

ACE

(hanging up)

Tell him to wait there.

CUT TO:

176 INT. TANGIER BLACK JACK TABLE - NIGHT 176
Nicky now has Sherbert by the neck. Marino leans against a table.

NICKY

You give me that money this minute or I'll pull both your eyes out.

SHERBERT

He said he'll be right here! I swear.

Ace arrives and pulls Nicky to the side, where they can be partially hidden by slot machines.

ACE

You're not supposed to be in this place.

NICKY

Neither are you. What am I even talking to you for? You're supposed to be on your T.V. show. Just tell them to give me the fucking money.

ACE

Nicky, you're drunk. Because, if you're in your right mind, there's no way you'd blow this for everybody. Friends don't do this. Don't you understand? Get out, now, please, before somebody tips the cops and it's all over the papers.

CUT TO:

Nicky walks back to table. A crowd stares. He looks back at Ace and at Sherbert.

NICKY

(to Sherbert)

What the fuck are you looking at?

Before Sherbert can answer, Nicky pulls a phone off the wall, throws it at him, and along with Marino, walks out. Sherbert winces and is soon surrounded by dealers and waitresses.

CUT TO:

177

INT. LAWYER OSCAR'S OFFICE - DAY

Ace and Ginger, a little stoned, seated with Oscar in office.

177

OSCAR

He's making sense Ginger.

ACE

You're sober between eleven in the morning and one in the afternoon. That's two hours a day. If I gave you your jewels now, you'd blow the whole thing in a year and then where would you be?

GINGER

We made a deal. You said if it didn't work out I could get what belonged to me and leave.

OSCAR

But Ginger, you want more than that now. You're asking about alimony payments. Child support. Custody.

GINGER

I want what any divorced woman gets...

ACE

(interrupts)

Ginger, look at me. Look in my eyes.
 You know me. Do you see any thing in
 these eyes that makes you think I
 would ever let you leave my house
 with my son in your condition?

Ginger bursts into tears.

CUT TO:

178

INT. "ACE'S HIGH" - DAY

178

Ace rehearsing with dancers and aides on the show. He
 walks to the side of the stage where we see several Pit
 Bosses waiting to ask him questions.

ACE (V.O.)

Ginger... It got to be a matter of
 just waiting for the next explosion.

BILLY SHERBERT

Leo Kessler, from Detroit, needs
 fifty more on credit.

ACE

What's he down?

BILLY SHERBERT

Forty.

ACE

Give him twenty five.

Ace is cued back to center stage as the dancers and
 musicians finish their song.

ACE (V.O.)

All this time... All this time...
 And I could never make her love me.
 I thought that I could change it --
 that all the money and glamour was
 gonna change it. But that wasn't
 what happened.

CUT TO:

179

INT. "ACE'S HIGH" CORRIDOR - DAY

179

Ace walking back to his dressing room. Kim has her arm
 on Ace's shoulder. She pecks his cheek as he enters his
 room.

ACE (V.O.)

So, what could we do? We took a few
 breathers from each other. At that
 time her latest trip was to Beverly
 Hills.

CUT TO:

180 INT. ACE'S DRESSING ROOM - DAY
Makeup table, but piled up more with legal papers and documents than makeup.

101.
180

ACE
(to Security Guard)
Get me the Beverly Wilshire.

CUT TO:

181 EXT. BEVERLY WILSHIRE HOTEL - DAY
Ginger and David exit and walk towards CAMERA.

181

TRACK BACK as she smiles to reveal Lester Diamond -- over his shoulder. They embrace. Diamond musses David's hair. They walk off.

ACE (O.S.)
(picking up the phone)
Mrs. Rothstein, please. Suite 316.

HOTEL CLERK (O.S.)
Sorry, Mr. and Mrs. Rothstein
checked out, sir.

CUT TO:

181A INT. ACE'S DRESSING ROOM - DAY
Ace reacts. Startled.

181A

CUT TO:

182 EXT. ACE'S HOUSE - DAY
Two Tangier's SECURITY MEN walk toward house.

182

CUT TO:

182A INT. ACE'S ENTRYWAY - DAY
Ace is waiting for Security men.

182A

SECURITY #1
We got a number... and an address.

CUT TO:

183 INT. DIAMOND'S APARTMENT/ INT. ACE'S HOUSE - DAY
183A INTERCUT.
Phone rings. Les Diamond picks up the phone

183
183A

DIAMOND
Hello. (pause) Hello.

CUT TO:

ACE
Lester, this is Harry Rothstein. I
want to talk to Ginger.

DIAMOND

She's not here.

ACE

Lester, I want to talk to Ginger.
It's very important. I want my kid.
I want him put on a plane, quick.

DIAMOND

Harry, believe me, I don't know
where she is. But, can I call you
back in a few minutes?

ACE

Call me at home.

CUT TO:

184 INT. DIAMOND'S APARTMENT - DAY
Lester hangs up the phone, turns to Ginger who is
sitting nearby holding her son.

184

DIAMOND

Come on. We still have time. You
wanna get even with that bastard?
There's two million dollars in that
box. We take that and the only thing
he cares about -- that kid -- and go
to Europe. You dye your hair. You
get plastic surgery. You're the
mother, for godsake. He'll pay
anything to get the kid back.

GINGER

He knows where we are. He could be
sending people over here right now.

DIAMOND

No he won't. He's waiting for me to
call him back.

GINGER

(gathering her bag and
David)

Oh yeah! Oh sure! Just him! He's
gonna wait for you to call him back.
Come on, we're getting out of here.

CUT TO:

A185 INT. ACE'S HOUSE - DAY
Ace is on the phone.

A185

ACE

I've got thing you want at three two four.

He hangs up.

CUT TO:

185 EXT. VEGAS PHONE BOOTH - DAY 185
Ace picks up phone the second it rings.

ACE

I think they're gonna snatch my kid. I have their address in Los Angeles, but I gotta get back to the house and keep them on the phones. Do you have anybody you can send?

CUT TO:

186 EXT. PAY PHONES VEGAS AND CHICAGO - DAY 186
Remo Gaggi on phone taking notes with a pencil.

GAGGI

Let me see what I can do. I'll get right back to you.

CUT TO:

187 EXT. HIGHWAY PHONE BOOTH - DAY 187
Ginger on telephone. Les and David in car in BG.

GINGER

...I'm in trouble. I don't know what to do. I'm afraid he's gonna kill me.

CUT TO:

187A INT. GOLD RUSH - DAY 187A
Nicky leaning against wall phone. Marino watches.

NICKY

Yeah... Okay... Let me see what I can do. Call me later. (before hanging up) Just don't do anything crazy.

CUT TO:

187B EXT. HIGHWAY PHONE BOOTH - DAY 187B
Ginger sighs in exhaustion and fear and hangs up the phone. David and Diamond in BG.

CUT TO:

188 EXT. ACE'S PATIO - DAY 188
Through glass doors see Ace on the phone. Nicky slips into frame. Taps on window. Ace gets up and opens glass door.

CUT TO:

189 INT. ACE'S HOUSE - DAY 189

NICKY
I gotta see you. Ginger called me.

ACE
(carefully)
What do you want?

NICKY
I just told you. Ginger called me.

ACE
What's she want with you?

NICKY
She's afraid to call you.

ACE
(pause)
She's with that cocksucker again.
She's got David.

NICKY
That's why I'm here. She wants to come back, but she's afraid you're gonna whack her.

ACE
They're gonna kidnap my son.

NICKY
You give her the okay. She'll come back.

ACE
I know where she is. I had our friend send some people to the house.

NICKY
Yeah, I know. Why didn't you come to me? This ain't business, Ace. This is family.

ACE
I appreciate that.

NICKY
Meanwhile, you call people back home. It makes us look bad out here, Ace. Back and forth, this one and that one. In the meantime she's fuckin' gone. Am I right?

ACE
What am I going to do with this woman?

NICKY
First, you let her come back. She's got the kid for Chrissake. Nice and easy. Then, when she comes back, you put the kid to bed, you're gonna kick the fucking shit out of her so she'll never do it again.

TIME CUT TO:

190	INT. ACE'S HOUSE/EXT. DIFFERENT HIGHWAY PHONE BOOTH	190
190A	-- EVENING INTERCUT. Ace's phone rings.	190A

ACE
Hello.

GINGER
Hi.

ACE
I'm not going to ask where you are. Just put David on a plane as quickly as you can.

GINGER
If I were to come back with David, would you forgive me?

ACE
I don't know. I'll try. I don't know if I could do it. (pause) What happened to the box? What happened to my money?

GINGER
I made a mistake. I spent a few dollars.

ACE
How serious?

GINGER
Serious.

ACE
What's it under.

GINGER
Twenty five.

ACE
Under twenty-five thousand?

GINGER
Yes.

ACE
You've still got the rest?

GINGER
Yes.

ACE
Okay, don't worry about it. I'll
have a plane out there in a couple
of hours. You lost \$25,000 to that
pimp. That I can handle. I can't
handle any more.

CUT TO:

191 EXT. AIRPORT PRIVATE JET - NIGHT 191
Ace sees Ginger and David coming off the Tangiers
Private plane. Ginger wobbles a little as she comes
toward him.

GINGER
(waving and smiling
brightly)
Hi, Harry!

CUT TO:

192 INT. ACE'S CAR - NIGHT 192
Ace seated in car, turns to her before moving.

ACE
What about the money?

GINGER
I wouldn't let him near it. I mean,
he wanted it but...

ACE
And the twenty-five thousand?

GINGER
It came out of the bank box.

ACE
What did you do with it?

GINGER
He needed some clothes.

ACE
Twenty-five thousand for clothes?

GINGER
I got him a watch, too.

ACE
Twenty-five thousand dollars for
clothes and a watch?

GINGER
Yeah.

ACE
Clothes and a watch? That's what he
wanted?

(pause)
Junk! Real pimp stuff.

Ace puts his hand out and Ginger rummages in her sloppy
purse and gives him back the bank key. Angrily Ace puts
the car in gear and they drive off.

CUT TO:

193 EXT. VEGAS RESTAURANT - NIGHT 193
Ace and Ginger, dressed for dinner, getting out of their
car just like any other couple and walking toward the
restaurant.

ACE (V.O.)
The good part was I had David back.
So, we went home, had the maid stay
over, and put the kid to bed. I
calmed myself down, and we went out
to dinner. Try to keep things nice
and civil. Y'know.

CUT TO:

194 INT. VEGAS RESTAURANT - NIGHT 194
Ace and Ginger are at dinner.

ACE
Twenty-five thousand makes no sense
to me.

GINGER

That's what it was.

ACE

No. I mean, how many suits could you buy him? Say you got him thousand-dollar suits. That's twenty-five suits. First of all -- he's not gonna wear \$1000 suits -- but, if he did, which he won't, how do you get fitted for twenty-five suits in three days. I can't get fitted that fast and I pay top dollar.

GINGER

It wasn't all for suits. I got him a watch, too.

ACE

Yeah. Okay. But even if you got him a nice watch. A really nice one. Say you go five, (pause), eight, (pause), nine grand? Which is impossible.

Ginger is staring down at her plate getting furious.

ACE

That still leaves sixteen thousand dollars.

GINGER

Ace? Are you going to stop?

ACE

I just can't figure it out.

GINGER

You don't have to figure it out. It's over. I'm back.

ACE

I know, but I thought it was over a couple of times before.

(pause)

I'm just trying to figure out why none of this adds up.

Ginger glares at him.

ACE

I can't get past it. Why can't I get a straight answer out of you? That's

(MORE)

ACE (CONT'D)
 what gets me! Now, counting the watch, and let's say, another four grand goes for the expenses over the weekend, (pause), that still leaves him with all that extra money.

Ginger puts down her napkin and walks out the door.

CUT TO:

195 INT. ACE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ace walks in and hears Ginger, a little drunk, on the phone.

195

CUT TO:

GINGER
 (on phone with drink)
 I can't take him anymore. He's driving me crazy. I need help. I told you. Help me kill this bastard. He'll never let me go...

ACE
 You want to kill me? I'm here.

Ace grabs the phone. He hears a dial tone. Ace throws phone down near her. Ginger rises and attacks Ace. He puts his hands around her throat, then suddenly stops. Amazed at himself. He drags her into the bedroom, throws her on the bed, opens the closet, and throws an overnight bag at her.

ACE
 Pack this bag and get out! I want you out of my house!

GINGER
 I'm not getting out of here till I get my money.

ACE
 I'll give you your money. Just get out!

GINGER
 The arrangement is over.

ACE
 No kidding.

GINGER
 I want my money.

Ace goes inside closet and comes out with his hands and arms filled with cash and stuffs it into the bag.

ACE

Here! Take it. Take it and get out.

In BG there are racks of her clothes still hanging in the closet.

GINGER

What about the rest of my clothes?

ACE

Take them.

GINGER

I want the bank key for my jewels.

ACE

You'll get your jewels. Just get out of here! Get out of my sight!

GINGER

This isn't everything!

ACE

You can come back and get the rest tomorrow.

GINGER

I want the key.

ACE

Just get out! You never loved me.

GINGER

I'm gonna wake up David. I'm taking him with me.

ACE

Never! You're a junkie. You're stoned right now. Get out!

GINGER

He's my kid, too.

ACE

Fine. Send my lawyers a letter. Just leave.

CUT TO:

196 EXT. ACE'S DRIVEWAY - NIGHT 196
Ginger is furious. She tosses suitcase into back of her sports car. Ace slams the door.

GINGER

(loudly)

You're not getting rid of me like this. You're not going to cheat me.

She drives off.

CUT TO:

197 INT. ACE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT LATER 197
Ace awake in bed. He hears a car turn into his driveway. Sees the car's headlights beams on the bedroom ceiling. He hears downstairs door open.

CUT TO:

Ginger in bedroom doorway. Tired and crying she drops bag and collapses onto the bed. Ace puts his arm gently around her.

ACE (V.O.)

The funny things was, after all that, I was glad she came back. I didn't want her to go. I loved her, but, later, I realized, I didn't want to give her the money, because I knew I would never see her again.

CUT TO:

198 INT. ACE'S KITCHEN - DAY 198
CLOSE UP of a hand-written list of assignments and a beeper. They are being pushed across a table.

TILT UP to see Ginger. She is listening to Ace. She looks at the Nanny who is walking David through the kitchen.

ACE

From now on I want to know where you and David are at all times. This is a list of the things you'll be doing all day. I want you to check in three times a day and, if there's a change in the schedule. (Ace then hands Ginger a beeper.) Here's a beeper for your purse. It's very light. So I can get a hold of you when I have to.

Ginger reluctantly gathers up the debris of her new life.

CUT TO:

199 EXT. CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - EVENING 199
A very large trailer is in the middle of thousands of cleared acres where a large sign announces the coming of the 7000-room GIANT casino. The largest in the world.

CUT TO:

200 INT. CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - EVENING 200
Ginger and Nicky are alone in a large trailer. They are standing near a small bar and Nicky is pouring Ginger a drink. Ginger and Nicky are a little tight.

GINGER

(close to hysteria)
He treats me like a prisoner. He almost killed me. Nicky, you've gotta help me get outta there.

NICKY

I don't know what the hell to tell you -- I can't even talk to him anymore.

GINGER

I want my life back.

NICKY

Why don't you get a separation?

GINGER

He won't do that. I can't go into court against him. He'll get everything.

NICKY

You're gonna have to do something, because you can't stay like this.

GINGER

And you know he's not going to give me my own jewelry. He's got the key. Do you know anybody at the bank who can help me get it out? There's a some money in there, too, Nicky. I'm desperate. I'll take care of anybody who helps me.

NICKY

Let me think -- Let me see what I could do...

GINGER

I could've run away to Europe with the baby, but I was too scared. I knew he'd track me down. He'd kill me.

NICKY

No he wouldn't. He would'a had me kill you -- and he would'a been right. You don't run away with a man's kid.

GINGER

But I didn't run away. I came right back, just like you told me.

NICKY

(getting closer to Ginger & embraces her)

Come'ere. He got himself nuts out here. It all went to his head. God knows who he thinks he is. He's not the same.

GINGER

Nicky, I can see that he hates me. I'm afraid of him. I need help. I need a new sponsor.

Nicky sits her down on the sofa and joins her, brushing back her hair.

NICKY

(softly)

You'll be okay. Don't worry. You're with me now. I'll protect you.

Ginger's sobs subside a little and her hand starts to unconsciously rub Nicky's neck.

GINGER

I need help. Nicky. I need a new sponsor...

Nicky interrupts and takes her face in his hands and kisses her. She kisses him back and they make love.

DISSOLVE TO:

201

EXT. CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - NIGHT

We see Ginger and Nicky slip out of the trailer. They look around the deserted work site and steal a kiss before getting in their own cars and driving off in opposite directions.

201

NICKY (V.O.)

He never knew how to handle her. Ginger was a hooker. She was always a hooker. You kiss her and she'll

(MORE)

NICKY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 spit on you. You slap her, and
 she'll kiss your ass. But it's like
 everything else with Ace, he over
 analyzes things until he fucks them
 all up.

CUT TO:

202 EXT. GIANT CRANE A MILE AWAY - NIGHT 202
 Where FBI men with long lens cameras are recording the
 event on film. Click Click.

CUT TO:

203 INT. ACE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT 203
 Ginger walks in and is startled to see Ace seated
 motionless with a glass of milk.

ACE
 You didn't answer your beeper.

GINGER
 I threw it away.

ACE
 The new beeper? Why?

GINGER
 Nobody lives this way. I wake up
 with my assignment taped to the
 refrigerator door. It's like being
 in a prison around here.
 Ace notices her hands

ACE
 What happened to your manicure. I
 thought you were going to get a
 manicure?

GINGER
 It was raining.

Ginger goes to bedroom to change. Ace follows.

ACE
 And, so, what'd you do?

GINGER
 I had lunch.

ACE
 That's nice. Who with?

GINGER
Jennifer.

ACE
Where?

GINGER
We went to Pietro's.

ACE
What did you have?

GINGER
I had a salad.

ACE
What did Jennifer have?

GINGER
She had ... the same.

ACE
(pause)
I want you to call Jennifer and ask her to tell you what you had for lunch, and I'll listen in on the other line.

GINGER
Why do you want to do that?

ACE
I want you to do it.

Ginger leaves bedroom and goes to the hall phone to dial. She waits a minute and hangs up.

GINGER
There's no answer.

Ace is standing beside her. He dials the phone. Ginger clicks it off.

GINGER
All right, I didn't have lunch with Jennifer.

ACE
(pause)
Who were you with?

GINGER
 (pause)
 I was with somebody.

ACE
 I just hope it's not one person.

TIME CUT TO:

204 INT. ACE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

204

WIDE SHOT of the two of them seated separately.

ACE (V.O.)
 She kicked my heart out. I knew she probably fooled around, but Nicky was a disaster.

GINGER
 It was crazy. I know that, but I was mad at you. I was drunk. He got drunk... the next thing I knew... I'm sorry. I didn't want it to happen... He didn't want it to happen, but...

ACE (PAUSE)
 Aside from everything else, do you understand that what you did was dangerous.

GINGER
 Harry...

ACE
 (interrupting)
 If Chicago finds out about this, we can all be in a lot of serious trouble. You've got to put a stop to it before anybody finds out.

GINGER
 I know. I'm sorry. It'll never happen again.

ACE
 What if he won't stop?

GINGER
 He'll stop. I can back him off...

CUT TO:

205 EXT. VEGAS ROADSIDE MOTEL - DAY 205
CAMERA PANS from motel sign to rear window.

ACE (V.O.)

She was very convincing when she wanted to be, but this is how she backed him off.

CUT TO:

206 INT. VEGAS MOTEL ROOM - DAY 206
Inside window Ginger and Nicky have finished making love.

NICKY

Listen to me. If you're ever challenged. If he asks about anything, deny everything. You can never admit this. Do you understand what I'm telling you. I don't want any beefs from him going back home, because that could be a disaster. You gotta be careful. He's not dumb.

GINGER

I know that. What do you think I am, stupid?

CUT TO:

A207 EXT. ALL AMERICAN GAS STATION - DAY A207

CUT TO:

207 INT. ALL AMERICAN GAS STATION - DAY 207
Marino seated with Gaggi in back office. Beeper in BG.

ACE (V.O.)

The next time Marino had to take the shoebox to Chicago he was scared. Things were way out of hand in Vegas. He didn't know what was going to happen. When he walked in he didn't know if he was going to get kissed or killed.

Gaggi nods for Marino to give the package he is carrying to Beeper.

GAGGI

That fucking Jew down there is blowing his mind.

MARINO

The fucking guy is crazy

GAGGI

Marino, I wanna ask you something.
It's private. Just tell me the
truth.

MARINO

Sure Remo - please.

GAGGI

Tell me the truth.

MARINO

Of course. What?

GAGGI

The "little guy?" He wouldn't be
fucking the Jew's wife would he?
Because that would be a problem.

FREEZE FRAME of Marino

ACE (V.O.)

What could he say? He knew if he
gave the wrong answer, Nicky could
have been in big trouble. Because,
there's one thing about those old-
timers, they didn't like any fucking
around with other guy's wives. So he
lied. Even though he knew that by
lying to Gaggi he could get himself
killed.

UNFREEZE

MARINO

Geeze Remo, I don't think so. I
haven't seen any signs. It's all
crazy out there, you know.

GAGGI

I know. That's why I'm asking. I
want to make sure Nicky's okay. He
needs anything, you let me know. You
know Nicky, sometimes he don't ask.

MARINO

Oh yeah. Yes.

GAGGI

He's a good kid and everything, but
things are so fucked up with the
Jew, that maybe you keep an eye on
him for me, okay?

MARINO

Sure.

GAGGI

I wouldn't want to jeopardize anything with people who are our friends. (pause) Okay. You're a good boy.

CUT TO:

208 EXT. LEANING TOWER PARKING LOT - NIGHT 208
Nicky is hitting a MAN who is leaning against a car. They are surrounded by Marino, Fusco, Blue and Hardy. The man remains erect.

ACE (V.O.)

By now, even the guys in Chicago knew we had a mess out here, but I was hoping that the worst was over. Nicky had really hit rock bottom and he took his whole crew with him. He wasn't the old Nicky anymore. In fact, one night, Nicky had to belt a guy three or four times before the guy went down. In the old days, Nicky would have decked him with one shot. But he lost control of everybody.

CUT TO:

209 EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT 209
Blue gets out of car with aluminium foil package to confront police and is shot dead.

ACE (V.O.)

And they all followed him. They started doing stupid things. The cops shot Blue because they thought his pizza was a gun, and they could have been right.

CUT TO:

210 EXT. DETECTIVE'S HOUSE - NIGHT 210
The house explodes as gunfire riddles porch. Marino, Fusco, and Hardy are firing.

ACE (V.O.)

To get even, Nicky's crew got coked up one night and shot up the cops' houses.

CUT TO:

211

EXT. GOLD RUSH - DAY

211

Nicky and Marino are outside talking. They are covering their mouths with their hands and constantly looking around. They use sign language, too.

ACE (V.O.)

It got to the point they couldn't even talk in the Gold Rush anymore because the feds had put a wire in the wall. Nicky found out about it from a teller who owed him money. The guy worked in the bank across the street where the feds were listening in.

MARINO

Chicago asked me again about you and the Jew's wife.

NICKY

What do you know?

MARINO

That's what I tell them, but Jiggs and Tony Gorilla said if you did you fucked up.

NICKY

You think that fuck is going home? Making a beef behind my back?

MARINO

Nah. Not him. You would'a heard.

NICKY

And what's to stop him?

MARINO

I know.

NICKY

I don't trust him anymore, but they'll never okay anything.

MARINO

They keep asking about him.

NICKY

Sure, they're earning with the prick, but I got a feeling he's gonna start a war. I gotta think about it... I'm not sure yet. Get some guys to go dig a hole and then let them show you where it is.

MARINO
Angelo and Buster?

NICKY
Yeah. But, I'm not sure yet.

MARINO
They'll do it.

NICKY
Then, when I'm ready, I'll make sure
you'll know. I'll say the word "Go
see the Jew" and I want it to
disappear.

MARINO
Just let me know, but you gotta be
sure. You know what I mean?

NICKY
(pause)
Did I tell you to do anything yet?
(pause) Just let me think about it
someday.

CUT TO:

212 INT. JUBILATION NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT 212
Ace is seated at a table with legal papers, lawyers and
pals from the casino. Ace using nearby phone. There is
no answer. Ace leaves the table and hurries out.

ACE
(to Maitre d')
I gotta go home. Hold everything for
me.

MAITRE' D
Sure, Mr. Rothstein.

Maitre D' watches Ace walk out the door. He picks up the
phone and dials.

MAITRE D'
He's on his way home...

CUT TO:

213 INT. LEANING TOWER - NIGHT 213
Nicky is listening to phone.

MAITRE D' (O.S.)
Yeah... He just left.

Nicky hangs up the phone and looks across the room at Ginger, who is seated in a booth smiling and waiting for him to come back.

CUT TO:

214 INT. ACE'S HOUSE - NIGHT 214
 Ace gets home and everything is still. Fear strikes him and he runs to David's room to make sure the kid is there, he sees that David's leg has been tied to his bed. Ace starts untying his son in blind fury when the phone rings.

NICKY (O.S.)

How ya doing.

ACE

I don't know. Ginger's missing. She tied the kid to the bed.

CUT TO:

215 INT. LEANING TOWER - NIGHT 215

NICKY (O.S.)

Calm down. Everything is okay. Ginger is with me over here at the Leaning Tower.

CUT TO:

215A INT. ACE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 215A

ACE

She's there with you?

CUT TO:

216 EXT. LEANING TOWER - NIGHT 216
 Ace starts in the door but he is greeted by Nicky.

NICKY

Wait a minute. Hold it. Don't make a scene. You know you two are drifting apart. You're having troubles. She wanted some advice.

ACE

I don't know what to tell you Nicky. Do you know what she did?

NICKY

Harry, she's just trying to save the marriage.

ACE

Trying to save the marriage!
She's loaded all the time. She
kidnapped my kid. She ties the kid's
leg to the bed. What is this? She's
a sick woman Nicky!

Nicky raises his hands almost in a plea.

NICKY

(very calmly)

Harry, please. Don't be too hard on
her. Calm down.

Ace pauses for a beat, realizing that Nicky is standing
in his way and that Nicky could be dangerous. Ace takes
a wide berth around him.

CUT TO:

217 INT. LEANING TOWER - NIGHT

Ginger seated in booth. Her back to sparse crowd as Ace
walks toward her booth and sits down facing her. Nicky
follows behind Ace, but does not interfere.

217

GINGER

(brightly)

Hi Harry!

ACE

Don't "Hi Harry me." You Irish
bitch.

GINGER

(exasperated)

Please. Don't start.

ACE

Don't you understand that's your
son. I thought there was a common
ground between us. I'm the father.
You're the kid's mother. I'm going
to have to have you committed. I
can't believe what you did to your
own son!

Ace sees Ginger look up at Nicky, who is standing with
Marino about five feet behind him.

GINGER

It was just for a little while. To
keep him from getting up while I
went out. He was asleep. I would
have been back before he even woke
up.

ACE

If you ever do anything like that again to the kid, you'll regret it. If I ever find as much as a scratch on that kid, I'll throw you out a fucking window.

GINGER

Just let me go, all right. I'll sign whatever you want. Just give me the key to my jewels and let me go.

ACE

What? And let you disgrace me. God knows what you'll do. No!

GINGER

You miserable bastard!

ACE

You're a sick woman. There's no use talking to you. C'mon! Get up! Go get in your car and go home.

Ace notices that Ginger is darting a look at Nicky. Nicky gestures with his head for her to leave, but when Ace looks up and just misses Nicky's gesture. Ace goes to take her arm, but she storms out. Ace follows her and Nicky steps back to let him pass and follows him to the entrance where there's fewer people.

NICKY

Do me favor. Let me talk to her. She'll never do it again.

ACE

Nicky, stay out of this. You come out here as a friend. I tried to do everything for you even though I knew inside that you were going to bury me. You buried me...

NICKY

You buried yourself in all that bullshit. That's what buried you.

ACE

...you're fucking around with a sick woman. You're a pig.

Nicky reacts and tries to jump Ace, who does not move, almost daring him, but Marino grabs Nicky and Ace walks out.

CUT TO:

218 INT. ACE'S HOUSE - NIGHT
Ginger follows Ace through the door. As soon as she closes the door behind her, Ace turns.

218

ACE
You need approval from Nicky to go home?

GINGER
So?

ACE
You're still fucking him, aren't you?

GINGER
Fuck you Harry Rothstein.

Ginger is furious. She turns around and storms out.

CUT TO:

219 INT. ACE'S HOUSE - NIGHT
Ace walks over to the phone and starts to dial as he hears Ginger opening and slamming the car door, starting up her engine with a roar.

219

ACE (V.O.)
I didn't know what to expect. If Nicky thought I was going to make a beef out of it, I knew Nicky would have to kill me. And, if the guys in Chicago found out what had been going on, we'd all get killed.

Ace calls Billy Sherbert.

ACE
Billy? You got a gun? Get over here. I need some protection tonight. I don't know what they're gonna do.

While on the phone he hears tires screech. Ace pushes the curtain aside and sees Ginger tearing away in her sportscar.

CUT TO:

220 EXT. LEANING TOWER - NIGHT
Ginger pulls up in her sportscar. She jumps out of the car leaving it's door open and engine running.

220

CUT TO:

220A INT. LEANING TOWER - NIGHT
She walks past Marino.

220A

GINGER
Where is he? I want that Jew
bastard killed!

Nicky comes out and sees the commotion.

NICKY
(to Marino)
Hide that car in the back so nobody
can see it.

GINGER
Don't worry about hiding that car.
He knows everything. He told me that
he knows about us.

Nicky covers her mouth and looks around.

NICKY
Shut up! Get inside!

CUT TO:

221 INT. LEANING TOWER STORE ROOM - NIGHT
He takes her to rear store room. She turns to him.

221

GINGER
He shoved it in my face the minute
we got home.

NICKY
So what did you do? You told him?

GINGER
No! He just knows it. He told me.
And I don't give a fuck anymore.

NICKY
Didn't I tell you about this? What
if he goes to Chicago and makes a
beef? I wanna know exactly what you
said? What did you tell him?

GINGER
Nothing. I told him nothing. He told
me.

NICKY
You don't understand? This is
dangerous.

GINGER

If it's so fucking dangerous, why don't you kill him and get it over with?

NICKY

What are you saying? That I should kill him? No!

GINGER

Then have him killed.

NICKY

Hey Ginger, I can't do that. I've known him thirty-five years. We don't do things like that to each other.

GINGER

(pauses)

Then, what about my money? You promised to help me get my money.

NICKY

How can I get your money now? What, are you out of your fucking mind? He's gonna give you your money now? Look at what you've done to him! If you kept your fucking mouth shut -- Ahh! What's the use. I should have never gotten involved with you. I feel bad enough about it already.

Ginger screams and attacks Nicky, scratching his face. Nicky roughly slaps her across the face, roughly grabs her arm and pushes her out of the storage area and out the back door.

222 EXT. REAR PARKING LOT - NIGHT
Nicky watches her stumble toward her car.

222

GINGER

(opening the door and getting in her car)

I'll get my own fucking money. I don't give a damn anymore. I don't need you or anybody.

CUT TO:

Screaming at Nicky as she starts to pull out.

GINGER

I'll go to the FBI. I'm not afraid. I made it on my own all my life.

CUT TO:

Nicky at back door watching her leave. Marino joins him.

NICKY

I fucked up.

MARINO

Don't be so hard on yourself.

NICKY

Nah. I fucked up with Ginger. I should have never started with her. It's a bad fucking spot.

Nicky and Marino turn and walk back inside.

CUT TO:

223 INT. ACE'S HOUSE - NIGHT 223
Billy Sherbert enters house and gives Ace a shotgun wrapped in a raincoat.

ACE

Get inside! Get inside.

They close the door.

CUT TO:

224 INT. ACE'S HOUSE - NIGHT 224
Ace making sure all the doors, windows, and patio sliding doors are sealed and the curtains drawn.

CUT TO:

225 INT. ACE'S BASEMENT - NIGHT 225
Ace hiding cash in the basement freezer compartment and hiding jewelry in orange juice container.

ACE (V.O.)

I had already left David with neighbors. I hid the cash and jewels I had in the house in different stash places.

CUT TO:

226 INT. KITCHEN TABLE - MORNING 226
An exhausted Ace and Sherbert are seated at the table with the shotgun.

SHERBERT

But it wasn't your fault. You just found out about it. How can they blame you?

ACE

It was my responsibility. I should have realized. I let the situation go on. I let it get out of hand.

CUT TO:

227 EXT. VEGAS VALLEY DRIVE - MORNING 227

CAMERA FOLLOWS Ginger's car as she pulls up into driveway and crashes into the back of Ace's parked car.

CUT TO:

228 INT. ACE'S KITCHEN TABLE - MORNING 228

Ace reacts. Sherbert grabs the gun and Ace goes to the window.

CUT TO:

229 EXT. VEGAS VALLEY DRIVE - MORNING 229
Ginger repeatedly smashes into Ace's car.

CUT TO:

230 INT. ACE'S KITCHEN - MORNING 230

ACE

(to Billy)

It's okay. She's alone. Take the gun out back until I call.

CUT TO:

231 EXT. VEGAS VALLEY DRIVEWAY - MORNING 231
Ginger banging on Ace's car as neighbors gather.

GINGER

Open the goddamn door! I want my money. Come out here you bastard!

ACE

(emerging from the house)

Stop it! You're drunk! What's the matter with you? Stop or you'll be sorry.

Ginger gets out of the car and confronts Ace.

GINGER

Don't you threaten me, you sonofabitch. I'm in love with Nicky Santoro. He's my new sponsor. If you threaten me once more, I'm going to the FBI and you'll all go to jail.

CUT TO:

232 INT. FBI SURVEILLANCE CAR - MORNING 232
Two FBI agents are parked down the block and are
photographing the scene through a long lens camera.

232A CLICK: Ginger screaming at Ace on lawn. SERIES OF B/W 232A
STILLS.

CUT TO:

233 EXT. DRIVEWAY - MORNING 233
At that moment, POLICE OFFICERS drive up to curb and
walk up driveway.

ACE

Ginger, calm down. be careful.

COP #1

Mr. Rothstein, I'm sorry. We've got
some complaints about noise.

GINGER

(to Cop #1)

Why won't he let me in? I just
wanna get some things and get out of
here.

COP #2

Why don't you let her in the house?
It's half her house anyway. Then we
can all go home.

ACE

(to get rid of cops)

Okay, but for only five minutes.

CUT TO:

234 INT. FBI SURVEILLANCE CAR - MORNING 234

CLICK: Ace opens the door and lets Ginger inside.

234A FBI surveillance photo: SERIES OF B/W PHOTOS 234A

CUT TO:

235 INT. ACE'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING 235
Ginger races to the desk. Jimmies drawer with sissor
until it opens. Sissors break. Takes out Ace's key ring
with the safety deposit key.

CUT TO:

236 EXT. DRIVEWAY - MORNING 236
Ace and cops and many neighbors waiting as Ginger stalks
out carrying a small overnight bag and gets in her car.

CUT TO:

236A EXT. NEIGHBOR'S WINDOW - MORNING 236A
David is watching until the Nanny pulls him away into the house and the curtain he has pulled aside drops.

CUT TO:

236B EXT. DRIVEWAY - MORNING 236B

GINGER

(to cops)

Will you get me away from here. He threatened me before.

Ginger pulls out followed by the police car while Ace watches from the lawn as FBI Agents pull out and follow the police car following Ginger.

CUT TO:

237 EXT. VEGAS STRIP BANK: MORNING 237
On her way out of town, Ginger swerves into the bank parking lot and gets out of the car.

GINGER

(calling to the cops who followed her)

I just want to pick up some money before I leave.

CUT TO:

238 INT. FBI SURVEILLANCE CAR - DAY 238

238A CLICK: Ginger pulls into the bank, followed by the cops. 238A

B/W STILL PHOTOS

CUT TO:

239 INT. VEGAS STRIP BANK - DAY 239
Inside the bank Ginger pulls out three bank safety deposit keys.

CUT TO:

240 INT. ACE'S HOUSE - DAY 240
Ace is on the phone talking to banker Clark. Ace is looking at jimmed desk drawer, broken sissors and his key chain.

ACE

You've got to stop her. She's going to take my money. She's all drugged up.

CUT TO:

241 INT. VEGAS STRIP BANK - DAY
Clark is on the phone looking at Ginger in BG who is coming out of box area with three opened boxes.

MANAGER
I'm sorry Harry, I can't stop her.
She has the key and the box is still in both your names.

CUT TO:

241A Ginger pulls out her jewelry and bound packets of \$100 bills marked "\$10,000". Some fall off the counter to the floor. Ginger dips down demurely to pick them up. She looks up and smiles at one of the stunned cops who has accompanied her.

241A

GINGER
(indicating Manager)
Tell him I need a bag.

CUT TO:

242 EXT. BANK PARKING LOT - DAY
Ginger is putting the canvas bag in the trunk of her car when she sees Ace's Cadillac approaching.

242

GINGER
(to cops, fear in her eyes)
Oh God! There's Harry. Stop him. I don't want any more trouble.

As Ace pulls in, he is immediately surrounded by cops, who repeat Ginger's refrain that they don't want any trouble from Ace.

ACE
It's not me! Stop her! She's stealing my money.
But the cops still huddle around Ace's car until Ginger's car pulls out and disappears in traffic. Ace, unable to pursue, WATCHES Ginger's car disappear. The FBI car with the camera AGENT in the passenger's seat follows right behind her.

CUT TO:

243 INT. FBI SURVEILLANCE CAR - DAY

243

AGENT
Pull her over near the ARCO station.

CUT TO:

244 EXT. ARCO STATION - DAY
The FBI car motions for Ginger to pull over. She calmly pulls over and the FBI men pull in behind her car.

244

DISSOLVE TO:

245 EXT. GOLD RUSH - DAY
 FBI agents with rifles and wearing "FBI" jackets crash through the door.

245

ACE (V.O.)

And they all began to tumble. One after the other. Like dominoes.

CUT TO:

245A FBI agents taking Blue, Marino, Fusco and Hardy out front door with their hands behind their heads.

245A

ACE (V.O.)

Between Piscano griping on the wire... Nicky... Ginger... and me and my license... Paradise! ... we managed to really fuck it all up.

CUT TO:

246 EXT. NICKY'S HOUSE - DAY
 FBI agents in bullet proof vests at the door. Jenny tries to close the door. They burst in.

246

NICKY (V.O.)

Right away I got wind of the pinches coming down and I took off. Who needs to hang around for that bullshit?

247 INT. TANGIERS CASINO RAID - DAY
 FBI agents raid the cashiers cage with DuPrey and Austin and seize the scale, counting machines, and stacks of cash marked with a yellow "evidence" ribbon.

247

NICKY (V.O.)

But they got almost everybody else.

CUT TO:

247A INT. TANGIERS KITCHEN - DAY
 John Nance sees the Agents and runs out kitchen door.

247A

CUT TO:

248 INT. GREEN'S MALIBU HOUSE - NIGHT
 Green is surrounded by agents showing him papers they had confiscated.

248

ACE (V.O.)

Green? Don't even ask. The minute they said they were going to charge him as a co-conspirator, he flipped.

GREEN

I'll tell you everything.

ACE (V.O.)

He gave up everybody. They had to slap him to shut him up.

CUT TO:

249 INT. PISCANO'S APARTMENT - DAY 249
Agents holding up stacks of Piscano's expense receipt notebooks for each other to read as Piscano gets more and more agitated.

NICKY (V.O.)

Now, the best, and I couldn't believe it, Piscano's expense reports took the cake. He might as well have given them a blueprint. Everybodies names. Addresses. Dates. Everything.

AGENT

Look at this! How considerate of you. Thank you so much, Mr. Piscano.

When the AGENT gets one cuff on Piscano, Piscano clutches his chest with heart attack. The Agents drop the cuffs and try to help.

AGENTS

Take it easy, Arty. We're just going downtown.

Piscano's collapses and dies. Wife screams. Agents try to revive him with mouth-to-mouth.

ACE (V.O.)

Poor Arty got so upset he had a heart attack and dropped dead right there in front of his wife.

CUT TO:

250 EXT. ACE'S HOUSE - DAY 250
Ace in doorway being confronted by two FBI men. He is being shown pix of Nicky and Ginger.

AGENT

Why protect a friend who betrayed you like that?

Ace doesn't look and quietly closes the door.

ACE (V.O.)

At he end of the day, they finally
(MORE)

ACE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 came to see me with pictures. But, I
 didn't want to look at them or the
 guys who brought them.

CUT TO:

251 INT. FEDERAL COURT HOUSE - DAY 251
 Gaggi, Forlano, Borelli, and Cappelli are all in court
 where Forlano and Cappelli are breathing through masks
 and oxygen tanks with DOCTORS and NURSES. The JUDGE
 calls a recess and Bosses, their LAWYERS and nurses file
 through a side court door.

ACE (V.O.)
 When the bosses were arrested, they
 were so old that they needed doctors
 at their arraignment. And when they
 got 25 years to life for taking
 quarters out of a casino, you knew
 people were going to have to pay.

252 INT. COURT HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY 252
 Gaggi, Forlano, Borelli and Cappelli sit down in meeting
 around conference table as the lawyers and nurses
 silently walk out the door as if on cue.

NICKY (V.O.)
 They day they got pinched they had a
 meeting. Right there, behind the
 court. When something like this
 happens, you know how it works.

CAMERA PANS from one to the other.

CAPPELLI
 Stone's a good kid. He won't talk.

FORLANO
 No. You're right. Andy's a good kid.
 He'll stand up, just like his
 father.

BORELLI
 I agree. He's solid. A fuckin
 Marine.

CAPPELLI
 Yeah, he's a good guy. Always has
 been. Remo, what do you think?

GAGGI
 (a pause)
 Look... Why take a chance.

CUT TO:

253 EXT. CHICAGO MALL PARKING AREA - DAY 253
 Andy Stone and his LAWYER are walking toward their car when the Lawyer goes to the right and Gaggi's bodyguards, Fat Sally and Beeper appear, and shoot Stone dead.

ACE (V.O.)

As much as they liked him, he wasn't Italian, he wasn't one of them. As far as they knew, he could'a talked. Otherwise, he might still be alive

CUT TO:

MONTAGE of murders:

254 EXT. CASINO PARKING LOT - DAY 254

NICKY (V.O.)

Anyway, what had to be done, had to be done.

Sharply dressed man getting shot through the side window of his new Lincoln leaving bullet holds and blood on side of window.

CUT TO:

255 EXT. DESERT HOLE - DUSK 255

Bound Count Room Security Guard and Clerk are shot by Beeper and GOON in the desert. Victims fall right into a pre-dug hole and disappear from sight.

CUT TO:

256 EXT. COSTA RICAN HOUSE - DAY 256

John Nance is reading on the patio when Beeper grabs him around the neck and shoots him in the head.

NICKY (V.O.)

Nance was one of the first to skip, but then his kid got set up by the feds on a phony drug rap...

When Beeper lets go, John Nance collapses dead.

NICKY (V.O.)

...they were afraid he'd come out of hiding to save his kid, and give them all up.

CUT TO:

257 INT. BEVERLY SUNSET MOTEL CORRIDOR - NIGHT 257
 Camera tracks down grim hall past several doors.

ACE (V.O.)

After Ginger took off, she wasn't much help to anybody. Not to the FBI. Not to herself. She found some pimps in LA and in a few months they went through all her jewels.

CUT TO:

Suddenly, a door flies open and Ginger staggers half drugged into the hall looking for help. Screams. And, goes halfway down the hall to the desk where she collapses and dies.

ACE (V.O.)

When they found her, the coroner said her death was "suspicious", but I had a private doctor do an independent autopsy. He said she had been given a "hot dose." In the end, all she had left was \$3600 in mint condition coins.

CUT TO:

258 EXT. RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - DAY 258
Ace gets in his car to start the ignition and it explodes, throwing Ace about thirty feet into the air.

CUT TO:

Vegas blue sky.
Ace's body -- as in beginning of film -- flying in the air in slow motion.

The screen fills with the rising explosion of smoke and fire.

ACE (V.O.)

No matter what the feds and the papers said about my car bombing, it was amateur night and you could tell.

CUT TO:

259 EXT. RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - DAY 259
Ace exits the restaurant, walks to car and gets in.

ACE (V.O.)

Whoever it was, they put the dynamite under the passenger's side. But that model car had a metal plate under the driver's seat and it deflected the explosion.

CUT TO:

260 INT./EXT. ACE'S CAR - DAY 260
 Ace turns on the ignition and we see two and three-inch flames come out of the defroster vents and everything goes silent as he is suddenly engulfed in flames. Ace opens the door and rolls into the street where two MEN grab him and take him away as the car explodes in flames two stories high.

ACE (V.O.)

The bombing was never authorized.
 Not by the bosses. But, I suspect I
 know who lit the fuse. And, so did
 the bosses.

CUT TO:

261 EXT. INDIANA FARM - DAY 261
 Nicky and his brother Carmine get out of a car on a farm road for a meeting. Fat Sally, Beeper and four smiling HOODS are waiting. As Nicky shakes hands with one Hood.

NICKY (V.O.)

Everything died down, they wanted me
 to send my brother, Carmine, out to
 Vegas to keep the packages coming
 home. And they were right. It was
 still too hot for me to go back. I
 mean, I'm not a jerk. What's right
 is right. We were going to meet...
 Urgh!

They hit him in the head and hold him while they beat
 his brother with baseball bats.

DISSOLVE TO:

261A The hoods beating Nicky to death with bats. 261A

ACE (V.O.)

The bosses had enough from Nicky.
 How much were they gonna take. I
 heard they made him watch while they
 beat his brother to death first.

DISSOLVE TO:

261B Nicky and Carmine are both dead. 261B

CUT TO:

262 EXT. RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - DAY 262
 The EXPLOSION's smoke and fire is now falling to the
 ground. We see Ace on the ground, still alive.

ACE (V.O.)
The bosses had other ideas for me.

CUT TO:

263 EXT. AMBULANCE - DAY 263
An ambulance driver has put Ace on a stretcher.

AMBULANCE DRIVER
You're sure a lucky guy mister.

CUT TO:

EXPLOSION - SMOKE CLEARS TO SEE

264 EXT. THE GRAND CASINO - NIGHT 264
The brand new 5000-room hotel with its entrance shaped like the MGM Lion's head.

ACE (V.O.)
The town will never be the same.
After the Tangiers, the big corporations moved in and there wasn't any room for guys like us.

CUT TO:

EXPLOSION - SMOKE CLEARS TO SEE

265 EXT. THEME PARK PIRATE BOAT - NIGHT 265
With youngsters wearing pirate hats and waving cardboard swords.

ACE (V.O.)
And while the kids play cardboard pirates, mommy and daddy play the poker machines and slots.

CUT TO:

EXPLOSION - SMOKE CLEARS

266 EXT. THE EXCALIBUR HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT 266
Another 5000 room hotel built like an Arthurian castle with moats and "live jousting" contests in front.

ACE (V.O.)
In the old days, dealers knew your name and how to get your wallet. It was a scammers world loaded with action.

CUT TO:

EXPLOSION - SMOKE CLEARS

267 EXT. THE MIRAGE HOTEL - NIGHT 267
 A 4000 room hotel with a 60-foot volcano out front and
 tourist traffic backed up watching it belch smoke and
 flames.

ACE (V.O.)
 Today, it's just a family town.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXPLOSION - SMOKE CLEARS

268 EXT. BOCA RATON LUXURY RESIDENTIAL AREA - DAY 268
 A house very much like Ace's house in Vegas, including
 the fact that it backs up on a golf course.

ACE (V.O.)
 But in the end, I wound up right
 back where I started. Not because I
 didn't screw up. No, that's not why
 they let me live.

CUT TO:

269 INT. BOCA RATON HOUSE - DAY 269
 An older, grayer Ace is alone in his living-room with TV
 sets and Fax machines and multiple phone lines. He
 surrounded by newspapers and files. He is very much the
 way we saw him during his earlier handicapping days,

ACE (V.O.)
 ... They let me live because, after
 all, I could still pick winners, I
 could still make money for them,
 and, why mess up a good thing? And
 that's that.

END